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WELCOME

Dear Students,

We are glad you are here at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology! Our goal in the Career & Professional Development Center is to help you succeed as a student and to support your professional development, preparing you for success in your career field upon graduation.

This Career & Professional Development Guide serves as a useful resource for your career planning, résumés and cover letters, interview preparation, and job searches. Co-ops and internships help you gain the relevant work experience and skills that employers most value when making hiring decisions. The quality of education you receive at the School of Mines, combined with your real-world experiences, will pave the way for your success after graduation.

We look forward to working with you throughout your college years and helping you achieve your career goals by graduating from the School of Mines as a professional!

Sincerely,

Darrell Sawyer, EdD
Director

MISSION STATEMENT

The School of Mines Career & Professional Development Center will successfully engage students in their career and professional development and will foster partnerships to connect students with employers, campus, and the community.
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Why Mines Advantage?
Participating in curricular and co-curricular experiences leads to significant personal and professional development advancements. Benefits include exclusive perks, an enhanced résumé, and distinction in the eyes of employers.

Sign up today to get started on the path to personal and professional development!
http://www.sdsmt.edu/Campus-Life/Student-Services/Mines-Advantage

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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 an interest inventory.
- Answer these questions: “Who am I? What are my goals?”

Explore options
- Access career resources available online and in libraries.
- Talk to alumni working in various career fields.
- Attend career fairs and visit with employers.
- Research employers and alumni on LinkedIn.
Career & Professional Development

- Résumés and cover letters
- Behavior-based interviews
- Evaluating job offers and benefits
- Job search strategies
- Business etiquette dinners
- Professional networking

Career Fairs

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

On-Campus Interviews

The center coordinates the scheduling of campus interviews through an online system called “The Gold Mine.” More than 150 employers visit the campus each year to recruit Mines students.

Job Postings

“The Gold Mine” system

www.sdsmtcareers.com enables students to search and apply for jobs posted by employers.

Internships & Co-ops

The center 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.

Alumni Placement

Mines alumni have free access to “The Gold Mine” job postings.

www.sdsmtcareers.com

- Apply for on-campus interviews.
- 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.
- Access jobs posted by employers on other job boards.
CAREER PLANNING TIMELINE

Not sure what to do or when to do it?

Freshman: Inquire about career options
- Sign up for Mines Advantage.
- 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 a career interest assessment.
- Create a résumé and cover letter.

Sophomore: Explore career choices
- Attend School of Mines career fairs and apply for internships/co-ops.
- Develop a curriculum plan with your advisor including a co-op/internship.
- Register in “The Gold Mine” system and familiarize yourself with its services.
- Update your résumé and cover letter.
- Attend the Career & Professional Development Center’s 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.
- Reach 50 percent completion of Mines Advantage.

Junior: Confirm career decisions
- Update your résumé in “The Gold Mine” system and add internships/co-ops.
- Join the student professional chapter for your major.
- Apply for additional internships/co-ops.
- Schedule a mock interview.
- Participate in professional development activities.
- Volunteer with campus or community organizations.
- Develop your leadership skills and experiences.
- Reach 75 percent completion of Mines Advantage.

Senior: Prepare to enter your career field
- Develop a plan to search for jobs or apply to graduate schools.
- Update your résumé in “The Gold Mine” system.
- Visit with many prospective employers at School of 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 “The Gold Mine” job postings on a regular basis.
- If applying to graduate school, know the procedures and deadlines.
- Create a LinkedIn profile.
- Reach 100 percent completion of Mines Advantage.
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 communication and teamwork skills.
- 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 careers.sdsmt.edu/students for additional information.

On average 75% of School of Mines graduates have relevant work experience upon graduation and many receive job offers several months before graduation.
Do you have big dreams and a bold vision?

Bobcat has opportunities in the following fields:

Engineering
Finance
Human Resources
Marketing/Sales
Operations
Sourcing

Headquartered in North Dakota with locations in Fargo, Bismarck, Gwinner and Wahpeton. We’re an equal opportunity employer—and committed to a diverse workforce.

See job openings or apply online: www.bobcat.com/careers
School of Mines career fairs are held each fall and spring. They feature more than 150 employers and several hundred 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, whether now or down the road.

These career fairs offer all School of 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 School of Mines & Technology students and alumni.

### 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.
  [careers.sdsmt.edu/students/fairs](http://careers.sdsmt.edu/students/fairs)
- 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 résumé 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 letter.
- Reinforce enthusiasm with why you’re a “good fit”.
- Submit applications/résumés online if requested.
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 School of Mines students. In addition to the School of Mines Career & Professional Development Center, your job hunt can involve many other resources:

- Company web sites.
- Internet job posting boards.
- The Alumni Association’s list of employers.
- 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.
- Third-Party Recruiters/Staffing Agencies—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.

NOW HIRING

INTERNSHIPS IN ENGINEERING

- Gain software experience in your field
- Receive competitive compensation

Work for a South Dakota-based, international company listed by Forbes as one of America’s Most Trustworthy Companies and one of 200 Best Small Companies in America!

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recruiter@daktronics.com
Daktronics is an Equal Opportunity Employer
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**

School of 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. The Alumni Association’s alphabetical list of employers, showing where our alumni work, can be a useful tool in your job search. 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 (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.) 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.
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 objectives are.
- What you have accomplished.
- Why you are a 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 an employer. The final version should make a good impression within thirty seconds.
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  Chaired  Designed  Listened  Presented  Revised
Accommodated  Charged  Detailed  Located  Prioritized  Scanned
Accomplished Checked  Detected  Managed  Problem-solved  Scheduled
Achieved  Chose  Determined  Maintained  Produced  Selected
Acted  Clarified  Developed  Manipulated  Projected  Set
Adapted  Classified  Devised  Mapped  Programmed  Shaped
Addressed  Coached  Diagnosed  Marketed  Promoted  Sold
Administered  Collaborated  Directed  Mastered  Proposed  Solicited
Advertised  Collected  Discovered  Maximized  Protected  Solved
Advised  Comforted  Dispatched  Mediated  Proved  Specialized
Advocated  Communicated  Dispensed  Mentored  Provided  Stabilized
Affected  Compared  Displayed  Merchandised  Published  Structured
Aided  Compiled  Dissected  Minimized  Publicized  Supported
Allocated  Completed  Distributed  Moderated  Purchased  Supervised
 Analyzed  Composed  Documented  Modified  Publicized  Taught
Answered  Computed  Drafted  Monitored  Queried  Tabulated
Anticipated  Conceptualized  Edited  Motivated  Questioned  Taught
Applied  Conciliated  Educated  Narrated  Rationalized  Team-built
Appraised  Condensed  Effected  Negotiated  Reasoned  Theorized
Approached  Conducted  Eliminated  Notified  Received  Tested
Approved  Confirmed  Empathized  Observed  Recommended  Trained
Arranged  Constructed  Indicated  Recorded  Recruited  Tabulated
Ascertained  Consulted  Influenced  Obtained  Revised  Taught
Assembled  Contracted  Informed  Offered  Recruited  Tabulated
Assessed  Contributed  Initiated  Opened  Rectified  Taught
Assigned  Controlled  Innovated  Operated  Redesigned  Transcribed
Assisted  Converted  Inspected  Ordered  Reduced  Tutored
Attained  Cooperated  Installed  Organized  Reorganized  Tutoring
Audited  Coordinated  Instituted  Originated  Related  Undated
Augmented  Correlated  Instructed  Overcame  Reinforced  Unified
Author  Corresponded  Integrated  Oversaw  Related  Upgraded
Authorized  Counseled  Interpreted  Packaged  Renewed  Used
Balanced  Created  Interviewed  Participated  Reorganized  Validated
Bolstered  Critiqued  Introduced  Perceived  Repaired  Verified
Briefed  Cultivated  Invented  Perfected  Reported  Visualized
Brought  Debated  Investigated  Performed  Represented  Wrote
Budgeted  Decided  J udged  Persuaded  Researched  Validated
Built  Defined  Launched  Planned  Responded  Verified
Calculated  Delegated  Learned  Practiced  Resolved  Validated
Cared  Delivered  Lectured  Predicted  Revamped  Validated
Catalogued  Demonstrated  Led  Prepared  Reviewed  Validated

ACTION VERBS
The adjacent sample list may be helpful in describing your past work experience, skills you have, or simply providing a way to think about some of the things you have done. This list may be especially helpful in utilizing key words within your résumé.
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.

GET RESULTS

• Keep it short—one page if possible.
• Use action words.
• Use at least ten point font.
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• Limit bolding, underlining, or italicizing text. Excessive bolding defeats the purpose of highlighting the most significant items!
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• Proof it again and again.
• Remember your audience—a very busy employer.
• Connect your skills to the employers’ needs.

JOE JOBSEEKER
joe.jobseeker@yahoo.com

Current Address
501 E. St. Joseph Street
Rapid City, SD 57701
(605) 444-4444

Permanent Address
1st Street South
Hometown, SD 57101
(605) 555-5555

OBJECTIVE
A summer internship in the chemical engineering field.

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Science, Chemical Engineering
South Dakota School of Mines & Technology (SDSM&T), Rapid City, SD
• Degree Expected: May 2017
• Dean’s List (4 of 6 semesters)
• GPA: 3.3

EXPERIENCE
• 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, SDSM&T Chemical Engineering Dept., Rapid City, Summer 2014
• Assisted professor with research on optimizing the process for using wood biomass to produce ethanol.

Office Assistant, SDSM&T Admissions Office, Rapid City, SD Sept. 2013 - May 2014
• 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 May - Dec. 2014
• 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 Sept. 2014 - Present
• 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.
• Led other non-chemical engineering team members in optimizing fuel cell.

COMPUTER SKILLS
Visotec, EES, Visual Basic, MathCAD, AspenPlus, Microsoft Office

HONORS/ACTIVITIES
American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) 2014 - present
Student Association Junior Senator 2014 - present
Mines Advantage 50 percent completion 2014

REFERENCES Available upon request

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉS
Effective cover letters can be very important to the job search. Employers often read your cover letter before your résumé, so a well-developed cover letter can create a positive first impression.

- 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. Applicant’s address.
2. Name, title, company name, and address.
3. Use “Dear Director” if you cannot get a specific name.
4. Opening Paragraph: introduce yourself, identify the job, mention how you heard about the job, and state any connections.
5. Middle 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. Closing 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.

```
1  123 First Avenue, Apt. 678
   Rapid City, SD 57701
Date

Ms. Mary Smith
Director of Human Resources
ABC Company
123 Main Street
Anytown, SD 577xx

3  Dear Ms. Smith:

Currently, I am a senior chemical engineering major at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology (SDSM&T) and will be graduating this May. I am interested in the Process Engineer job posted with the SDSM&T Career & Professional Development Center. After talking with your company officials at our career fair and further researching your company, I would be very excited to have the opportunity to work for ABC Company.

While completing my degree, I have had the opportunity to acquire relevant work experience through two internships as a production engineering intern with Cargill. During my internships, I successfully completed several projects, which strengthened my passion for working as a process engineer. My education at SDSM&T, combined with my internship experiences, has helped me 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 Student Ambassadors has provided me with many opportunities to develop strong teamwork, communication, and leadership skills. In addition, I have acquired efficient 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.

Thank you for your consideration of my enclosed résumé. I would like to discuss my qualifications with you further and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Enclosure
```
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 either a Word document or pdf file.
Equipment Design Opportunities Available

For more information about KOLBERG-PIioneer, INC., visit us on-line at www.kolbergpioneer.com. A complete listing of current job openings with position descriptions and an on-line application form are available...or contact:

Rhonda Kocer, Human Resources Manager at....
800-668-2579, Ext. 2518     personnel@kolbergpioneer.com

WE’RE HIRING

We provide the resources and services to power our nation’s homes and businesses.

Montana-Dakota Utilities is part of a regional natural gas and electric utility company that serves nearly 1 million customers in eight states. We are headquartered in Bismarck, N.D., and our goal is to attract and retain top talent. We offer a great place to work with competitive pay and benefits. Explore what Montana-Dakota and the rest of our utility business has to offer and discover an opportunity that is right for you.

jobs.mdu.com
www.montana-dakota.com

Great jobs right here at home.
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 on 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!
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.

**SCHEDULING A CAMPUS INTERVIEW**
- On-campus interviews are scheduled through “The Gold Mine” online system. [sdsmtcareers.com](http://sdsmtcareers.com)
- Next-day interviews are scheduled directly by employers at career fairs. Keep checking “The Gold Mine” on a regular basis to learn about new opportunities.
- Students are expected to honor all interview appointments. The competition for interview slots is often very keen. If you must cancel an interview due to illness or personal emergency, call the Career & Professional Development Center at 605.394.2667 and provide as much advance notice as possible.
- A “no-show” without any notification not only reflects poorly on you, but also can leave an unfavorable impression with the interviewer about Mines students in general.
- Candidates who fail to appear for an interview risk losing their privileges to use career services, including future campus interviews.
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?

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

**Opening/Introduction**

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.

**Information Exchange**

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.

**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.

- 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.
Telephone 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.

**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 the Career & Professional Development Center.
- 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.

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**PHONE & VIDEO INTERVIEWS**

**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).
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.
Dress Code

- Personal hygiene—shower, clean nails, fresh breath
- Hair—clean, combed/brushed, professional hair style
- Cologne/Perfume—use in moderation
- No visible tattoos or body piercings
- Avoid bringing backpacks or coats into the interview room

Men
- 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

Women
- 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; understated colors for fingernail polish

Business Casual is NOT

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

Top 10 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.

1. Flip flops
2. Wrinkled clothes
3. Clothing that is too tight
4. Women—revealing skirts or blouses
5. Dirty or scuffed shoes
6. Heavy use of perfume or cologne
7. Visible tattoos or piercings
8. Men—the stubble look may be popular in social settings but isn’t appropriate for an interview
9. An overall look that is too casual
10. Too much jewelry

TOP TIPS Interview

- 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.
CONSIDERING 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?
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.

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### 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.
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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!

**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, straightforward, and end on a very positive note.

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.

According to a recent *LinkedIn* survey in the *New York Times*:

- 41% of employers said they considered volunteer work as important as paid work
- 20% reported making a hiring decision based on volunteer work
Send a follow up letter/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.
Dear Ms. Jones:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview with you and discuss my qualifications for the software development position. I am very excited about the possibility of working for XYZ, Inc.

As we discussed, my summer internships not only provided me with relevant work experience but also developed my technical and teamwork skills. I am convinced that I am qualified for this position and would be an asset to your company.

Again, thank you for the interview. I look forward to hearing from you and hope to have the opportunity to join the XYZ team.

Sincerely,

Jill Jobseeker

(Signature)
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 School of 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.

**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 notes.
- Be friendly to everyone you meet—including receptionists, secretaries, production workers, etc. Treat everyone as if they are the CEO.
- 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.
- Do not order alcohol.

**After the Trip**
- 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).*
- Send follow-up notes 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.

**GET RESULTS**
- Pay attention to the company culture and how to “fit in.”
- 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!
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!
- 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.

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.
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.

Once you have accepted a job, 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.
• Notify the Career & Professional Development Center of your accepted job offer so your résumé will not be referred to other employers.
• Do not renege on an accepted job offer except in extremely extenuating circumstances (unexpected health problem, marriage, divorce, ill parent, etc.).

Students who renege on job offers can create unfavorable impressions of School of Mines students to employers, which may cause them to reconsider their decision to recruit on our campus in the future.

Act with integrity and adhere to a code of conduct:

• Accept responsibility for your actions.
• Keep your word and follow through.
• Make decisions based on personal and professional ethical standards.

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 a whiner or 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.
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