



WAGNER COLLEGE

# COLLEGE-TO-CAREER SURVIVAL GUIDE

*RESUME, COVER LETTER AND  
INTERVIEW PREPARATION*



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# College-to-Career Survival Guide

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*Since the average college graduate can expect to spend 85,000 hours of his life working, it makes good sense to prepare for this eventuality as carefully as possible.*

This careful preparation involves a 6-part job-search process which requires the time and thought of the participant. To try and take short cuts at any point in this process is to do yourself a great disservice. Short cuts undermine any sense of professionalism you are striving to achieve.

- I. **RESUMES ARE THE HEART OF THIS 6-PART PROCESS.**  
*A resume is a summary of functional and transferable skills, targeted to the position you are looking to secure.* The major purpose of a resume is to encourage potential employers to schedule an interview.
- II. A **COVER LETTER** is as important as your resume. It is your introduction, the reader's first impression of you, and should reflect your unique personal skills and abilities. A cover letter's tone should be more conversational. Always send an individualized cover letter, addressed to a **person** rather than a title, with each resume you send. This demonstrates initiative, professionalism, organizational skills and courtesy.
- III. Expect to **FOLLOW-UP** the transmission of your resume and cover letter by phone, within a few days after submission. If employers are receptive to your call, use this opportunity to express your interest in scheduling an interview.
- IV. **RESEARCH** is a vital step in the job-search process. Companies said they can tell when candidates have not taken the time to find out about them and they are not impressed. *If you do not do your research, how will you know if a company is right for you or you for them?* How can you write a good resume and cover letter targeted for a particular company and show what makes you a good candidate without doing research?
- V. All your previous preparations, the research, resume and cover letter, have brought you to the interview. *An INTERVIEW is a "sales presentation" of yourself.* You are selling your experience, knowledge, skills and potential to get the job done. The main objective for the interviewee is to obtain a job offer. The main objective for the interviewer is to determine if you are the best person for this particular job.
- VI. No job search is considered concluded until the **FOLLOW-UP** is done. What better way is there to show a potential employer that you're the kind of person who sees a task to fruition? Sending a computer-printed thank you note within twenty-four hours of the interview is a courtesy to the interviewer who has made the time to see you.  
**FOLLOW-UP IS KEY!** The phone will not ring if you stare at it. You are in the driver's seat and must get the car going.

# RESUMES

# RESUME 101- FUN!

*There is no “one-size-fits-all” comprehensive format when it comes to writing resumes.*

Resumes are as individual as their authors. Even in fields such as health and accounting where the work is often the same, it's other skills and experiences gathered along the way that might make the qualifying difference. Use these differences to your advantage and stand out in an employer's eyes.





*Generally, a resume should be conservative in style.* You may be tempted to try a more creative format when writing your resume but this is extremely difficult to pull off. ***Even in creative fields such as advertising or promotions, using a traditional business format for your resume is recommended.*** Seasoned employers recommend that you save your creative work for your ***portfolio***. You will have greater success if you strive to create a resume that is easy to read, is visually pleasing and has its content well organized.

*A resume grows and changes with you as you progress in your academic and professional career.* You can't think of writing a resume as a one-shot deal; you write it once in college and then you're done. On the contrary - it needs to be revisited constantly to insure that it accurately reflects your education, current skills and experience, and illustrates it all in the best possible way for the job search at hand.

Resumes must represent you in the clearest, most positive light possible. They must embody you, be your representative, and show that you have the ability to organize information and present it in a clear, concise manner.

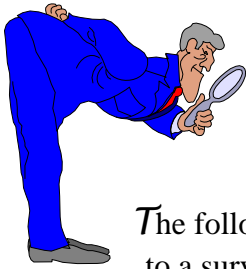
*In the eyes of employers, a well-written resume is a document that supports the promise of performance* and is a means by which they can quickly assess significant aspects of your background to decide if you have the right qualifications before scheduling an interview.

## RESUME POINTS TO CONSIDER

-  All resumes must be accurate and truthful; never informal, glib or overdone.
-  Resumes vary widely from person to person and field to field.
-  The major purpose of a resume is to encourage potential employers to schedule an interview.
-  ***Everyone needs a resume!*** Whether you are applying for a new career, a promotion within the same company, a part-time position, an internship, fellowship, graduate or other professional school, you will need a resume. If you are about to graduate college, or re-enter the work force after a substantial period of time, get ready to write a resume!

## RESUME STATS

- 📖 You can often control what a prospective employer will ask on an interview. **Seventy percent of the questions asked** will come from information supplied on your resume and cover letter.
- 📖 Busy companies want short, clear, concise resumes. Large corporations may receive up to **10,000** resumes during the recruiting season.
- 📖 Corporate decision-makers prefer **one-page resumes**, especially if you are applying for an entry-level position.
- 📖 Resumes are generally reviewed by human resource administrators who spend on average **30 seconds** assessing them.



## PET PEEVES & COMMON RESUME MISTAKES

NOTED BY SOME OF AMERICA'S TOP EMPLOYERS

(Or, what NOT to do on your resume!)

The following complaints reflect some of the feedback from companies that responded to a survey sent to employers listed in the book, *The 100 Best Companies in America to Work For* (Plume/Penguin Books). This information is intended as a guide for resume preparation; you are encouraged to use common sense and good judgement in assessing your own situation.

### Do **NOT**:

- a) Leave out dates. You must list your times of employment, using the month and year you started/ended, in reverse chronological order.
- b) List summary of work history by type rather than by exact company and job performed.
- c) Have entitlement mentality (I have my degree; I'm sharp; what can you do for me?)
- d) Give more space to less relevant experiences.
- e) List only job duties. You **MUST** record your **accomplishments** and state clearly when/where each was achieved.
- f) Keep accomplishments separated from work history so it's not clear what was done where.
- g) Use fancy fonts, graphics, photos of yourself (or anything else).
- h) Forget to check and re-check your resume for typos, misspellings, fluff wording, and/or poor, incorrect grammar.
- i) List references on your resume.
- j) Forget to use terminology that's used in the field. Don't be afraid to use it if you can comfortably use your knowledge of the terms in an interview.
- k) Be inconsistent in writing style, font, and spacing. Also refrain from using the first person "I" or "my".

## IDEAS FOR GETTING STARTED

*Successful resumes are not pulled off in fifteen minutes, or even a day.* Since a resume requires a great deal of self-reflection in order to define your career objectives and present yourself in the best possible light, *allow yourself as much time as possible to write it.*

*Before writing an initial draft, don't concern yourself with the stylistic constraints of a resume.* It's more important to get the information out of your head and on paper. Getting the information to one page, choosing the best format and condensing or expanding upon what you wish to include can all be decided later.

*Write down, in chronological order, all your academic, professional, and volunteer experiences, organizing the information needed for your resume.* It will detail the years regarding college attendance, jobs you've held and when, travel experiences, memberships, committees to which you've belonged, causes you've supported and special skills you've mastered.

*Include every job, skill etc. you've had since freshman year in college.* The risk of not including these positions in your draft is that you may be deleting significant information and overlooking impressive skills. If you are a freshman or sophomore, feel free to include relevant experience from high school.

*In every position you've held, you can identify "transferable" skills relevant to your career goals.* For instance, even though a student may have worked as a camp counselor, some of the skills necessary to be an effective counselor- *an ability to plan, organize and execute a program-* are extremely important skills for many career positions.

*This dense, descriptive list of all your experiences and accomplishments is the start of what can be called your PERMANENT FILE.*

*Later, when you are ready to edit your experiences, you can employ this general strategy: emphasize the important and withhold the irrelevant.* Focus on achievements and decide which experiences have more relevance to the type of positions for which you will be interviewing. You may, however, be able to utilize the omitted information for a different resume, one geared toward a different industry or profession.

Determine how far back you should go when deciding what to include in your resume:

- As a rule, you should **include only those educational and professional experiences you've had while in college** or high school that carried over as you began college.
- If you've been out of college and working for some time, actively consider only the past five to eight years.



# CHECK LIST FOR INFORMATION

TO INCLUDE IN YOUR PERMANENT FILE

All of the items on the following check-list provide a basis for a good resume and are also essential when negotiating a raise or promotion.

## PERSONAL

Certifications Licenses Old Resumes  
Awards (Athletic, Civic, Military, Performance, Professional)

## EDUCATIONAL

Academic Evaluations Collegiate Memberships Leadership Positions  
Honors Letters of Recommendation Transcripts  
Titles, Bibliographies and Abstracts of all Presentations and Theses

## EMPLOYMENT

Job Descriptions Advancements or Promotions Professional Evaluations  
Leadership Special Projects and Committees Achievements

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Names and Dates of all Seminars, Conferences, Continuing Education, Training

## NECESSARY RESUME CATEGORIES

- Contact Information--*
- Objective (optional)--*
- Education--*
- Experience--*
- Computer Skills--*
- References Available Upon Request (optional) e-mail--*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Include your full name, permanent address, city/state/zip, email, and telephone number with area code. If you live on campus, include both your permanent and campus addresses and **phone numbers**.

- *Don't* include nicknames, cell phone/beeper numbers or personal information (such as gender, height/weight, social security number) or an e-mail address unless you check your email daily. Also, if you elect to include an e-mail address, be sure that it sounds "professional". For example, [jim.smith@hotmail.com](mailto:jim.smith@hotmail.com), not [racecarmaniac@aol.com](mailto:racecarmaniac@aol.com).

**\*Note About Answering Machines and Voice Mail Messages**

*Be sure that both campus and permanent phones relay clear, professional messages. Do not have music of any kind playing in the background. You will be evaluated on every level including the very first time an employer contacts you. If your message is unprofessional, silly, etc. they may hang up and just go on to the next candidate. It is also best not to include cell phone numbers.*

## **OBJECTIVE**

AN OBJECTIVE STATEMENT CAN BE YOUR FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO SELL YOURSELF.

An objective is good to include for students seeking something other than a permanent, full-time position – i.e. internship, part-time/summer job or fellowship.

Graduating seniors may or may not choose to include an objective. If you are focused, have a strong career direction, and can express what you want to do in terms of skills the employer needs, then you should include an objective.

- The objective statement should be specific enough to show the direction of your job search but general enough so that you will be considered for a number of opportunities.

Just as a resume is a summary of your skills and accomplishments, an objective is a summary of your resume. It is a sentence or two that can bring focus, strength and continuity to the rest of your resume.

### **EXAMPLES OF OBJECTIVES:**

- *To obtain a marketing position that will use my strengths in demographic research and analysis to target, develop and maintain a dominant market share for the company.*
- *To obtain a position as a computer programmer with proficiency in C/C++ and assembly language to produce clean, readable, and imaginative code to speed release of products.*

*If you are not certain what the benefit(s) to the company may be,* it is acceptable to write an objective that includes information about the function or field desired and examples of your skills or background.

#### **For example:**



#### **ARTS ADMINISTRATION**

To obtain a position in the entertainment industry that will utilize my strong writing skills and interest in film.

#### **HISTORY**

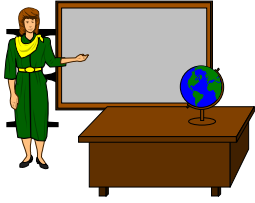
To utilize my curriculum and interest in foreign affairs within a government agency.

#### **AN INTERNSHIP**

To obtain an internship position with an international corporation that utilizes my language skills and experience with foreign cultures.

*Keep in mind that an objective is not always necessary to include, and is better omitted if it is weak, vague or ineffective.*

## EDUCATION



For recent grads, the education section typically follows the career objective immediately. The education section can come after the experience section if the student has gained extensive experience in a specific field.

*Do* list schools in reverse chronological order. *Don't* include high school or a GPA less than 3.0, but if your cumulative grade point average is 3.0 or better, it should be listed. Employers may assume you have less than a 3.0 if it is not stated on your resume. If your major GPA is greater, you may include that instead of, or in addition to, your cumulative GPA.

- *Grad students* - list graduate school before undergraduate.
- *Transfer students* - list school from which you anticipate receiving your degree before the school from which you transferred.

*In the case of transfer*, it may not be necessary to mention the college if you spent a minimal amount of time there (less than a year.) If, however, you believe the curriculum you studied at the college strengthens the objective, include it.

## ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

**O**ne way to bring attention to your resume is by including additional “success stories” about yourself. These additional categories allow you the opportunity to demonstrate you do have significant abilities.

Just because you were not voted “*Most Likely to Succeed*”, does not suggest you do not have additional information to offer in your resume. If you didn't have time to get involved in school activities because you were working 20 hours a week while carrying a full course load, that in itself is an achievement.

## RELEVANT CURRICULUM

Relevant curriculum does not refer to a generalized listing of courses; rather, it is a description of one or two courses (not introductory level) that pertain to your objective or career goals. Often, students are involved in special projects, case studies or an honors thesis in pursuit of their degrees. *A description of these may also be elaborated upon in a resume.*

## DESCRIPTION OF SPECIALIZED MAJORS

This refers to undergraduate programs that Wagner offers, most notably Arts Administration and Microbiology, which are found in few other academic institutions. Refer to the current Course Catalog for a description of these specialized degrees; you may want to include a brief description on your resume so the reader gets an idea of what the major entails.

## TRAVEL EXPERIENCE OR STUDY ABROAD

### LANGUAGE SKILLS

- Fluent in Spanish, Russian and reading comprehension of French

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Particularly relevant to those in pursuing *social science* degrees
- Can appear on a resume in two ways, depending on your level of involvement:
  - A) as part of your experience section, provided these activities involved specialized training, were on-going, required a significant amount of your time and increased your level of skills.
  - B) as an additional category that supports qualifications and skills already mentioned in your resume.

Many of the additional categories you can include are related to the educational section of your resume. Others come from outside experiences, such as employment and civic activities.

***Achievements should always be included in a resume.*** Achievements show a proactive and energetic attitude towards your responsibilities and are more impressive to an employer than a list of tasks.

NOTABLE EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS MAY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES:

### ACADEMIC, ATHLETIC, CIVIC AND PERFORMANCE HONORS

- Wagner College Alumni Music Scholarship
- First Place in 2003 Citibank College Advertising Award
- Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Honors Society
- Dean's List and Honor's Program
- Co-Captain and MVP, Division I Field Hockey and Lacrosse



### COLLEGIATE AND CIVIC MEMBERSHIPS

- Accounting and Business Society
- Westchester County Environmental Committee
- Sociology Club

### LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

- Vice President – Marketing and Management Club
- Peer Leader
- Resident Assistant



## EXPERIENCE

Most people are hampered by modesty, downplaying the significance of their experiences rather than valuing them as the building blocks of their careers. Be honest and market your skills as assertively as possible. If you don't, no one else will.

**F**irst, distinguish between experience that is immediately relevant to your career goals and experience that isn't.

*Divide these experiences between*

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE,

EXPERIENCE,

INTERNSHIPS, &

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

or any other descriptive grouping that best highlights your background.

*Don't* dismiss jobs that are not directly related to your aspirations! These positions provide important transferable skills that will support your career goals. Remember- a good waiter possesses good customer service skills and knows how to deal with deadline pressures. Just be sure to state how the aptitudes you acquired at your unrelated jobs can be utilized in the position you are looking to obtain.

### **HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR WORK EXPERIENCE**

When writing your work experience, incorporate the suggestions of the following checklist:

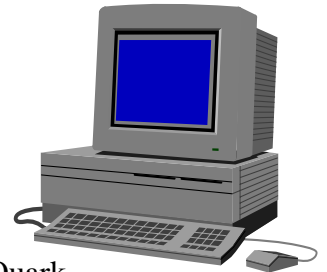
- Include **the COMPANY NAME AND LOCATION** (city/state).
- **DATES OF YOUR EMPLOYMENT** - beginning and ending dates, using month/year
- Your **JOB TITLE** - if you are working without an official title, evaluate the tasks and assign a title to the position
- It is helpful if the reader has an understanding of the environment in which you worked. Include a **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPANY**.
- Describe your **JOB RESPONSIBILITIES** in terms that showcase the skills that the employer needs and use action words to describe them.

**Always** try to incorporate your **CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS** in addition to your responsibilities. Accomplishments show a proactive attitude towards work and highlight your enthusiasm. They are more impressive to employers than any lists of tasks.

## COMPUTER SKILLS

Whatever your major, whatever your career aspiration, you **must** possess computer skills to be *competitive* in today's job market.

*If you possess operating and programming skills in addition to word processing and database skills, you may want to separate them accordingly.*



**COMPUTER SKILLS:** Windows '98, Microsoft Word, Access and Excel, Quark Express, Visual Basic, C/C++, HTML

Avoid vague language such as “various software application” on your resume. This invites questions from the interviewer.

Zero in on the meat of computer applications and state the most updated version you are familiar with on your resume. Rather than listing several programs for the Internet, just say “proficient in Internet use.”

## REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

This statement is the **LAST** sentence that will appear on your resume.

**T**here is some controversy regarding the reference statement. Some believe its presence is moot since the provision of references is assumed and stating the obvious adds clutter to the resume. However, the inclusion of the reference statement signals the résumé's conclusion to the prospective employer and lets them know no additional information is forthcoming.

Having references to substantiate your experience is as important as writing and distributing your resume. You do not want to let this detail escape your attention at the time of the interview, not after all the hard work you've done to get there!

### SOME POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND REGARDING REFERENCES

There is no absolute way to know if an interviewer will request references, but you should always be prepared to supply a list of references should a potential employer ask.

A **reference list** is never included on the resume. References are always listed on a separate sheet of paper and are not given to an interviewer unless they are asked for specifically.

- Obtaining references reinforces your networking skills. It is an important component of the career-search process.
- Select references who know you well enough to answer detailed questions regarding your work experience and academic background.

- **You can't assume someone will be glad to serve as your reference.** You must always ask your references' permission before using their names.
- **Gather three people to serve as your references,** including at least one professor from your major/minor, a current or former employer with whom you have a good relationship, any one who coordinates volunteer activities in which you participate, a coach or family friend (but not any of your personal friends).
- When you complete your resume, **give a copy of your resume to each of your references.** This serves a dual purpose: it reminds the reference that you asked for their support and if asked to elaborate on your credentials, they have the facts in front of them. They can combine your credentials with their personal knowledge of you and give a good, solid and authoritative recommendation.
- When you get a job, **share your joy with your references!** Let them know that you succeeded in your career quest! ***Thank them*** for their time and help.
- A ***reference*** is different than a letter of ***recommendation***: *references* are called upon by a potential employer to directly attest to verification of the information presented on your resume through verbal communication. A ***letter of recommendation*** is an indirect, written communication penned by a third party on your behalf.

**A final note about references-** every time you revise or update your resume (which should be as often as possible), reconsider your references as well.



## IT'S ALL IN THE WORDS

Begin your job descriptions with action verbs. You want an employer to think of you as a person who can get things accomplished. Try not to use the same word twice on your resume- a thesaurus or your word processing program can give you more possibilities. The important thing is to choose words of substance and power that zero in on your abilities and achievements.

**E**very resume should contain *keywords* that signal employers that you have the skills, talents, and experience to match their job requirements. Good resumes include words employers look for as an indicator of experience and competence.

Utilize words that describe your knowledge base, skill set, degrees, licensure, software experience, or affiliations, to name a few.

**BELOW IS A LIST OF EFFECTIVE WORDS**  
 (This list, though comprehensive, is by no means exhaustive and you may find additional  
 words that better describe you personally.)

## **EFFECTIVE RESUME TERMS**

accomplished	boosted	encouraged	instituted	piloted	rewrote
achieved	bought	enlarged	instructed	planned	routed
acquainted	briefed	entertained	integrated	predicted	saved
acted	broadened	established	interfaced	prepared	secured
activated	budgeted	estimated	invested	prescribed	served
adapted	built	evaluated	launched	preserved	settled
addressed	calculated	examined	lectured	printed	saved
adjusted	calibrated	exceeded	led	prioritized	shaped
administered	catalogued	executed	liaised	processed	shopped
adopted	centralized	expanded	maintained	produced	simplified
advanced	certified	expedited	managed	programmed	sketched
advertised	chaired	expressed	manipulated	promoted	sold
advised	changed	facilitated	mapped	proofread	solicited
aided	charted	familiarized	marketed	proposed	solved
aligned	chartered	fashioned	mediated	provided	sorted
allocated	comforted	fixed	mentored	publicized	sourced
amplified	compared	followed up	ministered	published	sparked
analyzed	compiled	forecast	modeled	purchased	spoke
answered	composed	formalized	moderated	realized	stabilized
anticipated	counseled	formulated	navigated	reassured	stimulated
applied	demonstrated	forwarded	negotiated	recommended	streamlined
appraised	designed	fostered	nourished	reconciled	strengthened
apprised	developed	founded	nursed	reconstructed	studied
appropriated	diagnosed	funded	nurtured	recorded	suggested
approved	directed	furthered	obliged	recruited	summarized
arbitrated	dispensed	gained	observed	rectified	supplemented
arranged	distributed	gathered	obtained	reduced	supplied
articulated	diverted	generated	operated	referred	supported
ascertained	documented	governed	optimized	reformed	surveyed
assembled	drafted	guided	ordered	rehabilitated	systematized
assessed	dramatized	helped	organized	repaired	tabulated
assisted	drew	hired	originated	reported	tended
assured	economized	identified	overhauled	represented	timed
attained	educated	increased	packaged	researched	trained
attended	effected	influenced	painted	reshaped	translated
audited	electrified	informed	participated	resolved	treated
augmented	eliminated	initiated	perfected	restored	tutored
authored	empowered	innovated	performed	retrieved	unified
authorized	enabled	inspired	persuaded	revamped	upgraded
awarded	enacted	installed	photographed	reviewed	wrote

## WHERE TO FIND MORE EFFECTIVE RESUME TERMS

### OFFLINE RESOURCES FOR KEYWORDS

1. Professional associations- read the newsletters (there may be one online as well), attend meetings and conferences regularly, and network outside those meetings with colleagues and mentors.
2. Informational interviews with other industry contacts.
3. Your company's formal job description of your position.
4. Job descriptions from your targeted companies.
5. Classified ads in newspapers, periodicals, and on Web sites.
6. Current "How To" resume books with sample resumes from your profession.

### ONLINE RESOURCES FOR KEYWORDS

1. Visit any of the career Web sites and search the position announcements for keywords.
2. The most visible collection of help-wanted print ads can be found at <http://www.careerpath.com>, which consolidates your classified postings from approximately 50 major newspapers.
3. Target your company's Web site and click its hyperlink. Note the keywords used in any vacancy announcements relevant to your search.
4. Bring up *search engines*- most of them have a "careers" section that you can explore.
5. Keywords can also be found in company literature, economic forecasts and industry trends.



## FORMATTING YOUR RESUME

You could have the most impressive qualifications, but if your resume is difficult to read and does not look professional, chances are you will not be the one invited to interview.

**D**o not underestimate the importance of the appearance of your resume. Impress employers before they read your resume with its visual appeal.

### DESIGN ELEMENTS

Visual appeal is created through a number of design elements, which include a consistent pattern, balance-symmetry and font.



**COMPUTER FORMATS:** There are a number of different resume designs you can use, as evidenced by the examples included in the back of this book.

Career Development highly recommends NOT utilizing the **template designs** included in many computer word processing programs, as they can be very limiting. They fail writers by leaving undiscovered other information they may include on their resumes that might truly set them apart.

## CONSISTENT PATTERN

### **BRING ORDER, LOGIC, AND PURPOSE TO YOUR RESUME.**

To achieve consistency, be sure to do the following:

- Use the same font and point size for each heading throughout your resume
- Use the same font size for all body copy throughout the resume. Occasional use of italics within the same font family is acceptable.
- Use the same spacing between headings and copy for each entry.
- There are a number of items you may decide to highlight in bold type including your name, category headings, Wagner College, and names of employers. Additional items may be bolded depending upon your own particular situation but do not over-do the bolding or underlining.

## FONTS

**The point size of fonts in your resume may range between 9 and 12; however, 11 and 12 point size are generally recommended.** Your name can be a few point sizes larger. Fonts are a way to get more space on your resume. If your resume is rich in text, you may benefit from using a condensed font to maximize space. However, **if you are preparing a scannable resume**, beware of using a font too tightly packed, where letters touch each other, because it will distort the scanning process.

A word of advice on the use of fonts for your resume- **steer clear of the fancy and flamboyant!**

**Use discretion in mixing fonts!** Limit your selection of fonts to two; **one is generally plenty.** If you choose to use a second font, use it as an accent for headings or your name rather than mix it haphazardly within the body of copy.

## BULLETS VERSUS PARAGRAPHS

*As with all other aspects of resume writing, utilize good judgement and use bullets with discretion and taste.*

- **Bullets signal your reader that something important and impressive is about to happen.** Your goal in using bullets is to **make the reader focus on your information** and accomplishments, **not the size of the bullet.** Aim for a bullet that is about the size of the lower case letters to the right of it.

**The use of bullets is generally reserved for special material on resumes** such as achievements or highlights of qualifications, and can be very effective if they are used for emphasis and aren't followed by long, technically dense sentences.

The paragraph format may take up less room than bullets and allows for the inclusion of interesting details. *Consider the work you wish to do.* For example, is the field you are interested in one that requires solid writing skills? **A resume provides an excellent opportunity to show a prospective employer your ability to write tight, coherent and effective paragraphs.**

The ultimate decision of whether to use bullets or paragraphs depends on your personality, how you wish to portray your experiences and also the extent of the information you need to convey.

## **SOME FINAL THOUGHTS ON RESUMES**

1. **Writing a resume can be a rewarding experience.** All too often we take for granted the achievements we've attained over our lifetime. A resume is one tool we can use to remind us of all we've accomplished.
2. **Utilize the resources available to you. The CCDEL** is committed to working with you to help you realize your career goals. Part of the Center's service is to guide you so that you are capable of writing effective resumes on your own throughout your professional career.
3. **The CCDEL staff does not encourage "resume shops"** for students. When someone else writes your resume, it sounds like someone else's resume. Writing a resume is a skill in and of itself. Should you still decide to use a "resume shop," be sure to check the final product carefully before leaving the store.
4. **Your resume should read easily.** Always make sure that the resume and cover letter are error free. Proofread and have others proofread and critique your resume. Spelling, typographical and grammatical errors will eliminate you from further consideration. Print out a sample copy to make sure your resume looks as you wish it to and to double-check it for any errors.
5. **Once you've written and edited your resume, type and print it out.** Have someone in the field (a supervisor at your internship site, for example) read it through. This will give you your first honest assessment to determine whether or not the resume hits its intended mark. This supervisor may also have other professional suggestions to include.
6. **Make sure you print the final copy of your resume on good quality bond paper.** This can be obtained at any office supply store or the bookstore, and it is advised that you select a white or off-white/ neutral paper.
7. **Revise a resume** to fit the specific position for which you are applying. It's extra work, but may very well pay off.

8. **Always send a customized cover letter with each resume.** It is your introduction in absentia. Submit a resume with a cover letter even if you have been asked to fill out an application that contains all the information. This demonstrates initiative, professionalism, organizational skills and courtesy.  
(Refer to the cover letter section of this book for assistance in writing your letter(s) and to view examples.)
9. **Always re-read your resume before every interview.** Chances are the interviewer did the very same thing.
10. **Always bring enough copies of your resume with you to the interview.** Have a copy ready for every person you expect to speak with and then some.
11. **Review and update your resume regularly and reassess** your references each time you do so.
12. **If your resume does not seem to be working for you, find out why.**

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SAMPLE RESUMES ON THE  
FOLLOWING PAGES

## MELISSA MARKS

One Campus Road, Box 2XX Staten Island, NY 10301  
(718) 390-XXXX  
STUDENT@WAGNER.EDU

### EDUCATION:

Wagner College Staten Island, NY Anticipated Graduation: May 2003  
Major: Elementary Education Concentration: Sociology  
Cumulative GPA: 3.6 Major GPA: 3.8

**Teacher Certifications:** LAST, May 2002 ATIS-W: pending December 2002  
**Other Certifications:** CPR, Child Abuse Seminar, Violence Seminar

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

P.S. 54, Staten Island, NY September-December 2002

**Student Teacher:** *Performed student teaching responsibilities in first and fourth grade classes.*

- Created thematic unit to teach about the fall season incorporating English, social studies, math, and science concepts. Implemented own lessons while adhering to NYS standards.
- Classroom tutoring; coordinate learning groups for special needs students.
- Create and teach multicultural lessons to promote diversity awareness amongst students.
- Administer tests, grade and evaluate student performance.
- Utilize hands-on strategy to engage students, appealing to both auditory and visual learners.

### PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE:

P.S. 52, Staten Island, NY Grade 3 January- May 2002  
Petrides Elementary School, Staten Island, NY Grade 1 September-December 2001

- Completed 40 hours at each placement observing different teaching and classroom management styles.
  - Acted as paraprofessional, providing instructional support to teacher.
  - Taught thematic unit about Thanksgiving, incorporating four educational disciplines.
- Wagner College Early Childhood Center Spring 2000, Fall 2000, and Spring 2001
- Completed 30 hours at each placement observing different nursery school activities.
  - Provided hands-on instructional assistance to other teachers.

### WORK EXPERIENCE:

Camp Sassacus, Cheshire, CT Summer 2002

**Camp Unit Leader:** responsible for fifth grade campers.

- Create weekly camp schedule including unique games and activities.
- Responsible for medical needs, phone calls to parents, and camper safety at waterfront.
- Supervise and manage counselors, making sure they were on task.
- Developed experience integrating the needs of autistic campers with the rest of the group.

**Camp Counselor;** rotated through third-sixth grade camper groups Summers 2000, 2001

- Supervised campers in daily activities.

Stork Club, Cheshire, CT

November 1996-June 1999

**Daycare Teacher:** developed experience in early childhood care and implemented activities.

### VOLUNTEERING:

CCD Church Facilitator, MS Walk, Relay For Life

**Hanson Melnick**  
**One Campus Road, Box # 8xx**  
**Staten Island, NY 10301**  
**(718) 390-xxxx**

**OBJECTIVE:** To obtain an internship that utilizes my organizational, promotional, and creative skills.

**EDUCATION:** **Wagner College**-Staten Island, NY  
Major: Arts Administration      Concentration: Music  
Anticipated Date of Graduation: May 2006 (freshman)

**WORK EXPERIENCE:**

Personal Drum Instructor                      Orchard Park, NY                      February 1995-Present

*Established own home-based business to provide private and group lessons.*

- Teach all styles of music, performance and rudimental techniques
- Enhance time management skills and schedule appointments
- Develop customer service and problem management skills

Wagner Career Development Office      Staten Island, NY                      September 2002-Present

Office Assistant: schedule appointments, maintain database, administrative responsibilities

**MUSIC PERFORMANCE:**

Wagner College                                      Staten Island, NY                      September 2002-Present

Drummer/Percussionist:

- Jazz Ensemble, Pep Band, Concert Band, Percussion Ensemble, Jazz Improvisation Ensemble

Independent                                      Orchard Park, NY                      July 1997-Present

Drummer/Promoter/Booking: *worked with several groups at a variety of venues in the Buffalo area*

- Adapted to different performance situations
- Sold own tickets, advertised performances, organized rehearsals and theme performances

**LEADERSHIP POSITIONS:**

St. Francis H.S. Pep Band                      Athol Springs, NY                      September 1999-March 2002

*Obtained St. Francis **Graduates Award in Creativity** for extensive contribution to Fine Arts Department*

- Founded pep band and performed as drummer
- Auditioned/Rehearsed musicians, and compiled song lists
- Developed pep rallies and half time shows

Hunters Hope                                      Orchard Park, NY                      November 2001- July 2002

Clerical Worker/Entertainment Coordinator

*Annual Krabbe Disease Research Symposium, attended by doctors and patients from across the nation.*

- Drummer for entertainment group, Dynamix; performed the music of "NSYNC" with vocalists/dancers and props
- Scheduled/Coordinated rehearsals, arranged travel and equipment moving

Iriquois Central School District              East Aurora, NY                      March-July 2002

Entertainer/Promoter

- Performed with Dynamix, as well as sold tickets and advertised fundraiser

**COMPUTER SKILLS:** MS Word, Excel, Internet navigation

Jacob Radomeier  
One Campus Road, Box # 9xx Staten Island, NY 10301  
(718) 390-xxxx  
Permanent phone: (888) xxx-xxxx  
Phenomz00@aol.com

#### OBJECTIVE

To procure a credited internship in artist development/management.

#### EDUCATION

Wagner College Staten Island, NY GPA: 2.9 Major/Current GPA:

*BS Arts Administration: Concentration Music, Anticipated Graduation: May 2003*

- Unique degree that combines business and music, including study of audience development, public relations, networking, marketing, finance, ear training, music history, and theory.
- Wagner College Alumni Scholarship, for musical performance.

#### RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

September 2002-present **Laughing Dog Studios** Staten Island, NY  
*Facility where songs for Celine Dion, Billy Joel, and Ghostface Killah were recorded/mastered.*

*Recording Studio Intern*

- Observe audio engineer while working with various styles of music.
- Pro Tools certification pending: December 2002.

May 2002-present **Prophet Records** Manchester, CT  
*Production/Artist Development*

- Mix and record demos for different artists, market artists, and create promotional packages.
- Exhibit proficiency in Cubase VST, Pro Tools, Sound Forge, Cakewalk ProAudio.

May 2001-February 2002 **Amphion Recording Studios** Rockville, CT  
*Setup/Production/Mixing/Artist Development*

- Worked with audio engineer in studio, setting up microphones and other equipment.
- Created and completed project of own undertaking, writing all music and performing on independently released album, *Khantent- The Fifth Percent*.
- Worked one-on-one with artists, recording, mixing and mastering entire album.

November 1999- Present **Self-Promoting Music Arranger** Staten Island, NY

- Arrange and compose music for hip-hop artists managed under East and Pine Productions, based in Amityville, NY.
- Sell original compositions and negotiate contracts for purchase or lease.
- Co-produced and promoted hip-hop show at Wagner College.
- Produced and co-arranged songs with artists from Philadelphia, New York and New England areas on compositions.

#### MUSICAL DISTINCTIONS

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- Produce folk album with Wagner College professor Kevin Kane.
- Created two songs, publishing pending, for X-Box and The Fast Lane.
- Performed at Webster Hall, Toad's Place, and other venues.
- Contributed two unique songs to the album *The Gain Green Project*, featuring D.J. Kay Slay.
- One of first D.J.s to host show on Wagner College Radio (WCBG) once launched. Also bring in artists to perform live on-air.
- Drum instructor for five years, nurturing and developing potential talent.
- Promote, arrange and produce various local concerts and shows.

## PIERRE SUNDQVIST

7 Work Lane

Jobsearch, NY xxxxx

local: (718) 390-xxxx

### Education:

Wagner College, Staten Island, NY Expected Graduation: May 2003GPA: 3.2

Major: Arts Administration Concentration: Theatre

*The Arts Administration program is a structured sequence of courses in Business Administration, Arts Administration, and one of the arts.*

### Experience:

Wagner College Music Department, Staten Island, NY March 2002

**Road Manager:** Handled finances, set up arrangements for each concert, and responsible for housing assignments.

Wagner College Theatre, Staten Island, NY January 2000-present

**Associate Producer:** responsible for day-to-day operations of show.

- ◆ Order costumes, in charge of props, event planning for cast, and run rehearsals.
- ◆ Write rough-draft of program copy and box office phone information script.
- ◆ Responsible for creating rough-draft of press-releases and forwarding to media individuals.

**Assistant to Producer:** ran auditions and took notes for all choreographers.

#### **Administrative Assistant to Managing Director**

- ◆ Negotiated with PepsiCo and local ice-cream distributor to obtain refrigerator and freezer gratis.
- ◆ Assessed pricing schedule and adjusted accordingly; expanded stand to include more items.
- ◆ Improvements resulted in major profits: stand previously operated at a loss of \$400, currently makes \$400 profit.
- ◆ Implemented running stock program.
- ◆ Ran publicity meetings, brainstormed ideas, coordinated publicity campaigns.
- ◆ Worked with *Staten Island Advance* and local community to gain media exposure for show.

**Assistant Stage Manager:** assisted in day-to-day operations and performances.

Loews Cineplex Entertainment, Stony Brook, NY May 1999-present

**Cross-Trained Employee:** participated in extensive training program, leading to responsibilities in box office, concessions, and customer service. Trained new employees.

Saint Frances Community Theatre, Coram, NY June 1995- August 1996

**Advertising Director:** Built up a returning clientele of companies to advertise in program.

### Leadership:

Kappa Sigma Alpha Co-Ed Fraternity **President** August 2002- present

- ◆ Coordinated sub-committees, organize business meetings, implement parliamentary procedure.
- ◆ Served as Public Relations chair: organize publicity, and assess public opinion of organization.

Student Activities **Vice-President** August 2000-May 2001

- ◆ Responsible for organizing large-scale events. Achieved Award for accomplishments.

Junior Class, Student Government **Treasurer** August 2001-May 2002

Resident Assistant August 2000-May 2002

- ◆ A leadership role involving organizing the floor, conflict control, crisis counseling, and planning and implementing floor programs.

## GEORGIA MONROE

One Campus Road, Box # xxxx  
(718) 390-xxxx

Staten Island, NY 10301  
student@wagner.edu

OBJECTIVE: To obtain a challenging internship in psychology that will increase my field experiences.

### EDUCATION:

Wagner College, Staten Island, NY      Anticipated Graduation: May 2004      Cumulative GPA: 3.8  
Major: Psychology      Minors: Gender Studies and Art  
Honors: Dean's List all semesters, Honors Program

### RELEVANT CURRICULUM:

**Principles of Psychological Testing:** learned **about** the basic issues and techniques in the construction, use, and evaluation of psychological scales. Created own unique study on romantic jealousy in relationships: created and administered survey, assessed findings, and wrote paper describing results.

**Adolescent Psychology:** discussed the interactions between the adolescent and the family and peers, and their effects on personality development.

**Experimental Psychology: Environment:** Discuss the theories of the effects of stress, environmental overload, and constraint on freedom and undermanning on a person's reaction to the environment.

### WORK EXPERIENCE:

Port Richmond Day Nursery      Staten Island, NY      Feb. 2002- Present

#### **Student Teacher**

- Assist teacher with caring for and educating children, ages 3-5.
- Class included children with learning disabilities and other special needs.

Wagner College Alumni Office      Staten Island, NY      Aug. 2000- Feb. 2002

#### **Office Assistant**

- Maintain alumni database information and perform other administrative responsibilities.

P.R.O.O.F. Investigations      Brooklyn, NY      Dec. 1999- Aug. 2000

#### **Receptionist**

- Organized files, scheduled appointments, and answered phones.

Brooklyn Public Library      Brooklyn, NY      Oct. 1998- Aug. 2000

#### **Library Assistant**

- Responsibilities included inputting book inventory and customer information into computer, logging books in and out of library and helping customers.

### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE:

Early Childhood Center      Staten Island, NY      Summer 2002

Conducted small group work with children and assisted in daily activities.

New York Cares Day      Staten Island, NY      October 2002

Painted banisters and a wall for children to paint a mural in an elementary school.

### MEMBERSHIPS:

Alpha Sigma Alpha National Sorority      Inducted Spring 2001

**Vice President of Public Relations and Recruitment**      November 2001-Present

- Recruit new members, promote the sorority's image on campus, and participate as an active member of the executive board.

LICENCES: Process Server Licence

COMPUTER SKILLS: MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, SPSS, and Internet research.

# SHARLISSE PAGE

311 xxxx Street

Staten Island, NY 103xx (718) xxx-xxxx student@wagner.edu

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## OBJECTIVE

To obtain a part-time position in the documentation division of Schering-Plough Pharmaceuticals.

## EDUCATION

Wagner College – Staten Island, NY Bachelor of Science in Biology, May 2003 GPA: 3.5

### HONORS AND MEMBERSHIP

Recipient of Dean's Scholarship

Dean's List - Fall 1998, Spring 1999, Fall 1999

Biology Club, Secretary

## RELEVANT COURSEWORK

**Inorganic Chemistry** - Studied the basic theories and laws of chemistry and properties of the more common elements.

**Organic Chemistry** – Learned about the nomenclature, structure, synthesis, reactions, and properties of the principal classes of organic compounds. Explored the mechanisms of organic reactions.

## INTERNSHIP

**Staten Island University Hospital** – Staten Island, NY Summer 2001

### Sleep Apnea Center

Learned how technicians prepared patients for diagnostic sleep apnea testing which measured EKG, EEG and snoring levels. Accompanied doctor on consultation with patients seeking treatment for sleep disturbances. Stayed overnight to observe the full scope of a technician's role.

## RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

**Institute for Basic Research** – Staten Island, NY 7/02 – 8/02

### Research Assistant

Assisted ophthalmologist with research on the eye. Used spectrophotometer to measure absorbency of lens and retinal tissues. Constructed graphs of absorbency versus time. In addition to laboratory procedures was responsible for locating articles within scientific journals from the facility's library.

*Volunteer, Genetics Department*

Summer 2000

Worked with two scientists who were performing genetic research on Robert's Syndrome. Maintained a cell culture under sterile conditions. Used microscope to locate chromosomes on slides. Assisted in preparation of agarose gels.

## ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

**Wagner College** – Staten Island, NY 10/02 - present

### Spiro Computer Lab

Responsible for assisting students with basic computer inquiries and checking printers.

**The Body Shop** – Staten Island, NY

Winter 2001

### Sales Associate

Greeted customers, advised them about merchandise and provided product samples.

## COMPUTER AND LANGUAGE SKILLS

Microsoft Word, Power Point, speak Arabic and Spanish

## **Valencia Mandolin**

357 Student Blvd.

Staten Island, NY 103xx

Phone: (718) xxx-xxxx

Email: student022@aol.com

### **OBJECTIVE**

To obtain an internship position at Commonwealth Associates.

### **EDUCATION**

**Wagner College** – Staten Island, NY

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration      Concentration Accounting, May 2003

**Cumulative GPA 3.519**

*Membership:* Treasurer, Alpha Omicron Pi Sorority

*Honors:* Dean's List and Scholarship recipient

### **EMPLOYMENT**

**Michael Minasz - Tax attorney**

2002-present

*Intern*

Completing clients' tax returns and any related procedures dealing with tax law and accounting.

**JoAnn Fleming, CPA**

2001-2002

*Intern*

Resolved bank statements and completed tax returns. Assisted in preparing tax activities for individuals and all sizes of businesses. This work included posting journal entries, T-accounts, balance sheets, income statements, and statements of owners equity strengthening analytical skills. Worked with two main programs: PDS client account system and CFS payroll system.

**Valduccis Pizza Café** – Staten Island, NY

1996-present

*Manager*

Work in family owned and operated pizzeria for several years. Primarily perform accounts receivable and accountants payable functions for payroll and payment of bills. Utilize strong interpersonal skills to interact with customers and suppliers. Improved communication skills through heavy phone contact with customers. Gained experience in small business issues and learned how to solve problems.

### **COMPUTER SKILLS**

Experienced with Excel, Microsoft Word/Works, PowerPoint and Word Perfect, Macros, Visual Basic, PDS Client Accounting System, CPS Payroll System

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Assistant Girl Scout Leader for Troop 5424 and assistant cheerleading coach for Saint Joseph Saint Thomas Debs Squad

# Kevin Klein

919 Student Terrace ~ Union, NJ xxxxx  
Home: 908-xxx-xxxx ~ Cell Phone: 908-xxx-xxxx  
*Email: [student888@aol.com](mailto:student888@aol.com)*

## **OBJECTIVE:**

To obtain a position that utilizes my interpersonal and computer skills along with my understanding of financial markets while providing me the opportunity for professional growth.

## **EDUCATION:**

**Wagner College, Staten Island, NY Double Major - Finance and Theatre**  
Candidate for degree: May 2003 Current GPA: 3.0

## **JOB EXPERIENCE:**

**MPL Systems, Inc.**

**PC MAC Technician**

September 1999 - Present

**Performed the following functions at several Wall Street firms such as Goldman Sachs and Merrill Lynch gaining knowledge of the financial industry and the role of technology in a firm's success.**

- Involved with the Technical Projects Team to perform a corporate rollout of new operating systems, new computer hardware, Microsoft and In-house software packages.
- Perform and assist with technical support for external branch offices.
- Perform site surveys as required and allocate associated infrastructure, cabling and/or MAC resources.
- Maintain integrity and accuracy of physical documentation and client databases.
- Responsible for implementation and maintenance of a transport infrastructure to support a high rise or campus environment.
- Responsible for providing/performing infrastructure diagnostics/problem resolution and updating documentation both hard copy and digital.
- Perform physical inventory of floor, closet and building plans and contractor drawings.
- Involved in physical breakdowns, moves and rebuilds of computer floors and communication areas.
- Perform physical implementation of cable infrastructure components and diagnostics.
- Provide customer service phone support and follow through in problem escalation.
- Ability to multi-task, be task and detailed oriented and meet deadlines.
- Ability to relay information and site survey information to Project Manager.

**Assemblyman Robert Straniere - Staten Island**

**Intern**

September-December 1999

- Coordinated with others involved in administration to reach all required goals.
- Escalated important issues to proper channels as they arose.

## **COMPUTER KNOWLEDGE:**

### **HARDWARE:**

- Able to install and configure hardware, software, driver and devices.  
Capable of Hardware and Software diagnostics.
- Install, configure, and troubleshoot HP and Lexmark printers.
- Construct and repair Pentium II/III Workstation and related PCs.

### **SOFTWARE:**

- Corel WordPerfect, Works, Office 97-2000, Internet Explorer, Netscape

### **OPERATING SYSTEMS:**

- Windows 3.1, 95, 98, NT 4.0, DOS

# Eugenio Sansone

94 Study Blvd  
Staten Island NY, 10301  
Home Phone (718) xxx-xxxx  
Cell Phone: (917) xxx-xxxx  
Email- student@aol.com

## **OBJECTIVE**

To work in a business environment, and obtain knowledge through hard work and apprenticeship. To be challenged, put to work, and have input in the decision making process.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

Hardworking, willing to learn from experienced employees and develop skills that will help in the advancement of future potential positions. A very personable person, who will be able to handle difficult situations and use his problem solving skills to overcome any possible hurdles that may occur. The ability to persuade, and to convey ideas clearly, eloquently and the ability to absorb information quickly.

## **WORK HISTORY**

*2002-Present Junior Input Analyst/Assistant to Director of Global Networking, Eurobrokers Inc  
New York, NY*

Input prices of different short date trades, such as securities, federal funds and Eurodollars into the operating system for the brokers. Enter communication information into a specially designed database, and speak with representatives from various phone companies to keep track of our different ISP/LAN and crossborder connections.

*Co-founder of Final Frontier Productions – Staten Island, NY*

Coordinate special events procure talent for each show, allocating the budget for the same. Currently growing and hope to expand our company with the production of our own music and through acquiring new talent.

*2001-2002 Manager/Head of Operations, St. George Theater - Staten Island, NY*

Primary goal was to get a landmark theater up and running for production. Allocated funds and booked new shows for the theater. Furnished and renovated the theater. During the night of shows, supervised the running of all activities. Obtained valuable people skills through the interaction with many agents, producers and talents that the theater hosted.

*2001 Junior Loan Representative, America Home Loans Mortgage Corp. – New York*

Obtained new clients through telemarketing and explained the different loans available to refinance their mortgage and consolidate any debt they had. Wrote and processed the loan, ran credit checks, found a specific program for the client, determined the loan amount, and put them in a more stable financial situation.

## **EDUCATION**

*1999-present Wagner College – Staten Island, NY Dean's List, Major in Finance, Minor in Accounting and Economics. Cumulative G.P.A- 3.614 Major/ Minor G.P.A- 3.75*

## **COMPUTER SKILLS**

- Microsoft Works, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Access, Microsoft PowerPoint
- Internet Literate

## Rhonda Patria

54 Resume Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10310

718-xxx-xxxx E-mail: [Student088@aol.com](mailto:Student088@aol.com)

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### Education

Wagner College Staten Island, NY B.S. in Biology with a minor in Chemistry May, 2002  
GPA 3.75

### Work Experience

CVS Pharmacy Staten Island, NY 2000- Present

#### **Pharmacy Technician**

- Communicating with physicians and other medical personnel to clarify and review prescriptions, drug interactions and availability of similar medications.
- Educate consumers on the medications that they are receiving and possible benefits or contraindications with OTCs.
- Experienced in third party billing; use knowledge of general trends in insurance coverage to guide physicians in selection of comparable medications.

Wagner College Theater Box Office Staten Island, NY 1998-2000

#### **Box Office Clerk and Summer Stock Manager**

- Sales, customer service, bookkeeping and other duties necessary for the operation of the Box Office.
- Self-supervised; accomplished goals independently within deadlines.

One Price Clothing Staten Island, NY 1996-2000

#### **Assistant Manager**

- Sales, bookkeeping, merchandising, and supervision of staff.
- Youngest person in district to be promoted to management role at age 17 and helped open three new stores for this chain.

## LEADERSHIP ROLES

Beta Beta Beta Biological Honor Society- Treasurer      Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Honor Society  
Biology Club- Treasurer      Pre-Med Coordinator  
International Students Association- Vice-President

## AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Bertelsman World of Expression Winner (3<sup>rd</sup> Place for Chemistry and Physics Departmental Award  
Original drama or prose)      Dean's List  
Robert Bloomquist Award in Biological Sciences      Presidential Scholar  
New York State Science and Technology Merit Scholar      Megerle Science Scholar

### Research and Publications

- Mechanisms of uptake and regulation of Melatonin by mouse hippocampal tissue with Dr. Andrej Wierasko at the *Institute of Basic Research* Neuroscience division at the College of Staten Island
- The Use of Tolluidine blue and semi-thin sections to differentiate between Neuronal and Glial cells in developing Zebra fish embryos with Dr. Zoltan Fulop at *Wagner College*- presented findings at the 2001 Eastern Colleges Science Conference
- Senior Research project on the Accumulation of arsenic by Zebra fish maintained in water of different arsenic concentrations with Drs. Zoltan Fulop and Mohammed Alauddin at *Wagner College* – Presented findings at the 2002 Eastern Colleges Science Conference

# COVER LETTERS

# COVER LETTERS

## PURPOSE OF A COVER LETTER

- Target the resume to a particular person
- Introduce yourself to the employer
- Offers an opportunity to direct attention to your specific skills and qualifications related to the job requirements and employer expectations
- Opportunity to state why the organization is of interest to you
- Demonstrate your written ability to communicate effectively
- To interest the employer and encourage a response

Your cover letter is as important as your resume and needs to be written with great thought and consideration. It should accompany your resume every time it is mailed to an employer. The cover letter is specifically designed for a particular company, job or employer, reflecting creativity, communication skills and a professional attitude. It should highlight how your background has given you transferable skills that match that job, even if your experience is not exactly related to the position. It needs to present your achievements and interests, demonstrate your writing skills, and bring out your personality.

Before writing your cover letter, take your time considering the following:

- ❖ Know your qualifications-- major objective of a prospective employer is to determine if you have the necessary skills and qualifications to be successful in that respective organization. Use the cover letter to identify the skills important to the position.
- ❖ Research the organization-- include information specific about the firm to indicate your interest. For example, you may want to state how the organization's philosophy is similar to your own.
- ❖ Be clear about the position you're interested in-- if you're not sure what positions are available, you may want to state your career direction.

## INCLUDE IN YOUR COVER LETTER:

- √ Name of contact person with his/her address and title
- √ Field of interest/specific position desired
- √ Experiences and education in the field
- √ Knowledge of organization, with evidence of your research
- √ Stress your accomplishments
- √ Request an interview
- √ Mention your enclosed/attached resume
- √ State your interest in a career with the organization

## **WRITING THE LETTER:**

Your cover letter should be one page in length and include the above points. Prepare your letter in an acceptable business style; consult the examples in this guidebook as a reference for what it should look like. Cover letters have three main parts:

- I. **Introductory Paragraph:** states how you found out about the position and which job/internship you are interested in. If you have a contact at the organization who referred you, now is a good time to mention that person.
- II. **Connecting Paragraphs:** should describe your qualifications and background and connect to the job requirements for the position you are looking to obtain. Provide specific examples of academic and/or work experiences. Point out your unique achievements and qualifications. You should also unveil your knowledge about the organization in these paragraphs and why you would like to work for them. In other words, you should be looking to answer the following two questions:
  - A. Why them?-- why do you want to work for them?
  - B. Why you?-- what can you do for them and why should they hire you? Really market yourself!
- III. **Including Paragraph:** should reflect your interest in scheduling an interview. Restate your phone number, and thank the reader for their time. Also restate the solid match between you and the company/position. State that you can be reached at the number mentioned to answer any inquiries regarding your qualifications, as well as to schedule an interview. Don't forget to sign your letter! Make a follow-up phone call about a week after you mail the resume; this type of initiative is appreciated by employers.

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*Included are some cover letter samples to give you an idea of how to phrase the main points of your cover letter. Your cover letter will be more conversational in style than your resume will be, and can be utilized to showcase more of your personality. Even still, remember that this you want both your resume and cover letter to look and sound professional, and be taken seriously.*

February 28, 20..

Bellflower Circle  
Fairport, NY 14450

Ms. Christine Trapani  
Associate Director  
Saatchi & Saatchi  
375 Hudson Street  
New York, New York 10014-3660

Dear Ms. Trapani:

I am a Wagner College psychology student with a minor in marketing, interested in pursuing a career in industrial/organizational psychology. Through my research, I located information about your organization and was impressed with what I learned about your commitment to the field of human resources and personnel development. I am attempting to identify a summer internship that will provide additional experience within this exciting field and utilize my knowledge of psychology and the diverse skills I have developed through employment. Attached is my resume for your review.

Throughout my college career, including my psychology and marketing courses as well as my life experience, I have developed excellent quantitative and analytical skills. Coursework in statistics, research methodology and experimental psychology has refined my research skills and ability to collect, organize, evaluate and present data. Beyond these important skills, however, my ability to work well with others, in a team setting and professional environment, is one of my greatest strengths. I am a self-starter and highly motivated, as demonstrated by my commitment to balancing employment averaging over 30 hours per week with full-time academic studies during the past three years at Wagner.

As Assistant Office Manager for a commercial real estate firm, I have taken a leadership role in supervising other staff members and managing the workflow to ensure our goals are accomplished. I bring a creative, innovative approach to every aspect of my work, and have consistently designed and implemented new office procedures to save the company both time and money. Currently my research for my industrial psychology course focuses on motivation and job performance, and I draw upon my personal experiences in the "real world" to inform my research and conclusions.

I would like very much to meet with you to discuss internship opportunities. You can reach me at the above address, or by telephone at (718) 442-8555. Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you can see that I have the skills and potential to do a great job for your firm.

Sincerely,

*Sarah Parks*

Sarah Parks

# THOMAS MAGUIRE

120 RESUME DRIVE STATEN ISLAND, NY 10XXX

(917) XXX-XXXX

STUDENT200@AOL.COM

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February 13, 2002

Ms. Christine Trapani, Associate Director  
The Program Exchange  
Saatchi & Saatchi  
375 Hudson Street  
New York, NY 10014-3660

Dear Ms. Trapani:

I am writing to express my interest in a paralegal/legal assistant position with your firm. My recent internship with the Staten Island District Attorney's Office confirmed my interest in pursuing a legal career, and led me to consider paralegal opportunities. I feel my skills, education and experience are a good match for the field. Enclosed you will find my resume providing additional details about my qualifications.

My most relevant experience was my role as an intern in the Narcotics Division for the Staten Island District Attorney's Office, where I developed the legal research and writing skills necessary for a paralegal position. At my own initiative and with my supervisor's approval, I expanded my responsibilities beyond those normally given an intern, gaining significant experience in researching case precedents using Westlaw and other legal resources. As a member of a legal research team including law students and other interns, I completed a preliminary analysis of data and findings, then forwarded my research to other members of the team for written summaries that were then presented to the attorneys. I also assisted the attorneys in developing questions used to examine witnesses and defendants at trial and completed a special project where I tabulated numbers of plea bargains and sentencing patterns for narcotics cases in 1998-1999.

Throughout my college career, as well as my work experience and internships, I have been a self-starter and have used self-motivation to achieve my goals. Throughout all four years of college, I have balanced my studies with full-time employment requiring a commitment of over 40 hours per week. My position managing a local superette has helped me acquire strong leadership and interpersonal skills, and I pride myself in doing an excellent job in accomplishing all of my endeavors.

I would like very much to meet with you to discuss employment opportunities and am available for an interview at your convenience. You can reach me at the above address, by telephone or e-mail. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Thomas Maguire

November 10, 20..

Cynthia Brem  
Assistant Vice President, Recruiter  
Credit Suisse First Boston  
11 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10010

Dear Ms. Brem,

I am a May, 2003 MBA candidate from Wagner College and I am interested in pursuing a sales and trading position with Credit Suisse First Boston's Fixed Income Division. I believe a sales and trading position would leverage my experience gained at Salomon Smith Barney, Merrill Lynch and The Bank of New York.

As you can ascertain from the enclosed resume, I have a strong history of academic achievement, leadership and excellence in athletics, as well as relevant work experience. I am confident that the skills I have gained from these achievements, together with the resolve of attaining a MBA, have developed me into a strong candidate to join the Credit Suisse First Boston team.

Currently, I am interning with Global Sales in Salomon Smith Barney's Fixed Income Division. Here my responsibilities include tracking new account openings, analysis of High Priority Document Reports and interacting with clients to facilitate the delivery of our research services.

During the summer following my first year of the MBA program I worked as a Summer Associate for The Bank of New York's Investment Manager Services. In this position I assumed the responsibility of reconciling financial futures and options positions as well as maintaining the accuracy of their proprietary database. In addition to these tasks, I took the initiative to develop and implement an Investment Manager Report, which quantified the monthly performance of their clients. Prior to my first year of graduate school I worked as a Summer Analyst for Merrill Lynch in their Private Client Technology Finance Group. There I worked in the capacity of a financial analyst where I was responsible for analyzing \$160 million worth of assets, consolidating P/L Reports and maintaining an accurate Headcount Report.

Throughout my experiences and education I have continued to develop strong academic and leadership skills. From captaining a Division I NCAA Tournament Baseball Team to being a distinguished member of Omicron Delta Kappa (National Leadership Honor Society) and Delta Mu Delta (National Honor Society in Business Administration), I have continued to set high standards of achievement for myself. Furthermore, I believe these accomplishments have developed me into an ideal candidate for a sales and trading position with Credit Suisse First Boston's Fixed Income Division. I have enclosed a resume for your consideration and I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Loretta DiPaolo

# RANDALL SCHUMACHER

Wagner College Box xx Staten Island, NY 10301  
(718) 390-xxxx; (718) 7xx-xxxx

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March 18, 2002

Joy V. Jasper  
Director of Personnel  
Beacon of Hope House  
Fax: 212 421 0021

Dear Ms. Jasper:

As a senior graduating with a degree in sociology from Wagner College, I am currently seeking positions that would be a good match for my educational background and social services experience, much of which has involved working with children and families in an educational and counseling role. Attached is my resume for consideration for your current opening as a Counselor.

During my studies at Wagner I worked for two years at the Staten Island Mental Health Society, where I was initially hired as an intern, then promoted to Respite Worker. My position involved counseling children ages 5-16, many diagnosed with ADD, helping them to develop daily living skills including enhancing their interpersonal skills, study skills, anger management, time management and their thought and decision-making process. In this role I designed programs for clients, providing developmentally appropriate activities to stimulate their interest in learning and lead to skill development. In addition to working with clients one-on-one, I also led them in recreational activities to help develop their thought process and patience. My experience teaching children also includes leading a classroom and designing the appropriate curriculum for students ages 8-9 at a summer camp. From these experiences I learned I have the skill, patience and motivation to help individuals learn, develop and succeed.

In addition to this experience, I completed an internship at The American Cancer Society, where I used my analytical and research skills to assess cancer rates in our community. At Wagner I was a very active member of our varsity football team, balancing academics with part-time employment and athletic commitments requiring over 40 hours per week.

I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my qualifications in more detail, and can be reached at the numbers above. Thank you for your time and consideration; I hope to speak with you soon.

Sincerely,

John Campbell

Wagner College  
1 Campus Road  
Staten Island, NY 10301

February 26, 2002

Ms. Greta Martin  
Editorial Assistant  
Dance Magazine  
333 Seventh Floor  
11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10001

Dear Ms. Martin:

I recently received information about your internship program through a member of the Wagner Career Development Center. I am a May 2003 candidate for a B.A. in English and minor in Dance. I have grown up reading *Dance Magazine*, as I hauled my dance bag from class to class, and now, I think interning for Dance Magazine would be the best possible way to express my love of dance with my love of English. I believe that dance is a love for many people, and this is what your magazine addresses, respects, and nourishes.

Having studied many types of dance for the last fifteen years, most recently at Wagner College, I have immersed myself in every aspect possible. This includes choreography credits in high school and assistant choreographic credits in college, as well as other areas of course work in choreography, dance history, social dance partnering, and Indian dance as it was affected by imperialism as a private study. I am truly committed to dance as an art form. I would love the opportunity to learn about dance through an administrative and journalism aspect.

Dance however is just a piece of the reason I would like to have this internship. I also have a lot of administrative responsibilities on campus, and through work experiences, which you will see in my attached resume. I am currently a resident assistant, in charge of 44 college sophomores and freshman. I have office experience in a medical billing office in which I was the youngest office worker, with the highest position and most responsibility. My work ethic and dedication is exemplary and I am very interested in learning all that I can about administration, journalism, and dance from your magazine.

I would like to thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Should you have any additional questions regarding my qualifications, I can be reached at 718-390-XXXX.

Sincerely,

Josephine Mercado

David Marrone, RN  
Professional Recruiter  
Newark Beth Israel Medical Center  
201 Lyons Avenue  
Newark, NJ 07012

Dear Mr. Marrone:

I am writing in response to your August 17<sup>th</sup> *New York Times* advertisement for the nursing position within **Beth Israel's Medical/Surgical Unit**. I am a May 2003 Wagner College nursing graduate and have just received confirmation of my New York and New Jersey State Licensure. I believe that the combination of my curriculum, preceptorship, clinical rotations, and fluency in Spanish make me a strong candidate.

From January through April of this year, I held a preceptorship in the medical/surgical unit of **Maimonides Hospital**. Prior to this I held rotations at **Staten Island University Hospital, St. Vincent's Medical Center** and **South Beach Psychiatric Center**. While maintaining a 3.6 grade point average I worked 25 hours as an LPN in the respiratory unit at **Silver Lake Nursing Home**.

In addition to clinicals and work experience, as a junior at Wagner I had the opportunity to assist a faculty member in her research for an article published in the Spring '96 *N&HC: Perspectives on Community Journal*. This research included interviewing experienced nurses and health care administrators in regards to the changes they've witnessed in nursing throughout the duration of their careers. It provided an excellent chance for me to develop my communication skills and a deeper understanding of the future of the health care industry.

I possess strong computer skills, time management skills, and am willing to work a variety of different shifts.

Thank you, in advance, for your time and consideration. I am excited at the prospect of working for **Beth Israel** and can be reached at 718-390-3100 to answer additional questions regarding my qualifications.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Ross

March 2, 20..

John Bass  
Director of Recruiting  
Associated Press  
50 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York, NY 10020

Dear Mr. Bass:

Victoria Crispo of the Wagner College Career Development Center has recently informed me of the **Associated Press Minority Internship Program**. As a prospective May 1998 graduate, I am interested in applying for the Summer 1997. I am particularly interested in the print editorial internships; however, I would like to be considered for any area you believe matches my qualifications.

I am a Biology major with a minor in English. At the present time I am still deciding what career path to follow. I am interested in an internship opportunity that will expose me to the media and strengthen my writing, editing, and communication skills. As a result of my curriculum in the biological sciences, I have developed an interest in research and laboratory skills. I am confident that my quantitative skills, coupled with my language skills, makes me a strong candidate.

I have been writing for the *Wagnerian*, the school newspaper, and *Kallista*, the school yearbook, for the last two years. I am also the Vice President of the Student Government Association and through this experience have learned how to motivate other students and act as a liaison between the student body and college administrators. I have also held a part-time job at a local attorney's office, where I've expanded my computer skills.

Enclosed is my resume. My application and other forms are being sent under separate cover. I can be reached at 718-390-3100 to schedule an interview; I look forward to learning more about the **Associated Press** and discussing my qualifications in greater detail.

Thank you, in advance, for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sue Smythe

March 2, 20...

Leslie Brown  
Director, Intern Program  
The Juilliard School  
60 Lincoln Center Plaza  
New York, NY 10023-6588

Dear Ms. Brown:

I was recently informed about your post-graduate internship program through the Wagner College Career Development Center. I am a May 2003 candidate for a B.A. in Theatre. Having specialized in technical theatre, I am interested in applying for your stage management division beginning August 2003.

My attached resume highlights my most significant accomplishments; among them include internships at the **Eugene O'Neill Center** and the **New Dramatists Society**. In both situations, I was responsible for script revision and distribution, supervising play readings and prop maintenance. As an active participant in the Wagner College Theatre Program, I was stage manager for the productions of *Falsettoland*, *Twelfth Night*, *Look Homeward, Angel*, *A Night of One Acts*, *You Can't Take It With You*, and *Camelot*.

*In addition to my theatre credits, I have held part-time jobs throughout college that have helped me develop administrative skills. As a student assistant in the College's Alumni Office, my daily responsibilities have included fielding phone calls from alumni and corporate donors, updating the database of alumni names and biographical information and providing tours to returning alumni for reunion and homecoming events. This job has enabled me to develop my telephone, public speaking, and computer skills.*

After speaking with Wagner alumni who are currently interning at Juilliard as well as reading through the School's literature, I am confident that my stage management skills will be both utilized and strengthened by the opportunity to join the program.

Enclosed is my resume. Thank you, in advance, for your time and consideration. Should you have additional questions regarding my qualification, I can be reached at 718-390-3100.

Sincerely,

Caesar Randazzo

## COVER LETTER FOLLOW-UP

*An important aspect of conducting a job search is what occurs after you submit a cover letter and resume. Too often after mailing materials, a job seeker will wait anxiously by the telephone hoping that it will ring. Since your resume is probably one of hundreds submitted for an advertised position, you may be waiting forever.*

The Career Development Center highly recommends that you always call a prospective employer a week after sending a cover letter and resume, in order to follow-up.

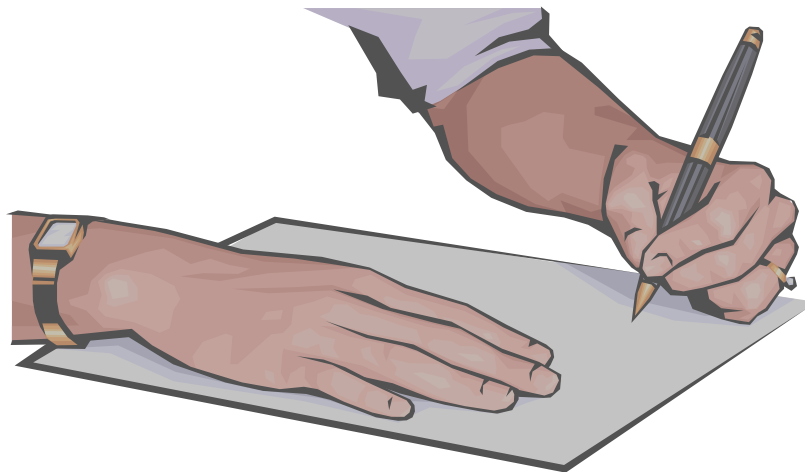
Your telephone script may be as follows:

“Mr. Weber, my name is Fred Weismann, and I am calling in reference to the Management Trainees position. I submitted my resume to you a week ago and I’m calling to confirm that it was received.” Wait for a response...if resume was received, suggest the following: “I’ll be in Manhattan several days this week; can I schedule an interview with you?”

### YOUR OBJECTIVE BY CALLING IS TO GET THE INTERVIEW!

Below are some suggestions to follow after sending your cover letter:

- 1. Call the employer.*
- 2. Send another letter.*
- 3. Contact a different individual within the same organization.*



# INTERVIEWING

# INTRODUCTION TO INTERVIEWING

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The first step towards your professional success begins with an interview, virtually a "sales presentation" of yourself. In it, you must convey to a potential employer that you have the knowledge, skills and potential to get the job done. Your success as an effective communicator will determine if you will be extended a job offer.

Everything you do, from the moment you arrive until the time you leave is being judged. Even the conversations you are having with other employees of the company (that you think are casual in nature) will factor into the decision as to whether or not you will be called back for future consideration. *Why?* Employers want to make sure you will be a good fit for their entire company culture.

***What you do and say within the first five minutes of meeting with an employer are absolutely critical!*** What you are wearing, how you enter the room, your manner, punctuality, and how you conduct yourself are all communicating messages that will impact on your interview outcome.

## SPOTLIGHT ON YOU!



### POSITIVE REINFORCERS



- Good handshake, smiling, attentiveness, inquisitiveness
  - Enthusiasm, frequent eye contact, punctuality
    - Pleasant and well modulated voice
    - Appropriate humor and laughter

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE INTERVIEWER

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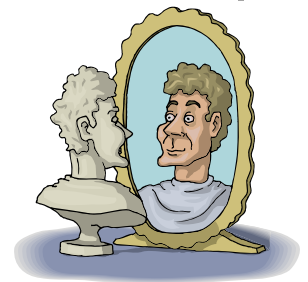
***Companies credit you with making informed choices.*** They expect that you've made the decision to approach them based on the assumption that you matched your qualifications to their career opportunity, and you've done research on their organization. Interviewers are continually amazed at the number of applicants who drift into job interviews without any apparent preparation and only the vaguest idea of what they are going to say.

- ***Little or no knowledge/research about the organization and applicants who seem to be merely shopping around are two major reasons candidates are rejected for positions.***
- ***You must prepare for each interview!*** Even if you are going on five or more a week, every company has different management styles, challenges, and expectations.

- Your resume has succeeded in getting you an interview. The recruiter will now use it as a springboard to ask more probing questions, all designed to find out if you are the best choice for the position.
  - Interviewers look for an unusual job or experience, interests- things that will allow them to ask questions that will assist them in finding out as much about you as they can.
- Interviewers all complete evaluation sheets to rate the skills you present in light of the skills required. This evaluation sheet answers the all-important question "*Why should I hire you?*" Therefore, it's smart to have some idea of what skills the profession requires and provide good examples of how you've utilized them in the past.

## MIRRORING

"One of the reasons a person gets a job is that the interviewer identifies with the person...thinks the person is 'our kind of people.' This is one of the most important body language messages you can send: *I'm like you and I belong here.*



This doesn't mean you should deny your individuality. Your unique qualities must shine through if you're going to win the job.

During the interview you need to bring out not only those aspects of yourself that are unique, but also those that mesh with the company's needs."

From *The Interview Rehearsal Book- 7 Steps to Job-Winning Interviews Using Acting Skills You Never Knew You Had* - Deb Gottesman and Buzz Maur; Berkley Books, NY

## THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Treat the interview experience with the respect it deserves. Your future employability, in fact, depends on it! Preparing and practicing for your interview will give you the confidence to deliver your presentation in an articulate, enthusiastic, and positive manner.

Commit to your job search and realize that finding a job is a job in itself. There really are no shortcuts. Utilize all your resources and assume a proactive role in your career search.

## INVESTIGATE YOUR CAREER FIELDS

"*Why are you interested in working for our organization?*"

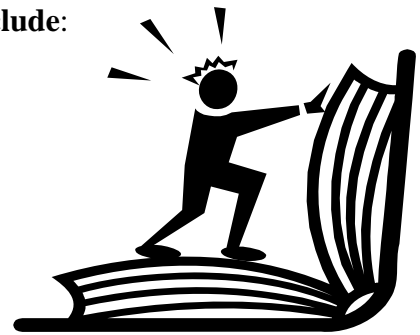
Remember, companies credit you with making informed choices about contacting them so find companies that interest *you*.

- Conduct research and talk with people in the field. Include your professors, career counselors, previous employers, classmates, alumni, friends, your parents' friends- anyone who can help you identify promising leads.

- Attend job fairs. They provide you with an opportunity to meet with many employers in one place and gather literature about the company and their job openings. Employers view these as opportunities to gain interest in and engage potential employees, not generally as interviewing opportunities. Job fairs also allow you to get a feel for the company culture and "personality type" of the organization through face-to-face contact with the company's employee representatives.
- Look at the "Best of..." lists in *Fortune*, *Working Woman*, *Barrons* and *Business Week* that rank companies on how well they treat their employees. Also review local, business, trade, city and national newspapers.
- Surf the Web to look at the company sites that appeal to you. Once you've gotten some idea of where you'd like to work, do your research to prepare for your initial interview.

**A preliminary list of research topics for the company should include:**

- Size and location(s) of company
- Determine if the company is a subsidiary or a division
- Number of employees
- Products and services
- History, philosophy and corporate objectives
- Chief competitors
- Growth and earnings
- Current trends
- Potential expansion



**Please Note:** Sources will vary widely in viewpoint and depth of information. For example, a company's own literature will be written from a more biased perspective than that of a reference book.

**INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS - The Best Kept Secret of the Job Search Process**

Informational interviews require some chutzpah, but they are wonderful opportunities to network with companies you are interested in working with but that may not be hiring right now.

An informational interview benefits **both** employer and prospective employee, because each party meets the other without the pressure of finding and filling a position. You may want to mention this mutual benefit when requesting such an interview from an organization. This type of interview can take place with a mentor that you have located from Wagner's Mentor Program.

In an informational interview, speak with the interviewer to learn more about the company firsthand and satisfy questions to help you assess your choices. You are also establishing a relationship with a prospective employer.

You should prepare for an informational interview the same as you would for a job interview- you need to always have a focus and purpose in meeting with employers, not just an idle curiosity. It is also considered a betrayal of trust if you do ask for a job during this meeting.

## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

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The following information has been provided by *The Interview Rehearsal Book - 7 Steps to Job-Winning Interviews Using Acting Skills You Never Knew You Had* - by Deb Gottesman and Buzz Mauro; Berkley Books, New York - available in the CCDEL Resource Room.

### WHAT ACTORS KNOW AND YOU SHOULD TOO

*What can actors teach you about getting a job? A lot more than you think.*



Actors know a lot about seeking and finding work. In some professions, landing a good job means you're set for several years, but actors know a show may last only a few weeks and then it'll be time to look for work again.

Actors have a unique perspective on what it takes to get hired. It's not uncommon for five hundred actors to show up at a Broadway casting call, all competing for the same role. You are given a two-minute audition slot and during that you must prove you can do the role better than anyone else.

**Actors are not the only people who need to learn how to audition, however. In the business world, the audition is officially known as the job interview...** and nothing is as important as self-presentation. Your skills and qualifications may have gotten you in the door, but it's your personality- the winning way you present your skills and qualifications- that will get you the job.

### WHAT DO INTERVIEWERS ASK?

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**T**o be truly prepared for your interview, it would be wise to familiarize yourself with common interview questions and suggested answers. CCDEL has a number of materials to help you in the Resource Room.

It is better to rehearse and have answers prepared than it is to think you can answer any question given in an impromptu manner. Prospective applicants who are unprepared often ramble on, stringing together wordy answers that lead nowhere.

**Be prepared to tackle the tough questions.** Not a good GPA? Explain it - especially if you can say that you worked a significant number of hours a week to pay for 50% of your college expenses. This is an achievement that shows dedication, hard work and ability to manage time.

## YOU'RE IN!



Inquisitiveness and enthusiasm  
Clear, concise and honest answers  
Confident delivery

## YOU'RE OUT!



Inability to express self clearly- poor voice, grammar or diction  
Making excuses- evasiveness- hedging on unfavorable factors in record  
Not listening or monopolizing the conversation  
Long, involved but unsubstantial answers

**N**ot all interview questions are asked to illicit answers. Some are asked to

- determine your ability to react to the unexpected,
- give the interviewer a reason to nominate or eliminate you from further consideration,
- determine how you manage anger or see if you can capitalize on an opportunity.

### UNUSUAL QUESTIONS

Be ready for at least one surprise. If an employer asks you an unusual question like "*Why is a manhole cover round?*" they are not truly expecting you to give them the correct answer. What they are trying to assess is **your ability to think on your feet and give a fairly reasoned response**. There really is no way of knowing what kind of question could be asked but understanding the interviewer's reason for asking does give you an advantage.

### OPEN-ENDED OR VAGUE QUESTIONS

*"Tell me about yourself" or "Tell me a story"*

This can be one of the very first questions asked... If you are prepared, you know this can be your golden opportunity to get the ball rolling by demonstrating some traits every interviewer is searching for: *intelligence, enthusiasm, confidence and dependability*.

#### *Craft your answer to include:*

Your strongest skills, greatest areas of knowledge, greatest personality strengths, the things you do best and your key accomplishments.

Construct a well-thought out, logically sequenced summary that is tightly focused, full of specifics and about two minutes in length. Provide a brief introduction, key strengths (to be demonstrated by key accomplishments), their importance to the prospective employer, and where and how you see yourself developing in the position for which you're applying.

## SELF-INCRIMINATING QUESTIONS

*"Name three of your biases" or "What are your greatest weaknesses?"*

**These are questions designed to eliminate you from consideration.** The best strategy probably is to give a rote response, such as "I tend to be a perfectionist." Look for a way to move beyond the question and on to another question that would give the interviewer more information to work with.

If the interviewer is persistent, and some might be, avoid revealing any major weaknesses. **If you name a weakness, try to show how you compensate for this weakness.** For instance- "I don't have any major weaknesses that interfere with how I do my work. The only area where I occasionally fall behind is in completing my daily activity reports. Sometimes, I find myself with two or three days' worth of reports to do at once. If this is the case, I stay late and get them done. I have a good memory, but I always keep careful notes in my calendar as I go along, so I always have the information I need to fill them out accurately."

**A** great interview is a 50/50 proposition. You and the employer should share somewhat equal speaking time. Employers won't be impressed if you sit passively and wait for questions to be asked of you.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

- What are your long and short range goals and objectives? When and why did you establish these goals and how are you preparing yourself to achieve them?
- What specific goals, other than those related to your occupation, have you established?
- Do you speak a foreign language?
- What do you really want to do in life?
- Why did you choose the career for which you are now preparing?
- What is more important to you, the money or the type of job?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- How do you determine or evaluate success?
- What two or three accomplishments have given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- Do you have plans for continued study? An advanced degree?
- What criteria are you using to evaluate the company for which you hope to work?

### **CHARACTER TRAITS**

- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
- How would you describe yourself?
- How do you think a friend or professor who knows you well would describe you?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?

### **EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND**

- How has your college experience prepared you for a career in \_\_\_\_\_?
- Describe your most rewarding college experience.
- Why did you select your college or university?
- What led you to choose your major field of study?
- What college subject did you like best/least? Why?
- If you could do so, how would you plan your academic study differently? Why?
- Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic achievement?
- What have you learned from your participation in extra-curricular activities?

### **INITIATIVE AND CREATIVE ABILITY**

- What do you do when you have trouble solving problems?
- Are you excited by a challenge?
- Can you work without direct supervision?
- Who has inspired you and why?
- If you encountered this situation (one as described by the employer) how would you handle it?
- How do you go about making important decisions?

### **MANAGEMENT ABILITY**

- How would you establish a rapport with staff?
- How do you communicate with your co-workers?
- How do you define teamwork?
- Tell me about a great experience that you had working on a team. Why was it great?
- What plan of action do you take when facing a problem?
- Describe the relationship that should exist between supervisor and those reporting to him/her?
- How do you work under pressure?
- How do you define leadership?

### **CAREER OBJECTIVES**

- What are your long-range career objectives?
- How do you plan to achieve your career goals?
- What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
- What do you expect to be earning five years from now?
- Why did you choose the career for which you are now preparing?
- What would you like to do and learn in your first job?

### **SUITABILITY FOR TARGET JOB**

- What is important to you in selecting your first job?
- Why did you choose the career for which you are now preparing?
- What qualifications do you have that make you think that you will be successful in \_\_\_\_\_?
- What do you think it takes to be successful in a company like ours?
- In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our company?

- In what kind of work environment are you most comfortable?
- How do you work under pressure?
- Why did you decide to seek a position with this company?
- What do you know about this company?
- What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
- Are you seeking employment in a company of a certain size? Why?
- Do you have a geographical preference? Why?
- Will you relocate? Does relocation bother you?
- Are you willing to travel?
- Are you willing to spend at least six months as a trainee?
- Why do you think you might like to live in the community in which our company is located?

### **EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING**

- In what part-time or summer jobs have you been the most interested and why?
- What have you learned from your mistakes?
- What skills did you develop in your last position?
- What did you enjoy most/least about your internship?
- Describe your most significant work-related accomplishment.
- What major problem have you encountered on-the-job and how did you deal with it?

### **OUTSIDE INTERESTS**

- What are your leisure time activities?
- What newspapers/magazines do you read? What section do you turn to first?

- Can you name the US Senators from your state?
- Have you ever had a leadership role or led a committee?
- What are you doing to improve yourself?
- What is the most interesting trip you've ever taken?

### **Q & A: HOW TO ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM YOUR INTERVIEWER**

Interviewer: "Tell me about a difficult situation you had to rectify."

You: Provide an overview and summarize the experience

Interviewer: "How did you handle it?"

You: Identify the problem and your assessment of the situation. Your judgement may be the most compelling part of the example. Be sure to show how your judgement made a difference.

Interviewer: "What was the outcome?"

You: Describe your specific contribution. Use clear "I" messages to differentiate your unique contribution to solving the problem.

Interviewer: "What did you learn from that experience?"

You: Have an ending to the story! And, if relevant to the example, give credit to other people who helped solve the problem.

### **OTHER EXAMPLES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND THE SKILLS THEY ASSESS**

Research: Describe a situation in which you had to use reference materials to write a research paper. What was the topic? What journals did you read?

Communication: Give me a specific example of a time when a co-worker or classmate criticized your work in front of others. How did you respond? How has that event shaped the way you communicate with others?

Initiative: Describe a situation in which you recognized a potential problem as an opportunity. What did you do?

Assertiveness: Give me a specific example of a time when you sold your supervisor or professor on an idea or concept. How did you proceed? What was the result?

- Commitment: Describe the system you use to keep track of multiple projects. How do you track your progress so that you can meet deadlines?
- Imagination and Creativity: Tell me about a time when you came up with an innovative solution to a challenge your company or class was facing. What was the challenge? What roles did the others play?
- Relationship Building: What, in your opinion, are the key ingredients in building and maintaining successful business relationships? Give me examples of how you've made these work for you.
- Teamwork: Describe a time when you got co-workers or classmates who dislike each other to work together. How did you accomplish this? What was the outcome?
- Time Management: Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What things did you fail to do? What were the repercussions? What did you learn?
- Decision Making: Describe a specific problem you solved for your employer or professor. How did you approach the problem? What role did others play? What was the outcome?

### **SALARY**

*In your first encounter with a prospective employer, your mission is solely to enthusiastically and knowledgeably convey your interest in the job. You need to focus on any opportunity that arises in the interview to introduce the skills and qualifications you want to sell and leave the employer with the impression that you are good for the organization and are someone who can get the work done. If you are called back for a second interview, this is a good time to bring up the issue of salary. Do NOT bring up salary issues during your first interview, unless the interviewer initiates conversation about it.*

***IT'S NO EASY TASK TO SOUND NATURAL, CONFIDENT AND SPONTANEOUS ON AN INTERVIEW. YOU NEED A LOT OF PRACTICE!***

## BE YOUR OWN CRITIC

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**K**now what you want to get across to the interviewer before you get there. If it helps you to write out answers to the interview questions, do it. Know exactly what you want to say and when to end your answer.

*Practice by taping your answers to the questions.*

Are you speaking too loudly, softly, quickly, slowly? Are your answers clear and concise? Do you insert unnecessary phrases into your speech? Pausing when answering questions is acceptable- filling up the airwaves with white noise is not.

## LET OTHERS HELP YOU

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Look for a thorough job description that interests you and give it to helpful friends and family. Let them ask you questions based on the description so that you can practice your answers. Ask them to evaluate you and accept their criticism graciously. They are trying to help. Schedule a practice interview with CCDEL.

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## WHAT TO WEAR... ..

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*Do not leave the selection of your interview clothes to chance.* It is also best not to try to pull something together at the last minute. This is a legitimate reason to go shopping and invest in one or two good, professional-looking outfits.

*Well in advance of your interview date, assemble your entire outfit.* Make sure that there are no holes, missing buttons or broken zippers. Be certain that it fits, is cleaned and well pressed.

*Present a neat, businesslike, professional appearance.* When in doubt, be conservative in dress until you learn more about the style of the organization. Remember that an employer is taking notice of your dress/appearance to assess whether you will reflect a positive image of the company to its clients.

### Men

- A conservative, high-quality suit - neutral/dark in color, subtle patterns or pin stripes. Sport jackets are not appropriate.
- Standard white, well-pressed long sleeve dress shirt
- Contrasting but conservative tie
- Good quality business shoes (polished) and dark socks
- Business watch, no other jewelry
- Well groomed and conservative hairstyle



## Women



- A two-piece business suit in neutral colors - gray, blue, black, beige
- Skirts should not be worn more than 2" above the knee
- Simple pumps and neutral hose
- Make-up should be sparingly applied
- Hair styled appropriately for the business environment. Avoid styles that cover your face or look fussy or unprofessional
- Fingernails manicured and business length
- Business watch and only a sparse amount of jewelry

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## GETTING THERE

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**B**efore the day of your interview, get clear instructions on how to find the interview site. *Take a trial trip* and *know the routes you will need*. Be sure to allow enough time for travel and traffic.

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## THE NIGHT BEFORE

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The best way to allay your fears on interview day is to have thoroughly prepared beforehand. Still, no amount of preparation will completely make your anxiety disappear. Following these few steps might boost your confidence and make the day easier.

1. Lay out your entire interview outfit the night before and thoroughly check it over again.
2. Pack up the materials you will want to bring with you to the interview. These items include:
  - A portfolio, not your backpack
  - Directions to the interview site
  - Name(s) and title(s) of all the people with whom you'll be meeting
  - Extra copies of your resume and an updated version if something has changed since your original submission. This will give you a great opportunity to draw attention to new information that might help advance your career objectives. Your resume will also contain all the information necessary to fill out an employment application.
  - A portfolio or samples of your work, if required
  - Money
  - A comb, brush and any other appropriate supplies to help you freshen up.
  - A pad and pen to take notes. Write things down! You'll look diligent and responsible.
  - Current copies of your reference sheet - the names, titles and contact information of three or four individuals who have previously agreed to serve as your spokespeople. These are typically former employers, faculty or coaches.
3. Get a good night's sleep

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## THE DAY OF THE INTERVIEW

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**Remember- employers often decide in the first five minutes of meeting you if they want to know more about you. So...**

1. Don't bring family members, friends, or girlfriends/boyfriends to the interview. Be sure to **turn off** your cell phone/beeper.
2. **Leave plenty of time for travel and arrive 10 to 15 minutes prior to your interview time.** If you find that you are excessively early, take a walk, buy a magazine or have a cup of coffee and relax somewhere out of view of the receptionist. Return closer to the scheduled interview time. In the event of lateness, make sure you call the interviewer prior to your arrival to inform him/her of your situation.
3. **Be polite** to everyone and treat every interaction as if it were an integral part of the interview.
4. **Know beforehand the name and title of the person with whom you will meet.** Sometimes you will have rounds of interviews and many companies will prepare an interview schedule for you that will furnish this information.
5. Have **additional copies** of your resume for everyone with whom you'll meet.
6. **Greet the interviewer by name, with a firm handshake and smile.** Show genuine interest. Throughout the interview, make frequent eye contact. Nearly every interviewer is conscious of this. Watch your posture and stay professional. Do **not** to give one-word answers, as it shows lack of enthusiasm.
7. **Take your cues from the interviewer from the very start.** Wait until you are offered a chair before you sit down. Two or three minutes may be spent "warming up" with small talk. Maintain a positive attitude, and don't complain about anything- not even the weather.

Some of the suggestions from the book **101 Great Answers to the Toughest Interview Questions - Ron Fry**

- **Listen and respond to the interviewer's questions carefully.** Many interviewers like to do the talking and judge you by your reactions.
- **Some interviewers hardly speak and this might be hard to deal with.** This is why it is important for you to know what you want to get across to the interviewer before you get there. You can lead the conversation by asking questions that call, in turn, for a question you want to answer. Look for ways to steer the conversation so that you make sure you get your good points across.
- **Don't chew gum or smoke, even if offered.**
- Answer all questions honestly, even the bad ones.
- **Be open but focused.** Employers take a dim view of candidates who say "I'll do anything if given a chance to learn" or worse, "I don't know what I want to do- I hope you can suggest something." However, the way in which you present your skills may lead the interviewer to

suggest another job, perhaps a better one, and for this reason it is not advisable to say you'll only consider a certain job.

- ***Stay strong and positive, even if you get the impression that the interview is not going well.*** An interviewer who is genuinely interested in you may seem to discourage you to test your tolerance. If you remain confident and determined, you have probably made a good impression.

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## CLOSING THE DEAL - YOU CHOOSE THE ENDING

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As the interview winds down, the employer may ask "***Do you have any questions?***" Having no questions to ask is an immediate turn-off to the interviewer **but** asking the wrong questions is just as bad. If this is your first interview with the company, **never** ask:

- What does this job pay?
- What are the employee benefits?
- How much vacation will I get?
- When will I be promoted?
- Can I transfer to...?
- Will I have to work overtime?

In your first encounter with a prospective employer, your mission is solely to enthusiastically, knowledgeable and positively convey your interest in the job.

You need to focus on any opportunity that arises in the interview to introduce the skills and qualifications you want to sell and leave the employer with the impression that you are good for the organization and are someone who can get the work done.

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## QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

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Throughout the interview process, it is important to be inquisitive. Your questions also help the recruiter understand your professional and personal needs. When the interviewer asks, "***Do you have any questions?***" **YES!** You have questions. Good questions are those that you have discovered through your company research. Avoid asking questions that are controversial, personal or negative.

There are several reasons to ask a question:

- To obtain new information that will help you decide whether you would like to work for this organization.
- To clarify something that the interviewer said which you did not understand.
- To demonstrate that you have done some substantive research about the company.

### **Good questions include:**

- Why is this position open?
- What special skills are required for this position?
- What are the major responsibilities of the department?
- What would you like done differently by the next person who fills this position?
- What projects or tasks would you like to see accomplished in the next five or six months?
- Where could a person who is successful in this position go within the organization and within what time frame?
- What is the procedure for establishing organizational and individual goals?
- What is the supervisor's management style?
- What do you expect the employee you hire to accomplish?
- What criteria are used for a performance review?
- What qualities do you look for in a new employee?
- *How long will it take to make a hiring decision?*
- *What/when can I expect to hear from you?* - This is especially important if you receive multiple offers. If you need to make a decision by a certain date, please let the interviewer know. If you decide to accept a position with another firm, proper business etiquette requires that you notify all other companies with which you've interviewed.

During the course of the interview, listen carefully to the information that is being shared with you. The interview often will generate more questions from a candidate's perspective. By asking questions based upon the interviewer's comments, you will demonstrate good listening skills.

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## MORE TIPS FOR ACTIVE LISTENING

**The Interview Rehearsal Book** - *Deb Gottsman and Buzz Mauro*; Berkley Books, NY

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**Don't be afraid of silence.** A "thinking" pause after the interviewer has spoken will let him/her know you were listening and, at the same time, give you a moment to collect your thoughts and prepare your response.

**Stay connected.** While the interviewer is talking, respond non-verbally to what he/she's saying. Nodding your head and smiling are probably the two easiest ways to let him/her know you've gotten the message.

**Ask for clarification.** If you are confused by a question, don't be afraid to ask the interviewer what he/she means. Also, if he/she asks you something very broad, for example

- *"Tell me about your life"*

Find out which part of the answer he/she is most interested in hearing:

- *"Would you like me to begin with my most recent professional experiences?"*

**Use what you've heard.** If the interviewer has raised particular concerns, respond to them directly, even if they are off the topic you've been discussing. Again, be flexible and take your cue from him/her.

***End the interview on a positive note and with gratitude to the employer for the time and opportunity to interview.*** Be sure to ask for a business card!

In your closing dialogue with the interviewer, reinforce and summarize again those strengths you want the interviewer to know about you:

- *"There's one or two additional things I'd like you to know about me..."*
- *"I am good at team work and do best in a fast-paced environment- two things your company is known for."*

If you are genuinely interested in the position, don't be afraid to ask for a follow up interview. Leave the first interview with an "I want the job!" attitude. You won't have to make a decision until later.

- *"You make this sound like such a great and exciting place to work. I would love the chance to work here!"*

***You should always follow up with an employer soon after an interview to find out your status.***

If you were interviewed on a Tuesday and the employer said they will call you within a week and you haven't heard by the following Tuesday, call them Wednesday. Add a day to whatever time period they have given you but be sure to call. Your continued interest and persistence may be rewarded.

If you have not received a response from the organization within the agreed upon time, phone and ask if they have made a hiring decision. Hopefully, all your good efforts will result with an employment offer.

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*As a potential candidate for a job, have realistic expectations. Don't be discouraged if a definite offer is not made after the first interview or if salary is not discussed. There are reasons for not extending offers immediately. Recruiters need time to assess all the information they've received about you, review their evaluation sheets and communicate with others in the office or interview more candidates before making any offer.*

### Reality Check:

One of the most common complaints of job seekers is that employers do not notify them of their decision not to hire them. This is another good reason why, for peace of mind, you contact the employer, in due time, after the first interview.

*Also, whether or not you accept or decline an offer*, proper business etiquette requires that you inform the company, in writing, of your choice.

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## THANK YOU AND FOLLOW-UP

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In the real world, after the interview, your work is just beginning. If you wait for an employer to get back in touch with you, you might wait a *l...o...n...g...* time. Regrettably, not many employers will call or otherwise notify you that you have not been selected.

You must assume the initiative to get results and this means you must follow up with every interviewer.

### THE THANK YOU LETTER

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**As soon as possible after the interview, send a thank you letter to the employer.** There are many good reasons to write a thank you.

1. Recognize the importance of the meeting by extending common courtesy to the interviewer. Sincerely express appreciation for the time and insight this person has shared with you.
2. It can reinforce your interest in the position. It is not always obvious to the interviewer whether you would take the job if offered to you. Remind the interviewer that you are a good fit for the company.

3. It provides you with a chance to reinforce your listening skills. Personalize the thank you by highlighting a key interviewing point that was unique and meaningful. This is impressive and will refresh the interviewer's memory of you.
4. It is an opportunity to answer and expand upon any useful questions raised in the interview. If you did not get a chance to mention certain points, the letter can address these things. The thank you note is your last chance to make a positive first impression.
5. A thank you can give you a competitive edge over other candidates, especially in a tight job market. *Statistically, less than 10% of interviewees will write a thank you; if you write one you may stand out from the rest.*

## **SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER**

Jane Delacourt  
Senior Employment Representative  
American Management Association  
135 West 50<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10020-1201

Dear Ms. Delacourt:

Thank you for the recent opportunity to interview for the management trainee position. I enjoyed meeting you and Cliff Stoudt and learning more about the organization.

AMA appears to be growing in a direction that parallels my interests and career goals. The interview with you and your staff confirmed my initial positive impressions. I want to reiterate my strong interest in working for you. My prior experience as President of my class, in addition to my management curriculum, would enable me to progress steadily through your training program and become a productive member of your research team.

Again, thank you for your consideration. If you need any additional information, do not hesitate to contact me at 718-390-3100.

Sincerely,

James Lorenzi

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## MAKING YOUR DECISION

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### Write down your impressions of the interview:

- What did you do well?
- How could you improve on your performance next time?
- What aspects of the job seemed most appealing?
- What are the drawbacks?
- What are your impressions of the working environment?

### When you are evaluating the job, consider the following:

#### *Skills*

- Will you be using skills that you enjoy?
- Will this position help you further develop your job skills?
- Will this position be a good challenge for you?

#### *Environment*

- Under what kind of conditions do you work best?
- What is the culture of the organization? Does it match your personality?
- What are your future coworkers like?
- Can you work well with your supervisor?

#### *Location*

- Is this a geographic location you would enjoy? Where will you live?
- How will you commute?

#### *Salary*

- Will your salary be adequate to cover your living expenses?
- Pay attention to peripherals. Typically, a good benefits package will amount to as much as 40% of your salary. Important benefits to consider include health insurance, 401 (K) or retirement plan, profit sharing, tuition reimbursement, vacation and sick leave, annual evaluations, raises and bonuses.



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## WHAT YOU CAN DO WHEN YOU CAN'T FIND EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT OR THE ECONOMY WON'T LET YOU.

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It's not always possible to find the perfect job immediately. If this is your situation, you may want to consider some alternatives.

### *Seek out a post-graduate internship or fellowship*

Some organizations are willing to hire a summer (or longer) intern. Offering to intern for a brief period may get you the needed experience and opportunity to network with professionals in your career field.

### ***Modify your expectations***

It is more important that you work than wait for the right job to come along. Even if you must accept employment that is not particularly desirable for a time, you will be gathering new skills and contacts. You will be more motivated to look for a better position while working than holding out for your dream job and not working until then. You must keep active or run the risk of becoming depressed.

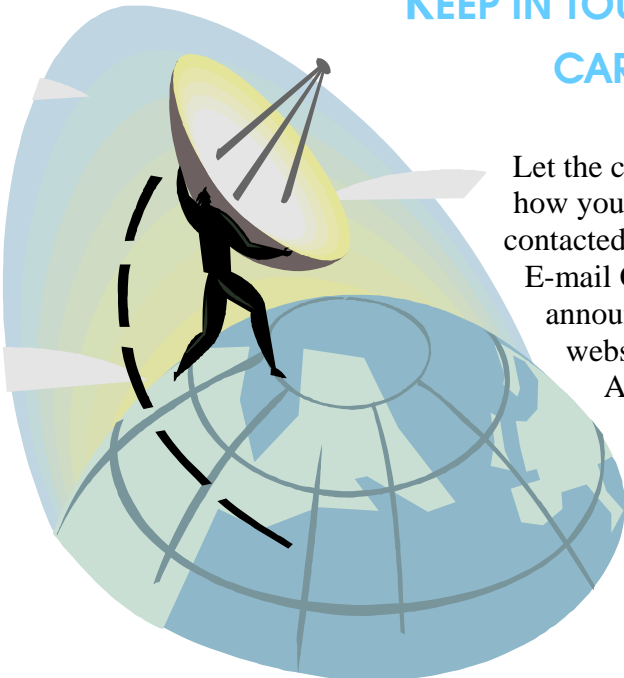
### ***Be a volunteer for something you love while working for your supper***

Volunteering in this capacity will help you improve or develop skills that you know you will need for the future. It, too, is an excellent way to network and can possibly lead to full-time employment. For example, if public relations is your goal, serving as an outreach coordinator for a local charity is a good way to get there.

### ***Consider graduate school/professional school/special training***

Build upon your educational base. Specialized education or training may make you more marketable by providing additional skills.

## **KEEP IN TOUCH WITH CLASSMATES AND YOUR CAREER CENTER!**



Let the career center know where you are after graduation and how you are doing. Register with the center so that you can be contacted throughout the year with current job openings.

E-mail CCDEL at [ccdel@wagner.edu](mailto:ccdel@wagner.edu) to receive announcements of current job openings and visit our website at [http://wagner.edu/career\\_development](http://wagner.edu/career_development).

Another way to touch base with our department is through AIM- our login name is **wagnerccdel**.

**Phone (718) 390-3181**

**Fax (718) 420-4012**