



SOUTH DAKOTA MINES

CAREER SERVICES GUIDE



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YOUR FUTURE STARTS HERE

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We are proud to be a part of our community, and we are always looking for great workers! Female and minority candidates are encouraged to apply! Start building your career today and Work for BX.

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Welcome

Dear Students,

Professional development is a lifelong process of experience and education that begins the very first time you are asked the question "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Whether you've decided on your career or don't know where to start, Career Services is a one-stop shop for your career questions and provides a range of services and programs focused on career growth, employment assistance and professional development to discover career opportunities based upon your skills, interests and passions.

During your time at South Dakota Mines, we are here to help by connecting you with the resources and skills you need to drive your professional development. We encourage you to take advantage of internships/co-ops and research experiences to round out your education experience.

We are committed to giving every student a competitive career edge and look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,



Matthew Hanley

Director of Career Services

Career Services

Main Level Devereaux Library
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Rapid City, SD 57701
Phone: 605.394.2667
careerservices@sdsmt.edu
sdsmt.edu/career-services

Staff

Matt Hanley, Director
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Office Hours: 7:30 am to 4:30 pm M-F

Summer: 7:30 am to 4:00 pm

Mission Statement

South Dakota Mines Career Services will successfully engage students in their career and professional development and will foster partnerships to connect students with employers, campus, and the community.



**SOUTH
DAKOTA
MINES**

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BUILDING

CORPS OF ENGINEERS

OMAHA DISTRICT

NWO.USACE.ARMY.MIL

BETTER

**STUDENT, RECENT GRAD,
AND SENIOR LEVEL
POSITIONS AVAILABLE!**

The Omaha District is a team of over 1,200 dedicated professionals who deliver quality engineering solutions to secure our Nation, energize our economy, reduce disaster risk, protect our environment, and manage our water resources. We are non-profit and we serve our citizens and the Nation.

The District has more than eighty years of distinguished service marked by engineering excellence, outstanding technical support, and superb multi-disciplinary services. We deliver quality, timely products and services at a reasonable cost.

For more than three quarters of a century, the Omaha District has been serving the upper Midwest and the nation. The district boasts a boundary that includes 1,100 miles of the Continental Divide on the west and nearly 400 miles of the Canadian border on the north. It covers an area of about 700,000 square miles in the northern Great Plains. Currently, the district is executing a total program in excess of \$1.75 billion—a historical peak—across its multiple mission areas in military construction, environmental remediation and rapid response programs, as well as civil works projects, including flood protection, navigation, hydropower, recreation, regulatory, recreation, flood damage control, coastal emergencies, and ecosystem restoration.

APPLY NOW AT USAJOBS.GOV

START YOUR CAREER TODAY AS A

- Civil Engineer
- Environmental Engineer
- Mechanical Engineer
- Electrical Engineer
- Park Ranger
- Biologist
- Natural Resource Specialist
- Fish Biologist
- Wildlife Biology
- Engineering Technician
- Architect
- Construction Manager
- Survey Technician
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WHY CHOOSE USACE?

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- ✓ Recruitment Incentives
- ✓ Dental & Vision Insurance
- ✓ Telework Opportunities
- ✓ Retirement Contributions & Matching
- ✓ Career Development Opportunities
- ✓ Annual Career Progression
- ✓ 12 Weeks Paid Maternity & Paternity Leave
- ✓ 11 Paid Federal Holidays
- ✓ Subsidized Childcare Support Programs



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

402-995-2417

1616 Capitol Ave.
Omaha, NE 68102

omaha.usace-pa@usace.army.mil



Choosing Your Career Path

PURSUE YOUR PASSION

Choosing a major is an important decision that can be overwhelming and intimidating at times. If you are not sure of your career path, you are not alone. Many students change their major in college.

Understand yourself

- Conduct a self-analysis of your interests, values, and skills.
- Take the Focus 2 Career Assessment, contact Career Services for details.
- Answer these questions: "Who am I? What are my goals?"

Explore Options

- Access career resources available online.
- Talk to alumni working in various career fields.
- Attend career fairs and visit with employers.
- Research employers and alumni on LinkedIn.



Get Results

- Prepare your résumé and cover letter.
- Select and ask three people to be your references.
- Register in Handshake at: sdsmt.joinhandshake.com to search for job postings.
- Attend campus career fairs.
- Take advantage of on-campus interview opportunities.
- Talk to faculty, alumni, and friends about internship and co-op goals.
- Research employers of interest to you and contact them directly.

ALUMNI PLACEMENT

Mines Alumni have free access to Handshake job postings.

- Access jobs posted and submit your résumé electronically.
- Research career fair employers.
- Learn about upcoming workshops and other events.
- Update your résumé and cover letters electronically.

 Handshake



sdsmt.joinhandshake.com

CAREER SERVICES

- Résumés and cover letters
- Behavior-based interviews
- Evaluating job offers and benefits
- Job search strategies
- Career and Major Exploration
- Professional networking

CAREER FAIRS

South Dakota Mines fall and spring career fairs attract a wide range of employers from Fortune 500 and regional employers to government agencies.

ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS

Career Services coordinates the scheduling of campus interviews through “Handshake”. More than 150 employers visit the campus each year to recruit Mines students.

JOB POSTINGS

Handshake enables students to search and apply for jobs posted by employers at: sdsmt.joinhandshake.com

INTERNSHIPS & CO-OPS

Career Services connects students with a wide range of employers offering “real-world” experiences to apply classroom knowledge. Students often obtain academic credit for internships or co-ops.

CAREER ADVISING

Students still deciding their major can access an interest inventory for career guidance.



www.sdsmt.edu/career-services

Career Planning Timeline

FRESHMAN INQUIRE ABOUT CAREER OPTIONS

- Create your Handshake account and familiarize yourself with the platform.
- Assess your interests, abilities, and values.
- Attend career fairs.
- Get to know your faculty and your peer advisor.
- Develop good study habits.
- Join at least one student organization and participate in different activities.
- Volunteer on campus and in the community.
- Discuss interests with faculty, students, and staff.
- If still deciding on a major, take the Focus 2 Career Assessment.
- Create a résumé and cover letter.

SOPHOMORE EXPLORE CAREER CHOICES

- Attend South Dakota Mines career fairs and apply for internships and/or co-ops.
- Develop a curriculum plan with your advisor including a co-op/internship.
- Register in Handshake system and familiarize yourself with its services.
- Update your résumé and cover letter.
- Attend Career Services workshops.
- Get involved in student activities.
- Attend employer information meetings held on campus.
- Identify three skills sought by employers and plan to acquire those skills.

JUNIOR CONFIRM CAREER DECISIONS

- Update your résumé in Handshake system and add internships and/or co-ops.
- Join the student professional chapter for your major.
- Apply for additional internships/co-ops.
- Schedule a mock interview with Career Services.
- Participate in professional development activities.
- Volunteer with campus or community organizations.
- Develop your leadership skills and experiences.

SENIOR PREPARE TO ENTER YOUR CAREER FIELD

- Develop a plan to search for jobs or apply to graduate schools.
- Update your résumé in Handshake.
- Visit with many prospective employers at South Dakota Mines career fairs.
- Compile a list of skills, accomplishments, projects, and work experiences.
- Apply for on-campus interviews.
- Select your references, ask their permission, and provide them with a résumé.
- Network with alumni, faculty, and other students with similar interests.
- Check Handshake job postings on a regular basis.
- If applying to graduate school, know the procedures and deadlines.
- Create a LinkedIn profile.



Internships & Co-ops

Internships and co-ops provide excellent opportunities for students to integrate their classroom learning with "real-world" work experiences in industry.

INTERN/CO-OP BENEFITS

- Gain valuable work experience.
- Confirm or redefine your career choice.
- Increase your chances for more job offers and higher starting salary offers.
- Develop career readiness competencies.
- Earn money to help pay for your college degree.
- Obtain academic credit.

Co-op experiences are often six to eight months (semester + summer) but can vary in length depending on the employer. Internships are usually for the summer or part-time during the school year. However, the terms are often used interchangeably by employers.

Students may earn one to three hours of academic credit with approval from their academic department. Students registered for co-op courses keep their full-time student status during the semester they are on co-op. Check sdsmt.edu/career-services for additional information.



Sanford

Underground Research Facility

South Dakota Science and Technology Authority

KICK START YOUR CAREER AT SURF!

Experience Internships

Want to gain real-world experience in your area of study?

SURF offers internships in Communications, Education, Engineering, Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S), Operations, Science and Underground Access (UAG). Through this competitive program, students work alongside professionals in their chosen field. Students discover first-hand how professionals in their field contribute to the operation of the deepest underground science laboratory in the United States. Internships are open to South Dakota residents and students attending South Dakota universities.

Explore as a Davis-Bahecall Scholar

Where could a career in STEM take you?

Through the Davis-Bahecall Scholars Program, students experience a once-in-a-lifetime learning opportunity that takes them around the world of modern scientific research. Scholars get an inside look at leading national and international laboratories and universities. The program is for students entering their first or second year of college.

Establish your career

Ready to build your career in STEM?

Operating a research facility nearly a mile underground requires personnel with a wide range of skills, ranging from technicians and administrative personnel to engineers and research scientists. Located in the heart of the Northern Black Hills, SURF works with national and international partners to advance world-class science and inspire learning across generations. SURF is an equal opportunity employer that offers competitive compensation and benefits.

www.sanfordlab.org/careers





GET RESULTS

Know how to "work" a career fair and what to expect to maximize your efforts.

BEFORE: Prepare

- Find out who will be attending via Handshake.
- Research employers.
- Update and proof résumé.
- Practice a thirty-second self introduction.
- Think of one to two questions to ask.

DURING: Communicate

- Dress appropriately and bring several resume copies.
- Make a good first impression. Smile, make eye contact, use a firm handshake, and introduce yourself in a positive, friendly manner.
- Remember body language! Don't chew gum, fidget, twist hair.
- Respect the recruiter's time.
- Ask questions and take notes.
- Request business cards.

AFTER: Follow up

- Send a follow-up email.
- Reinforce enthusiasm with why you're a "good fit".
- Submit applications/resumes online if requested.

Career Fairs

South Dakota Mines career fairs are held each fall and spring. They feature more than 150 employers and over 1200 students. These events bring a wide range of employers from many states to discuss job opportunities and recruit students for full-time, internship, and co-op positions. Employers come to campus to meet prospective new hires and often conduct next day interviews.

These career fairs offer all South Dakota Mines students—from freshman to graduate level—excellent opportunities to gain first-hand knowledge from employers about full-time job openings, as well as intern/co-op opportunities. The networking experiences and information available at the career fairs provide valuable assistance to students in furthering their professional goals and in securing jobs that lead to rewarding careers. These events are free to all South Dakota Mines students and alumni.

Job Search

Job searches are basically a marketing campaign where you sell yourself. After you identify potential employers, you need to convince them that you are a match for their companies. Remember—you are competing against candidates from other universities as well as your fellow South Dakota Mines students.

In addition to South Dakota Mines Career Services, your job hunt can involve many other resources:

- Company websites.
- Internet job posting boards.
- Handshake enables students to search and apply for jobs posted by employers at: sdsmt.joinhandshake.com
- Networking—visit with faculty, alumni, relatives, friends, or neighbors to ask for advice on job leads.
- Federal and state jobs are posted on usajobs.gov and jobbankinfo.org.
- Off-campus job fairs—Black Hills Regional Job Fair in Rapid City.
- Third-Party Recruiters like Adecco, Aerotek and Randstad but avoid firms that charge fees.
- Direct employer contact—identify employers of interest and send them your résumé/cover letter targeted to their specific needs.
- Timing can be critical—if a company has no openings at the time of your initial contact, follow up later to let them know of your continued interest.
- Join relevant professional organizations to gain access to specialized career fairs and job listings.
- Apply for jobs that aren't your first choice to get your “foot in the door” with that company.

Networking

Many jobs are never advertised and instead are filled through referrals from company employees. Networking can be one of the most effective ways to tap into the hidden job market. Networking does not mean “schmoozing”—it means using your personal and professional contacts to familiarize yourself with unpublished or not-yet-announced job openings.

CONNECT WITH ALUMNI

South Dakota Mines alumni can be a valuable resource during your job search. They work across the United States and throughout the world for a wide variety of employers.

Many alumni are willing to help their fellow Hardrockers apply for positions with their employer. You can also connect by joining the South Dakota Mines networking and alumni groups on LinkedIn. Don't wait until you're ready to graduate to contact alumni about full-time positions—also use them as a resource in securing internships and co-ops.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social networking sites such as Handshake and LinkedIn, can be useful networking tools and ways to connect with contacts that would not otherwise be accessible. However, it is important to review your online brand to ensure that what employers see is professional and appropriate.

NETWORKING 101

- Make a list of the people you know (faculty, family, neighbors, friends, alumni, etc.) who might be able to refer you to someone within a company.
- Contact your network and talk about the position you are seeking.
- Follow up with the referrals you received. When introducing yourself, provide the name of the person who referred you.
- Explain the position you are seeking and why you are interested in their company.
- Be courteous, professional, and sensitive to the person's busy schedule.
- Send a follow-up note to thank everyone you contact.

TOP TIPS: LINKEDIN

- Make sure your profile picture is professional and has an uncluttered background or shows you in a working environment.
- Achieve a 100% profile completion status by adding all work, educational, and volunteer experiences you have completed.
- Utilize the about section using key words in your field to increase the number of times your profile appears in an employer's search results.
- Connect with as many supervisors, faculty members, co-workers, and classmates as possible to gain access to future networking opportunities with recruiters and employers.
- Join groups related to your field and become an active member of online discussions. Many groups also have private job boards you can only access as a member.

Résumés

THE TICKET TO AN INTERVIEW

RESUME

Street Name. 1
70000 City Name
Tel: 0000 5555555
E-Mail: emailname@server.com

Your résumé is a marketing tool that highlights your qualifications for a position. It is a summary of your education, work experience, and skills that represents YOU to a prospective employer. The goal of a résumé is to get selected for an interview.

Your résumé should quickly identify to an employer.

- Who you are.
- What your career aspirations are.
- What you have accomplished.
- Why you are qualified for the position.

Deciding which academic and work experiences to include and what to omit can sometimes be difficult. Begin by making a comprehensive list of your jobs, relevant projects, awards, technical skills, extracurricular activities, volunteer activities, and other interests. Show your strengths by selecting the items that will most interest and employer. The final version should make a good impression within thirty seconds.

Commercial engines development
in programming
in software design and architecture, animation, network p
optimization
development experience. Worked on projects in various indus
t of a small team of engineers

PERIENCE

resent Company Name Ltd. (United States)
Lead Position Name
Working on new innovative project

- Sed sed ipsum et tortor orna
- Suspendisse nec urna st
- Donec et ipsum Int
- Integer sed tur
- Maecenas dignissim
- Aliqua

01/2005 - 01/2007 Company C
Position

Résumé vs. Curriculum Vitae

RÉSUMÉ

An overview of your knowledge, skills, and experience is generally one page long and used when applying for internship, co-op, and/or entry-level positions. Both layout and content are important— bad layout can result in being overlooked.

CURRICULUM VITAE

A comprehensive listing of your complete educational and professional accomplishments. Does not have a standard length and can be several pages. Content is king! Layouts are flexible as they are generally used for academic, research, and international positions.



Abstracted	Bolstered	Controlled	Educated	Maximized	Presided
Accommodated	Briefed	Converted	Effectuated	Mediated	Prioritized
Accomplished	Brought	Cooperated	Eliminated	Mentored	Problem-solved
Achieved	Budgeted	Coordinated	Empathized	Merchandised	Processed
Acted	Built	Correlated	Indicated	Minimized	Produced
Adapted	Calculated	Corresponded	Influenced	Moderated	Programmed
Addressed	Cared	Counseled	Informed	Modified	Projected
Administered	Catalogued	Created	Initiated	Monitored	Promoted
Advertised	Chaired	Critiqued	Innovated	Motivated	Proposed
Advised	Charged	Cultivated	Inspected	Narrated	Protected
Advocated	Checked	Debated	Installed	Negotiated	Proved
Affected	Chose	Decided	Instituted	Notified	Provided
Aided	Clarified	Defined	Instructed	Observed	Publicized
Allocated	Classified	Delegated	Integrated	Obtained	Published
Analyzed	Coached	Delivered	Interpreted	Offered	Purchased
Answered	Collaborated	Demonstrated	Interviewed	Opened	Queried
Anticipated	Collected	Designed	Introduced	Operated	Questioned
Applied	Comforted	Detailed	Invented	Ordered	Rationalized
Appraised	Communicated	Detected	Investigated	Organized	Reasoned
Approached	Compared	Determined	Judged	Originated	Received
Approved	Compiled	Developed	Launched	Overcame	Recommended
Arranged	Completed	Devised	Learned	Oversaw	Recorded
Ascertained	Composed	Diagnosed	Lectured	Packed	Recruited
Assembled	Computed	Directed	Led	Participated	Rectified
Assessed	Conceptualized	Discovered	Listened	Perceived	Redesigned
Assigned	Conciliated	Dispatched	Located	Perfected	Reduced
Assisted	Condensed	Dispensed	Logged	Performed	Referred
Attained	Conducted	Displayed	Maintained	Persuaded	Regulated
Audited	Conferred	Dissected	Managed	Planned	Reinforced
Augmented	Constructed	Distributed	Manipulated	Practiced	Related
Authored	Consulted	Documented	Mapped	Predicted	Renewed
Authorized	Contracted	Drafted	Marketed	Prepared	Reorganized
Balanced	Contributed	Edited	Mastered	Presented	Repaired

ACTION VERBS

The adjacent sample list may be helpful in describing your past work experience and skills or simply provide a way to think about some of the things you have done. This list may be especially helpful in utilizing keywords within your résumé.

Reported	Stimulated	Transcribed
Represented	Strengthened	Tutored
Researched	Stressed	Unified
Responded	Structured	Undated
Resolved	Studied	Upgraded
Revamped	Substantiated	Used
Reviewed	Succeeded	Utilized
Revised	Summarized	Validated
Scanned	Supervised	Verified
Scheduled	Supported	Visualized
Selected	Surveyed	Wrote
Served	Systematized	
Set	Tabulated	
Shaped	Taught	
Sold	Team-built	
Solicited	Theorized	
Solved	Tested	
Specialized	Trained	
Standardized	Transformed	



Sample Résumé

Federal Resume Tips

- Federal résumés can be longer than the traditional 1-2 pages. Typically, you should shoot for 1-3 pages depending on experience. However, if you are applying through USA Jobs, it is perfectly fine to go up to 5 pages.
- Information to include on Federal Résumé:
 - Education
 - Employer names, addresses and telephone numbers
 - Dates of employment
 - Former supervisor's names and telephone numbers
 - Your job title/series
 - List of your responsibilities
 - Salary/GS level and step
 - Career accomplishments
 - Training
 - Awards received
- Each Federal Agency can have different guidelines, so be sure to read each job announcement carefully.

Grubby Hardrocker

(605) 123-4567
Grubby.Hardrocker@gmail.com
linkedin.com/in/GrubbyHardrocker1

Profile

Chemical Engineering student capable of working independently with minimum supervision and committed to providing high quality service to every project. Focused on attaining experience in health and safety to mitigate environmental impacts. Professional, capable, and motivated individual who consistently performs in challenging environments.

Education

B.S. Chemical Engineering, Expected: May 2025
South Dakota School of Mines and Technology (SDSM&T), GPA 3.55

Experience

Engineering Co-op: May – Dec 2023
Cargill, Spiritwood, ND

- Designed piping and water purification system for sub-compartment humidification
- Tested sub-compartment humidification system
- Assisted in daily process problem solving and with process optimization projects

Research Assistant: May – Aug 2022

SDSM&T Chemical Engineering Department, Rapid City, SD

- Assisted professor with research on optimizing the process for using wood biomass to produce ethanol
- Conducted analysis of samples and recorded data utilizing MS Excel

Office Assistant: Sep 2021 – May 2021

SDSM&T Chemical Engineering Department, Rapid City, SD

- Answered phones and filed office documents
- Prepared packets for campus visits by prospective students and their parents

Relevant Projects

Sub-Compartment Humidification, Cargill, Spiritwood, ND

- Designed a \$300,000 piping and water purification system for sub-compartment humidification at a Cargill malt production facility
- Presented recommendations to plant management and corporate officials which were approved

Alternative Fuel Vehicle, SDSM&T, Rapid City, SD

- Member of team focused on running and maintaining a hydrogen-powered fuel cell for a one-passenger car to compete at a national student competition
- Lead non-chemical engineering team members in optimizing fuel cell

Relevant Skills

- | | | |
|-----------|--------------|----------------|
| ➢ Visotec | ➢ EES | ➢ Visual Basic |
| ➢ AutoCAD | ➢ Aspen Plus | ➢ MatLab |

Professional Development

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| ➢ American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) | Sept. 2021 – present |
| ➢ Society of Women Engineers, Treasurer | Sept. 2022 – present |
| ➢ Alpha Omega Epsilon (AOE) Professional Engineering Sorority | Sept. 2021 – present |
| ➢ Student Association, Junior Senator | July 2023– July 2024 |

GET RESULTS

- Keep it short—one page if possible.
- Use action words.
- Use at least ten point font.
- Leave some white space for margins.
- Limit bolding, underlining, or italicizing text. Excessive bolding defeats the purpose of highlighting the most significant items!
- Provide enough information to quickly get the reader's attention but not so much detail that your highlights get buried in too much text.
- Proof it again and again.
- Remember your audience—a very busy employer.
- Connect your skills to the employers' needs.
- Avoid using templates.

CODE REVIEWS

COLLABORATIVE SKILL BUILDING

LUNCH AND LEARNS



CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY

PAIRED PROGRAMMING

CULTIVATING AN ENGINEERING MINDSET

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JACOB B. WEST | '22 SDSMT GRAD

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Cover Letters

- One-page marketing tool that highlights your skills and qualifications, your desire to work for that employer, and reasons why you are qualified.
- Connects your background to the specific job for which you are applying
- Demonstrates your ability to communicate effectively.
- Submit with your résumé whenever possible.

1 [123 First Avenue, Apt. 314
Rapid City, SD 57701
Date

2 [ABC Company
123 Main Street
Anytown, SD 577xx

3 [Dear Hiring Manager,

4 [Currently, I'm a senior chemical engineering major at South Dakota Mines and will be graduating this May. I'm interested in the Process Engineer role you have available with your company and found this opportunity on our university's Handshake page. After speaking with your company recruiters at our career fair and further researching the company, I would be very excited to have the opportunity to work with ABC Company.

5 [While completing my degree, I have had the opportunity to acquire relevant work experience through my engineering co-op with Cargill and my research experience in the Karen M. Swindler Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering at South Dakota Mines. During my co-op and research experience, I successfully completed several projects, which strengthened my passion for working as a Process Engineer. My education at South Dakota Mines, combined with my co-op and research experience, has helped me to develop my personal and professional skills.

My active involvement in student organizations such as the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, Society of Women Engineers, and in Student Senate has provided me with many opportunities to develop strong teamwork, communication, and leadership skills. In addition, I have acquired the time management and organizational skills necessary to get the job done. I would welcome the opportunity to apply my education and experience to your company's continued growth and success.

6 [Thank you for your consideration of my submitted resume. I look forward to discussing my qualifications with you in further detail and hearing from you soon. Please feel free to contact me at 605-123-4567 (cell) or at Grubby.Hardrocker@gmail.com.

7 [Sincerely,
Grubby Hardrocker

Your Signature (digital or wet)

1. Applicant's address.
2. Name, title, company name, and address.
3. Use "Dear Hiring Manager" if you cannot get a specific name.
4. Intro Paragraph: introduce yourself, identify the job, mention how you heard about the job, and state any connections.
5. Body Paragraph(s): describe interest in job, highlight your most significant skills. Give examples of relevant work or, educational activities. Emphasize what you offer the employer and why you are a good match.
6. Conclusion Paragraph: refer them to enclosed résumé and request an interview. Close the sale with a positive note.
7. Your signature in blue or black ink.

GET RESULTS

- Write concise, punchy sentences.
- Use active instead of passive tense
- Vary sentence structure and length.
- Use a conversational yet professional tone.
- Avoid starting every sentence with "I."
- Keep letter to one page. *three to four paragraphs*
- Avoid using the same terms or phrases repeatedly.
- Edit carefully. *Read it aloud to check for cadence and flow of sentences, spelling, and grammar.*
- Write a draft, set it aside, and then take a fresh look at it.
- Proof it yourself, ask a friend and Career Services staff review it.
- Remember your audience—a busy employer!
- Utilize the job description to individualize cover letters to match your experience with what the employer is seeking.

References

Selecting references is a critically important part of your job search. Choose individuals who know you well and can attest to your skills and work ethic. A combination of work supervisors and faculty provides a good balance. Other possibilities include university staff members, community leaders, and directors of civic organizations for which you have volunteered. Listing relatives or friends is not recommended because personal references do not carry much weight with employers.

Before you list individuals as references, be sure to ask their permission. Provide your references with a copy of your résumé so they can refer to it if called by an employer.

If it has been a while since you first asked individuals to be references, touch base with them and update them on any recent activities and accomplishments.

ELECTRONIC RÉSUMÉS

Many employers now require that résumés be submitted electronically. Some employers have automated the initial screening process of applicants through résumé scanning software. Résumés are stored in a database and searched for keywords relevant to that particular position. The more keywords contained in your résumé that match the job description, the greater chance you will be identified as a qualified candidate and selected for an interview.

GETTING NOTICED IN THE ONLINE CROWD

Some Fortune 500 companies receive several hundred thousand applications each year. Getting your résumé to stand out from the crowd can be a challenge. To increase your chances:

- List the most important skills/accomplishments early on your résumé
- Include a qualifications summary that quantifies your experience.
- Be sure there are no grammatical or spelling errors.
- Update your résumé once a month on job posting sites.
- Provide “extras” (portfolio samples, letters of recommendation, etc.).

WHEN EMAILING YOUR RÉSUMÉ, KEEP IN MIND:

- Condense your cover letter into a brief opening paragraph. Briefly introduce yourself and explain the purpose of your email. Busy people do not like to read lengthy emails. Be succinct and give them a reason to open your attached résumé.
- Use the subject line to indicate the position for which you are applying
- Using industry jargon and abbreviations (AutoCAD, IEEE, etc.) is OK but spell out abbreviations that may be unfamiliar to employers (e.g., CAMP).
- Avoid using bullets, columns, graphics, or other special formatting.
- Keep your email message professional.
- Spell-check and grammar check your email before you send it.
- Do a test email before submitting it to an employer.
- Be sure to send your résumé as a pdf file.

Applying Online

GET RESULTS

- Use a lot of keywords relevant to the job description.
- Review the job posting carefully.
- Follow the application instructions EXACTLY.



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Interviews

KEY TO LANDING THE JOB



The importance of the interview in the job search cannot be stressed enough. Usually the first interview is a screening process. The employer evaluates whether you are a viable candidate based in how well you portray yourself, and effectively communicate your skills, experiences and career goals. Most campus interviews are scheduled in thirty- to forty- five-minute intervals, so you only have a brief period to make a good impression and sell yourself. Being well-prepared is absolutely critical!

Interview Prep

Spend time preparing for your interview. You usually get only thirty minutes to connect with an employer. Preparing for an interview can be some of the most valuable time of your college life—especially if it helps you land the job you desire and launch your career.

KNOW YOURSELF

- What are my goals?
- What are my strengths?
- What skills do I have?
- What is my weakness, and how do I compensate for it?
- What do I have to offer?

KNOW THE EMPLOYER

- Research the employer and learn as much as you can about operations, locations, work environment, and recent news.
- Attend information sessions often held before campus interviews.

PRACTICE YOUR RESPONSES

- Your ability to communicate is key to the success of your interview.
- Express yourself clearly and concisely.
- Think about how you would respond to possible interview questions (see p. 20).
- Practice responses out loud.
- Schedule a mock interview to receive feedback.
- Limit responses to 60-90 seconds.

Behavior Based

Many employers have switched to behavior based questions in their interviews. Behavior based interviews are based on the concept that past behavior is the best predictor of future performance.

To prepare for Behavior Based Interviews:

- How are your previous internships or other work experiences relevant to this job?
- What are the specific attributes the employer is seeking in candidates for this job?
- What specific examples can you provide to demonstrate characteristics for this job?

Behavior Based Interviews 101

The S.T.A.R. method is a technique of answering behavioral interview questions in a structured way by describing a specific Situation, Task, Action, and Result of the situation you are recalling. The S.T.A.R. method helps you explain in a simple yet powerful way how you handled specific work situations and challenges.

SITUATION: Describe the problem or situation you encountered.

TASK: What is the specific task you needed to complete.

ACTION: Briefly explain the action you took.

RESULTS: Describe the outcome and what you learned.

- Provide an example of a time when you took the initiative to get something done.
- Describe a time when you solved a challenging problem.
- Give an example of a situation where you experienced a difficult coworker.
- Tell me about a situation that required several things to be done at the same time.
- Describe a goal that you set for yourself and explain how you reached that goal.
- Describe a goal that you set for yourself that you didn't reach.
- Tell me about a time when you had an innovative or creative idea.
- Have you ever disagreed with a decision of your supervisor?
- Give me an example of a time when you showed your ability to keep track of details.
- Tell me about a time when the end result wasn't what you expected.
- Describe a time when you went "above and beyond" what was expected of you.
- Give me an example of a project that was very successful.
- Describe the best supervisor and the worst supervisor you have had and explain why.
- What is the most challenging or stressful situation you have encountered?
- Tell me about an experience where you had to adapt to different situations.

Sample Questions



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The Actual Interview

GET RESULTS

- Research the company.
- Know yourself.
- Practice your responses.
- Schedule a mock interview.
- Arrive early.
- Make a good first impression.
- Project self-confidence and poise.
- Dress and conduct yourself in a professional manner.
- Show enthusiasm and energy.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Communicate effectively.
- Accentuate the positive.
- Back up your statements of abilities with examples.
- Be aware of body language.
- Never talk negatively about former employers or colleagues.
- Have two to three questions ready to ask interviewer.
- Do not focus on salary or benefits.
- Leave the “know-it-all” attitude at home.

First impressions make a big difference—you never get a second chance to make a first impression! Most interviews are comprised of three parts:

INFORMATION EXCHANGE OPENING/INTRODUCTION

During this segment, generally twenty to twenty-five minutes, you will be asked a series of questions that will help determine if you are a “good fit” for the company. The interviewer will be:

- Assessing your knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes.
- Evaluating how you handle yourself, your degree of confidence, your ability to relate to others, and your motivation.
- Looking for candidates with a strong work ethic, a willingness to take initiative, assume responsibility, and produce results.
- Back up your statements with specific examples of a situation or project where you demonstrated that ability.

Near the end of this segment, the interviewer will ask if you have any questions. Be prepared with two to three good questions that show you have researched the company and strongly desire to work for them. This is not the time to ask about salary and benefits, unless initiated by the interviewer.

This part is the icebreaker and usually lasts three to five minutes. The interviewer will greet you, ask you to be seated, and engage you in small talk to help you relax.

Get your interview off to a good start when you greet the interviewer:

- Smile.
- Direct Eye Contact.
- "Hello, I'm _____. It's a pleasure to meet you."
- Firm, gentle handshake.

CLOSE

Similar to the “close” of a sales presentation, this part of the interview lasts only a few minutes. The recruiter will signal the end by wrapping up the discussion, standing up, and escorting you to the door. Before leaving:

- Ask for a business card.
- Make sure you understand the next steps and timeline in the process.
- Thank the interviewer and reiterate your interest in working for the company.
- Exit with a smile, good eye contact, and a firm handshake.

TOP TIPS: Interviews

- Bring a padfolio to take notes and write down questions.
- Bring a SMALL bottle of water.
- Make a test run if possible to check traffic and parking.
- Leave your phone in the car or turn it off.
- Be polite and professional to the administrative assistant.
- Ask all interviewers for a business card before leaving.

Telephone and video interviews are sometimes used by employers not visiting campus. The interview questions are often the same as those used in face-to-face interviews.

It is especially important that your voice shows energy and enthusiasm during the phone interview because you cannot make eye contact or read body language. One advantage of a phone interview is that you can refer to your notes so you do not forget key points you want to make.

As the phone interview is nearing completion, be sure to thank the recruiter for the opportunity to interview and reiterate your interest in the position. After the interview, send a follow-up note to thank the interviewer and reinforce why you are the best candidate for the position.

Phone & Video Interviews

TOP TIPS: Video Interviews

Video interviews are becoming increasingly common. Tips for success:

- Download the video software and practice using it.
- Set up a mock interview with Career Services.
- Prepare as if entering the employer's office for the interview.
- Dress professionally; avoid white shirts or patterns.
- Ensure there is proper lighting and that your background is professional.
- Look into the web cam vs. the person's image on the screen.
- Eliminate potential noise (barking dog, cell phone, open windows, etc.).
- Only have the video software open; other software could be distracting.

GET RESULTS

- Take the call in a quiet place.
- Be sure your voicemail message sounds professional.
- Practice answering questions by recording them and then playing them back to see how you sound.
- Jot down key points you want to emphasize and questions to ask.
- Have your résumé and the job description with you.
- Ask for clarification or for the question to be repeated, if necessary.
- Speak clearly with energy in your voice to show enthusiasm for the position.
- Smile during the phone interview to improve your delivery.
- Keep good posture during the interview. It can improve your delivery and keep you in a professional frame of mind.
- Expect brief pauses after you have finished answering a question because interviewers are likely taking notes.
- Jot down the name(s) of the interviewer(s).

Second Interview/ Plant Trips

GET RESULTS

- Pay attention to the company culture.
- Understand your supervisor's expectations of you and strive to meet them.
- Do not prove that you "know it all". Be a good listener and contribute appropriate ideas.
- Have realistic expectations and demonstrate your value to the company.
- Be confident in your abilities and remember you do not know everything.
- Build relationships with your boss and coworkers.
- Be conscious of impressions you are making on others.
- Continue to acquire new skills and abilities.
- To be a professional, you must act and look the part!

Being invited for a second interview or an on-site visit, sometimes called a plant trip, means that the employer is very interested in hiring you. However, a job offer is not yet a sure thing. This stage of the evaluation process allows both you and the employer a chance for a more in-depth assessment of each other.

During a typical visit, you will meet with a variety of people who have some input into the hiring decision. These meetings will give them a sense of your experience and expertise. Likewise, seeing the facilities firsthand and meeting some of the management team can help you decide whether the employer is right for you.

BEFORE THE TRIP

- Learn as much as you can about the company and if any South Dakota Mines alumni are employees.
- Prepare questions to ask throughout.
- Have a clear understanding of the travel arrangements and how expenses will be handled. (Some employers cover the expenses.)
- Bring several copies of your résumé and a copy of your transcript in a portfolio of relevant projects.
- Ask if you will be touring the field operations, production facility, etc. (Pack appropriately).
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Get a phone number to contact if you encounter travel difficulties.
- Be a good listener and ask questions.
- Observe the company culture, management style, and environment.
- During lunch/dinner meetings, remain professional, and follow the lead of your host in ordering food.
- Alcohol – take cue from host if appropriate to order. If desired, can order, but limit self to two drink maximum. Completely appropriate to abstain as well.
- Be prepared to discuss salary expectations if asked, but do not raise the subject yourself.
- Do not charge inappropriate expenses to an employer (room service, personal phone calls, in-room movies).

DURING THE TRIP

- Keep a positive and upbeat attitude.
- Pay attention to the names of the people you meet and collect business cards to send follow-up thank you notes.
- Be friendly to everyone you meet—including receptionists, secretaries, production workers, etc. Treat everyone as if they are the CEO.

AFTER THE TRIP

- Send Thank You emails within twenty-four hours to your host and other persons you met. Reinforce your interest and why you are a match for the position.
- Submit receipts for reimbursement.
- Make notes to help you compare employers if you have multiple offers.
- Follow up if you do not hear anything within the indicated time frame.

Follow Up Letters

Send a follow up email every chance you get—after an interview, meeting recruiters at career fairs, or talking with officials at a conference.

- Shows good business etiquette.
- Provides a networking opportunity to reinforce your qualifications.
- Gives a chance to demonstrate your written communication skills.
- Should be brief and sent within twenty-four hours after your interaction.
- Tone should be friendly yet professional.
- Format and delivery method are not as important as actually sending one.

Thank-You Note to Employers – Template

Tips

Send Thank You Note - whenever someone helps you with your job search – i.e., job interviews, site visits, meeting recruiters at career fairs, and even for informational interviews.

Send Within 24-48 hrs – the sooner, the better!

Be Clear & Concise – keep the letter short, be brief but meaningful.

Don't Sell Yourself Short – reiterate to the employer why you are a great candidate. Remind them of something important you discussed in an interview or provide them with some new information that you forgot to mention.

Proofread – it's important all your communication is polished and professional.

Interview - Thank-You Template

Dear *(Name of Interviewer)*,

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to talk with me about the *(Job Title)* with *(Company Name)*. I appreciate your time and consideration in interviewing me for this opportunity.

After speaking with you *(and/or the group)*, I believe that I would be a perfect candidate for this position, offering the *(Insert Strength)* and *(Insert Strength)* that is needed for this position.

In addition to my enthusiasm for being a top performer, I would bring the technical and analytical skillset that is necessary to get the job done well.

I am very interested in working with you *(and/or the team)* and look forward to hearing from you once the final decision is made regarding the position. Feel free to contact me at any time if further information is needed. You can contact me via *(Insert Phone #)* or *(Insert Email Address)*.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)



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Attire & Etiquette

*THERE IS NO SECOND CHANCE TO
MAKE A FIRST IMPRESSION!*



Looking professional matters. Interviewers notice how you look before they learn anything else about you, so it's important to project a professional image. Employers sometimes decide within the first five minutes of meeting you whether they intend to seriously consider you for the position.

Even though many employers have a "business casual" dress code, you still should dress up for an interview unless specifically told otherwise. It is always better to be dressed professionally than to risk not meeting the employer's expectations regarding your interview attire.

ATTIRE

- Suit or sport coat with dress slacks, dark colors
- Dress shirt — clean and ironed
- Ties — avoid loud patterns
- Shoes polished — dark color that goes with the slacks
- Socks — dark color, no white socks
- Classic business skirt/blouse or dress pant suit
- Blouse — conservative neckline
- Shoes — basic look, low heels
- Stockings — natural colors
- Accessories — keep jewelry to a minimum

DRESS CODE

- Personal hygiene — shower, clean nails, fresh breath
- Hair — clean, combed/brushed, professional hair style
- Cologne/Perfume — use in moderation
- Avoid bringing backpacks or coats into the interview room

BUSINESS CASUAL IS NOT:

- T-shirts and blue jeans
- Casual clothing worn to the beach, dance clubs, exercise sessions, or sport events
- Clothing that reveals too much cleavage, your stomach, or your underwear
- Flip flops, tennis shoes, or shorts

TOP INTERVIEW DRESS MISTAKES

Campus recruiters have cited the following mistakes some students made when dressing for their interviews. Remember—you often are being judged by someone from another generation whose expectations of interview dress are different from your peers.

- Flip flops
- Wrinkled clothes
- Clothing that is too tight
- Revealing clothing
- Dirty or scuffed shoes
- Heavy use of perfume or cologne
- An overall look that is too casual
- Too much jewelry

DINING ETIQUETTE

Lunch or dinner with a prospective employer may seem relaxing but it is still part of the evaluation process. Good behavior and proper dining etiquette are important to the overall impression that the employer will have of you. Some etiquette reminders:

- Turn off your cell phone
- Keep your elbows off the table
- Place your napkin on your lap as soon as you sit down and keep it there. If you leave the table, place the napkin on your chair
- When ordering food, take your cue from your host. Don't order the most expensive item on the menu!
- Alcohol – take cue from host if appropriate to order. If desired, can order, but limit self to two drink maximum. Completely appropriate to abstain as well
- Avoid foods that may be messy or difficult to eat (e.g., crab legs spaghetti, ribs, corn on the cob, etc)
- Use silverware working from the outside toward your plate.
- After using a utensil, keep it on your plate instead of the table
- Taste your food before seasoning it
- Pass the food clockwise
- Be polite to your server
- Don't talk with your mouth full. Take small bites
- Engage in table conversation with small talk on topics of mutual interest. Avoid talking about politics, religion, or inappropriate jokes
- Always thank your host

Essential Extras

FIRST YEAR ON THE JOB

Your first year on the job can be extremely important to your career success. Recognizing the differences between college and work can help you make the transition successfully. As a new employee, you may need to gain acceptance as a professional by your coworkers.

A positive attitude and learning the company culture will help you get started “on the right foot.” The impressions you make during the early weeks of your employment will largely determine the opinions your supervisor and coworkers form of you. Develop a reputation as a hard-working team member and earn the respect of your colleagues for the contributions you are making.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Once you have accepted a job offer, you should adhere to the following ethical standards:

- Withdraw from the interviewing/recruiting process.
- Notify other employers who were considering you so they can pursue other candidates.
- Cancel any pending interviews so another student can possibly be selected for your interview slot.
- Do not renege on an accepted job offer except in extremely extenuating circumstances (unexpected health problem, marriage, divorce, ill parent, etc.).

JOB OFFERS

You may receive several job offers during your search. Until you have accepted a job, you can continue to interview and pursue other offers.

If you are still undecided by the employer’s decision deadline, ask for an extension. Some employers may agree to a brief extension, but others may insist on a decision so they can pursue other candidates if you decline their offer. If you need help evaluating offers, asking to extend a deadline, or declining an offer please see a member of the Career Services staff.


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Salary Negotiation Toolkit

Salary negotiation is one of the most nerve-racking parts of attaining a job. Nevertheless, negotiating a salary is a tough, but necessary part of everyone’s professional path. When the time comes, it’s important to approach the conversation objectively, built upon an evidence-based case to negotiate for your desired outcome.

To help you prepare for when this time comes, below are some key tips.





Know Your Market Worth

Salaries vary greatly by industry, seniority, education level, size, and even geographical location. Utilize resources like the CPDC, Labor Stats, Glassdoor, Payscale.com, and Salary.com to determine your market worth.



Expect Resistance

Even air-tight cases can face some resistance from an employer, so be prepared to answer questions, especially, “How much are you looking for? Why do you deserve this salary?”

Why It’s Important to Negotiate Your Salary

Delving into salary negotiation is a perfectly normal, albeit expected, part of the employment process. Your salary is more than just a deposit into your bank account. It’s how the company shows you that they appreciate your work and value you and your skills. Part of advancing your career is attaining the salary you deserve.

Strike a balance between firm and flexible. Your salary negotiation won’t go well if you refuse to give any ground. Be prepared to go back-and-forth during negotiations and be sure any compromised reach is acceptable.

Need help practicing your pitch? Contact our office for further assistance.



Build Your Case

Prove you are worth investing in with specific examples of the value you bring. Bring up all evidence of your achievements, accomplishments, performances, and previous relevant experiences that directly correlate to the position.



Give a Supported Number

Have a range in mind, with your “ideal number”, which is the number you will give the employer, first. And your “willing to settle number” which you find justified with research, this could also be their original salary offer.



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www.sdsmt.edu/CareerServices/



Advice From Alumni

- Networking is extremely important! Introduce yourself to coworkers.
- Learn how to communicate effectively with different audiences and different generations.
- Get involved in activities. Show up at the company picnic!
- Broaden your skill sets continually.
- Develop interpersonal relationships.
- Keep a positive attitude. You won't get promoted if you're viewed as having a negative outlook on everything.
- Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know, but I'll find out!"
- Volunteer to help with projects or activities outside your regular work duties.

Grad School



For professions (medicine, law, university faculty, etc.) where an advanced degree is required, attending graduate school is a necessity. For other fields, deciding whether to attend graduate school immediately after earning your bachelor's degree can involve various considerations:

- What are your career goals?
- What is your readiness to pursue graduate-level work—time commitment, financial resources, etc.?
- What is the value of a graduate degree to your career plans—earning potential, entry into a profession, advancement, etc.?
- What is the current job market like? Is it to your benefit to pursue a graduate degree immediately or after working in your career field?
- How long will it take?
- How much will it cost? Would an employer help pay for graduate school?

A Good Fit

Once you have decided to pursue a graduate degree, it is important to identify graduate programs that are a “good fit” for you and your career goals. Some factors to consider include:

PROGRAM OF STUDY

Degrees offered; majors or areas of emphasis.

ADMISSIONS STANDARDS

Importance of test scores, grades, recommendations, statements; undergraduate degree in subject or course prerequisites; state residency; preferences for recent graduates or work experience.

FACULTY

Size of department, areas of expertise, type of research and teaching interests, publications and affiliations, awards, and accessibility to students.

FELLOWSHIPS/ FINANCIAL AID

Type and amount of awards available; criteria used for choosing recipients.

Timetable

SUMMER/EARLY FALL

- Write draft statement of purpose.
- Start browsing through guides to graduate programs and college catalogs.
- Visit with faculty members to discuss personal statement and possible programs.
- Sign up for required standardized tests.
- Visit schools — meet with faculty and graduate students in programs.

FALL

- Take standardized tests.
- Request application materials from programs.
- Ask for letters of recommendation (i.e., faculty, advisors, supervisors).
- Research financial aid — complete applications with early deadlines.
- Finalize statement of purpose.

EARLY WINTER

- Submit standardized test scores to the graduate schools.
- Complete application and financial aid forms.
- Order transcripts.
- Give your references forms to fill out (if provided) or addresses for letters.
- Send applications — watch deadlines for admissions and financial aid.
- Follow up by phone to verify all materials have been received.

Recommendations

Two to three letters of recommendation are required by most graduate schools. Select the most appropriate letter writers, who might be:

- Someone who has a high opinion of your ability to perform well.
- Faculty member(s) with whom you have taken several classes.
- Someone knowledgeable about the schools or programs.

To assist your references, provide them with the application deadlines, any specific instructions, a statement about what you are applying for and why, your résumé or curriculum vitae, and a copy of your transcript. Always send a thank you note to those who have written letters of recommendation.

Personal Essay & Curriculum Vitae

The personal statement is your opportunity to explain why you would be an asset to that university's graduate program. In addition to describing your career goals and your commitment to that field of study, your personal statement serves as an indication of your writing ability. Because the personal statement is a short piece that sometimes has a word limit, it is crucial that you first organize your thoughts and then refine your ideas. Make sure that your essay is free of errors by having it reviewed by Career Services.

Creating Your Curriculum Vitae

What is a Curriculum Vitae?

The curriculum vitae or CV is a professional document that is a comprehensive overview of your academic background and professional accomplishments. It is considered a living document as it will continue to grow through the course of your life.

When to use a CV?

In the United States, a CV is often needed when applying for jobs in academia, scientific and research positions, or for international employment. They are also applicable when applying for fellowships or grants. If you are applying for jobs in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, or Asia, expect to submit a CV rather than a resume.

Overseas employers often expect to read the type of personal information on a CV that would never be included on an American resume or CV, such as your date and place of birth, nationality, marital status, and photo. Keep in mind the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) laws regarding employment non-discrimination do not apply outside the country.

What's the difference between a resume and a CV?

A CV is a longer more detailed document of your background and skills. It includes a greater range of information, but many of the rules of writing a resume can also be applied to writing a CV. A two-to-three-page CV is common for most graduate students. However, your experience and education will dictate the length of your CV.

The focus is more on academic achievements such as education background and training, research interest, published works, teaching experience, field experience, academic honors and awards, and other professional experience.

Like a resume, the CV should include your name, contact information, education, skills, and experiences, in addition to, research and teaching experience, publications, grants and fellowships, professional affiliations and licenses, awards, and other information relevant to the position or program in which you are applying to. Start by making a list of all your background information, then organize it into categories, and include dates.



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INTRODUCTION

An effective opening line engages the reader and draws them into your essay. The rest should be a short summary of what is to come, an exciting preview of the body of your statement.

THE BODY

The main paragraphs should consist of events, experiences, and activities in order of importance. Highlight those that deserve particular attention. Explain how your goals align with the institution.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion should not merely restate your introduction. It is acceptable to restate your goals and motivations, but do so in a manner that will leave a lasting impression. Be clear, straight-forward, and end on a very positive note.

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