

# RATTLER CAREER GUIDE

SUCCESS IS IN YOUR FUTURE. LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN.



FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY  
CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT CENTER

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

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Dear Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Students and Alumni,

It is important that our students are prepared to meet the expectations of future employers in a competitive workforce. Students cannot wait until their junior and senior years to start thinking about their careers. Those are days of the past. It is imperative that all Rattlers begin planning a career path once enrolled in the university. Thinking of life after college should start during the orientation process and continue throughout the time spent learning and growing at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University.

Good news! Our center is here to help Rattlers with deciding a major, securing a fulfilling internship, developing a professional brand, and/or navigating a path to graduate school! The Career and Professional Development Center team is the key to preparation for that next step.

We are a committed team who recognize the importance of career development and want to see that our students have the proper tools to excel in the workforce. The services we deliver emphasize making students career-ready.

We hope that you will see the value of not only this Career Guide but the services our center provides. There have been many who have gone before you and have made a great impact on this world through their careers. We want you to be next. Let us help you develop a career plan that will help ensure your success while at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and beyond!

With Rattler Regards,  
Shereada Harrell  
Director, Career and Professional Development Center

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# MAKING THE CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER WORK FOR YOU

The mission of the Florida A&M Career and Professional Development Center is to educate and facilitate the job search process for all Florida A&M students, both current and former. There are many services available to Rattlers through the Career and Professional Development Center, and we recommend you visit the Career and Professional Development Center website at [famu.edu/careercenter](http://famu.edu/careercenter) to learn more.

Career Specialists serve specific colleges and programs on campus. They can also provide you with an overview of Career and Professional Development Center services as well as outline a plan for your career development. You should begin meeting with your designated Career Advisor as early as your freshman year. Services available include:

- JOB AND INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
- CAREER ASSESSMENT & ADVISING
- RESUME & COVER LETTER CRITIQUES
- WORKSHOPS & PROGRAMS
- RATTLER INTERNSHIPS
- EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION: COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (CO-OP) AND INTERNSHIPS
- CAREER FAIRS & EXPOS
- INTERVIEW PREPARATION
- APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL
- PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL ADVISING

## CAREER FAIRS AND EXPOS

There are several career fairs held on Florida A&M's campus every year. For additional information including date changes and locations, look under Upcoming Events on our website at [cpdcenter.famu.edu](http://cpdcenter.famu.edu).

### SEPTEMBER

FAMU-FSU Fall STEM Career & Internship Fair  
FAMU Fall Career Expo Networking Mixer  
FAMU Fall Career & Internship Expo

### OCTOBER

Graduate Feeder Fair  
FAMU Law Day

### JANUARY

FAMU-FSU Spring STEM Career & Internship Fair  
FAMU Spring Career Expo Reception  
FAMU Spring Career & Internship Expo

### MARCH

Education, Health, Nursing & Social Sciences Fair

Adapted with permission from the Career Guide at Texas A&M University.

**GENERAL INFO ABOUT CAREER FAIRS**  
Career Fairs give employers an opportunity to put their company or organization on display to students and university officials. It also serves as an information exchange venue for the employer representative and a prospective employee. By attending career fairs students meet face-to-face with an employer in a neutral setting that is far less threatening than the interview.

# CAREER DECISION MAKING PROCESS

## 1. ASSESS YOURSELF

Identify your interests, skills, values and personality. A good grasp of these attributes allows you to consider appropriate majors, investigate potential career fields, prepare a competitive resume and effectively explain qualifications to employers. Unsure of how to approach this? Start with us!

## 2. EXPLORE YOUR CAREER OPTIONS

Learn all you can about occupations and career fields that might be a good fit with your interests, natural abilities, personal values and overall personality characteristics. Our Center has several ways of making this easier for you.

Individuals can enter this model at different points of their academic career.

Whenever you consider a career change, employ these same steps. The specific details will differ, but the process is essentially the same.

Learning this process as a student makes this a valuable lifelong tool.

## 5. SEARCH FOR A JOB

Your *Career Guide* emphasizes important considerations for a knowledgeable, organized and successful search. First, create and polish your resume and cover letter. Utilize multiple top search strategies including networking, events, connecting with employers and social media.

## 3. GAIN EXPERIENCE

This is critical. Internships and well-chosen part-time jobs help apply theoretical classroom learning to real-life, test career goals, gain on-the-job experience and build a network. The Career and Professional Development Center provides opportunities for integrated learning experiences through internships, research, study abroad, living-learning programs, leadership and service learning, designed to complement academic majors.

## 4. CONSIDER GRADUATE/ PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

Graduate school involves personal and financial commitment. Research areas of interest and possible programs to find good fits for you. Applying involves entrance exams, personal essays, letters of recommendation and more depending on the program. Whether you're just starting to consider graduate school or you're well into the application process, take advantage of our helpful Center resources.

Advance your career

with

# HireARattler

powered by **iHandshake**

Three easy steps to get started and one step closer to finding your next opportunity.

## 1. Log in.

We've already set up a HireARattler account for you. Just go to [famujoinhandshake.com](http://famujoinhandshake.com) and log in with your iRattler username and password.

➔ Download the Handshake app and login today.

## 2. Introduce yourself.

Your profile is your time to shine, so don't be shy about listing your accomplishments. Because the more potential employers know about you, the better the chance they'll reach out. Make sure to list all of your hard work - in the classroom and out - in your profile.

➔ Start building your profile today.

## 3. Tell us what you want to do and where you want to be.

Set your preferences for the types of jobs and locations you're interested in, so we find the right opportunities for you. Because searching through hundreds of job postings that don't fit isn't a good use of your time. Let us help!

➔ Don't worry, you can update your preferences as often as you want!

## Helpful TIPS:



**Search** for an internship, job or co-op.



**Schedule** an appointment with a career specialist.



**Submit** applications, resumes and evaluations.



**Sign-up** for events, workshops & interviews.

**FAMU**

FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY  
**CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

[cpdcenter.famu.edu](http://cpdcenter.famu.edu)

[careercenter@famujoinhandshake.com](mailto:careercenter@famujoinhandshake.com)

(850) 599-3700

Center for Access and Student Success, Suite 309



## WAYS TO EXPLORE OPTIONS

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As you move along toward graduation, you will have numerous ways in which to explore your career options and discover who you are. What are your values and interests? Which path should you choose after graduation? In each of the areas below you will find suggestions for the ways you can evaluate yourself, expand your network of professional contacts and get some tips on pursuing a postbaccalaureate degree. Each of the counselors at the career center can talk with you about these strategies and the ways to use them successfully.

### Career Assessments

Assessments can help you explore your career interests, skills, values, and preferences. While no assessment can perfectly describe who you are or what your career is to be, they are valuable in helping you narrow your search and discovering options you may not have considered previously. To explore all of the implications of your career assessment results, you are encouraged to talk with your career counselor.

### Is Graduate School The Right Option for You?

Among the many paths you have to choose from after graduation is the pursuit of a graduate degree. As you decide whether or not graduate school is the right move for you, be sure to do the following:

- Research your career field of interest - is graduate school really necessary?
- Should you work a few years before going back to graduate school?
- Research the outcome of what a graduate degree will provide.
- More money? More opportunities in your field? Evaluate what is most important to you.
- Talk to faculty and advisors in your field of interest and get their feedback on your graduate school plans.

Start researching graduate schools and programs your junior year to become informed of deadlines and options. Depending on the application deadlines, you will want to start the application process a few months in advance. Applications are usually time consuming and require personal statements and letters of recommendation. Visit the Career Center for additional information on graduate school, including test and program information.



## WHAT IS YOUR STORY? DEVELOP YOUR PITCH

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Not sure what to say? Fill this out and practice your pitch with us!	
Hi, my <b>NAME</b> is...	
My big <b>GOAL</b> is...	
My <b>EDUCATIONAL</b> background includes...	
Some <b>RELEVANT</b> classes I've taken include...	
My <b>KEY SKILLS</b> and <b>QUALIFICATIONS</b> include...	
Something I'm particularly <b>PROUD</b> of accomplishing is...	
Something that makes me <b>UNIQUE</b> is...	

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Use the prompts to help you develop a compelling and quick summary of your skill sets that you can share with a decision maker.
2. Share things the person you're pitching to can easily remember and find interesting.
3. Your pitch should help you engage the listener in a conversation so don't talk too much about yourself and use your pitch to help lead to a question about the person or company.

*Reprinted with permission from the Triton Career Guide at the University of California, San Diego.*

# CREATING A PLAN

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Planning for the future is important. A plan, with well thought out steps, can lead to a successful future. Not sure where to start? Here is a plan we encourage all students to consider:

## EXPLORE

**Step 1** - Meet with your Career Advisor.

**Step 2** - Assess your knowledge, interests, values, skills and personality.

**Step 3** - Explore and research majors, careers, and employers.

## FOCUS

**Step 4** - Plan your job search process, including resumes, interviews, and salary evaluation.

**Step 5** - Gain experience in a career-related field.

## PLAN

**Step 6** - Create professional networks.

**Step 7** - Develop your self-marketing and job search skills.

## COMMIT

**Step 8** - Start early! Implement your full-time job, internship, co-op, graduate or professional school search.

**Step 9** - Keep abreast of career management trends.

Reach out to your Career Advisor today to develop a comprehensive list of actions and tasks that you can accomplish throughout your college career. This plan can serve as your checklist and as a reflection of your accomplishments. You could find yourself working through the action plan many times depending on where you are at in the search process.

*Adapted with permission from the Career Guide at Texas A&M University.*

# CAREER ASSESSMENT AND CAREER ADVISING

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Not sure what you want to do? Not sure how to get started?

The Career and Professional Development Center is here to help! Your Career Advisor is available to assist with your career development needs. In addition to meeting with your Career Advisor, you might consider taking a career assessment; assessments can help you better understand key attributes about yourself, giving you an awareness of your interests, values, skills and abilities.

The Career and Professional Development Center has several resources available to you as you identify and explore your career options. These resources can be accessed by visiting HireARattler. Access HireARattler powered by Handshake by utilizing this link: <https://app.joinhandshake.com>. We recommend that you schedule an appointment with your career advisor to discuss our self assessments in more detail.

## ASSESSMENT

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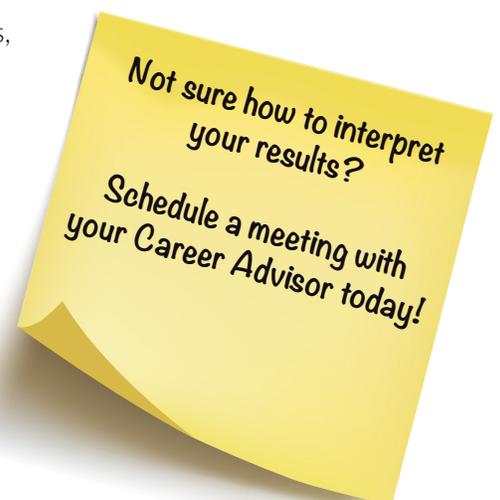
### FOCUS2

FOCUS2 is an online assessment available to both current and former students at Florida A&M. Through FOCUS2 you can research occupations, see what you can do with a major or identify potential majors by areas of interest.

Within FOCUS2, there are 5 surveys you can complete to explore career options.

With FOCUS2 results, you will be able to:

- Use the results to find occupations that match your values, interests and skills
- Explore information about career options and research occupations that relate to your particular major at FAMU
- Learn about education and/or training requirements for occupations as well as any skills that may be needed
- Learn about day-to-day job responsibilities





Online resources through [cpdcenter.famu.edu](http://cpdcenter.famu.edu) such as Florida Shines, CyberCareers, and What Can I Do With a Major In? can provide in-depth industry information as well as very specific details about individual companies and organizations, including details about hiring processes, corporate culture and opportunities for advancement.

## RESEARCHING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

There are several ways to explore career options, including:

- Talking to people in various professions;
- Participating in a formalized externship in January or job shadow program for a day;
- Arranging an informational interview to obtain an accurate perspective of the field from industry professionals;
- Seeking hands-on experience through cooperative education or an internship position to learn more and gain experience in a particular occupation;
- Considering opportunities to work or study abroad to further broaden your experiences;
- Leveraging online resources including the Occupational Outlook Handbook ([www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh)) and O\*Net Online ([www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)) to conduct research on specific careers.

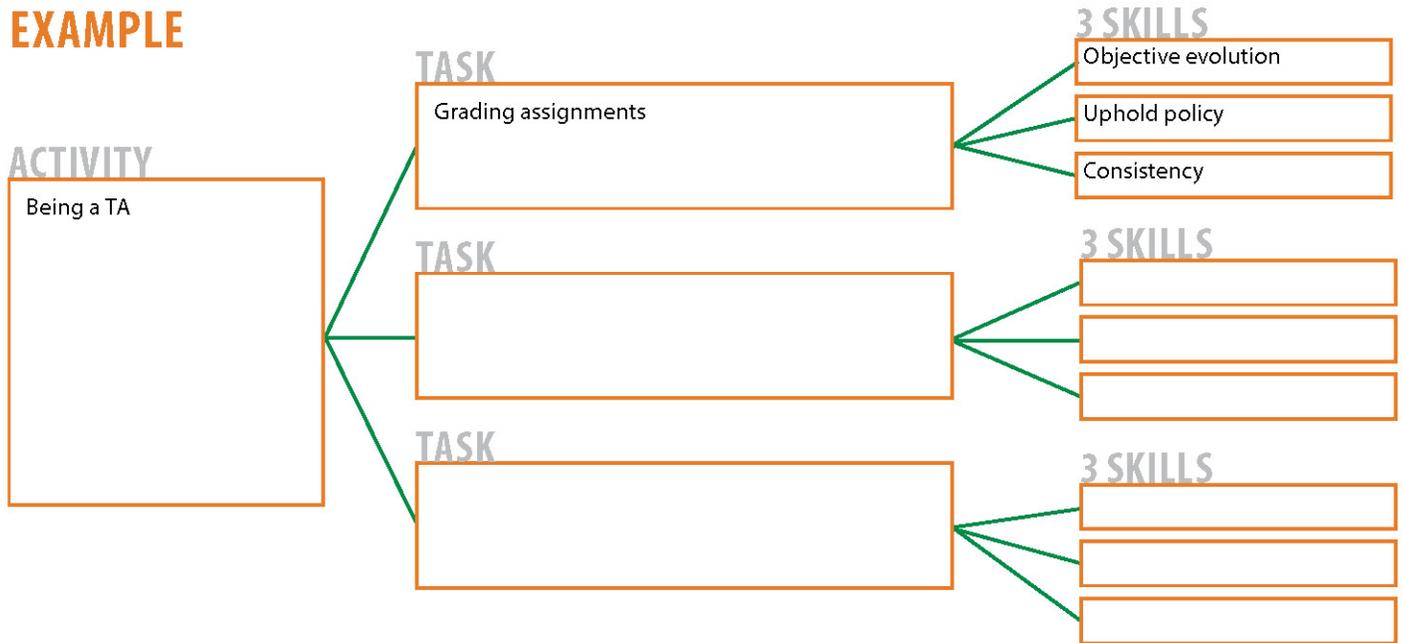
# CAREER EXPLORATION EXERCISE

1. **Make a list of all activities you've participated in:**  
(Think activities from high school, undergrad, grad, paid and unpaid experiences).

2. From the list, circle the 2 or 3 activities you enjoyed the most.

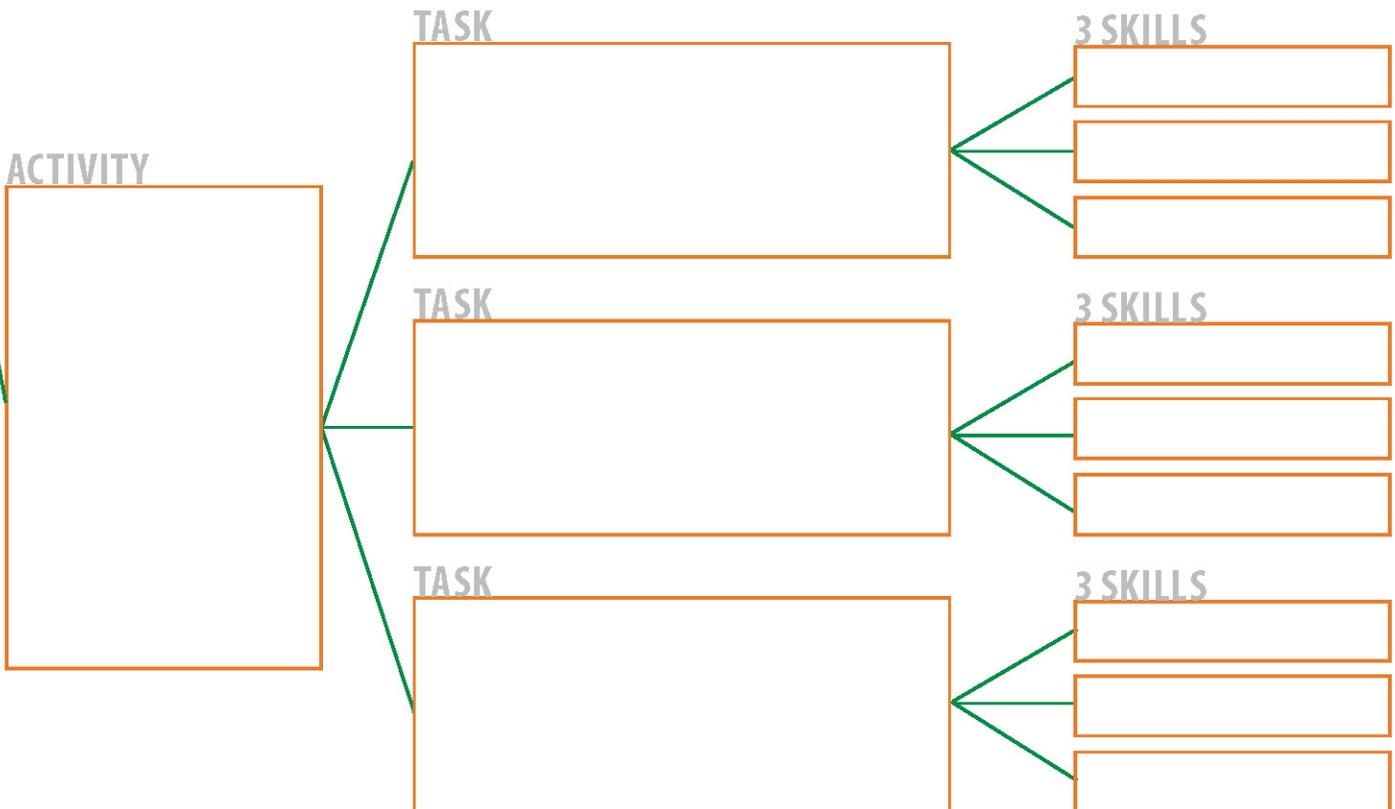
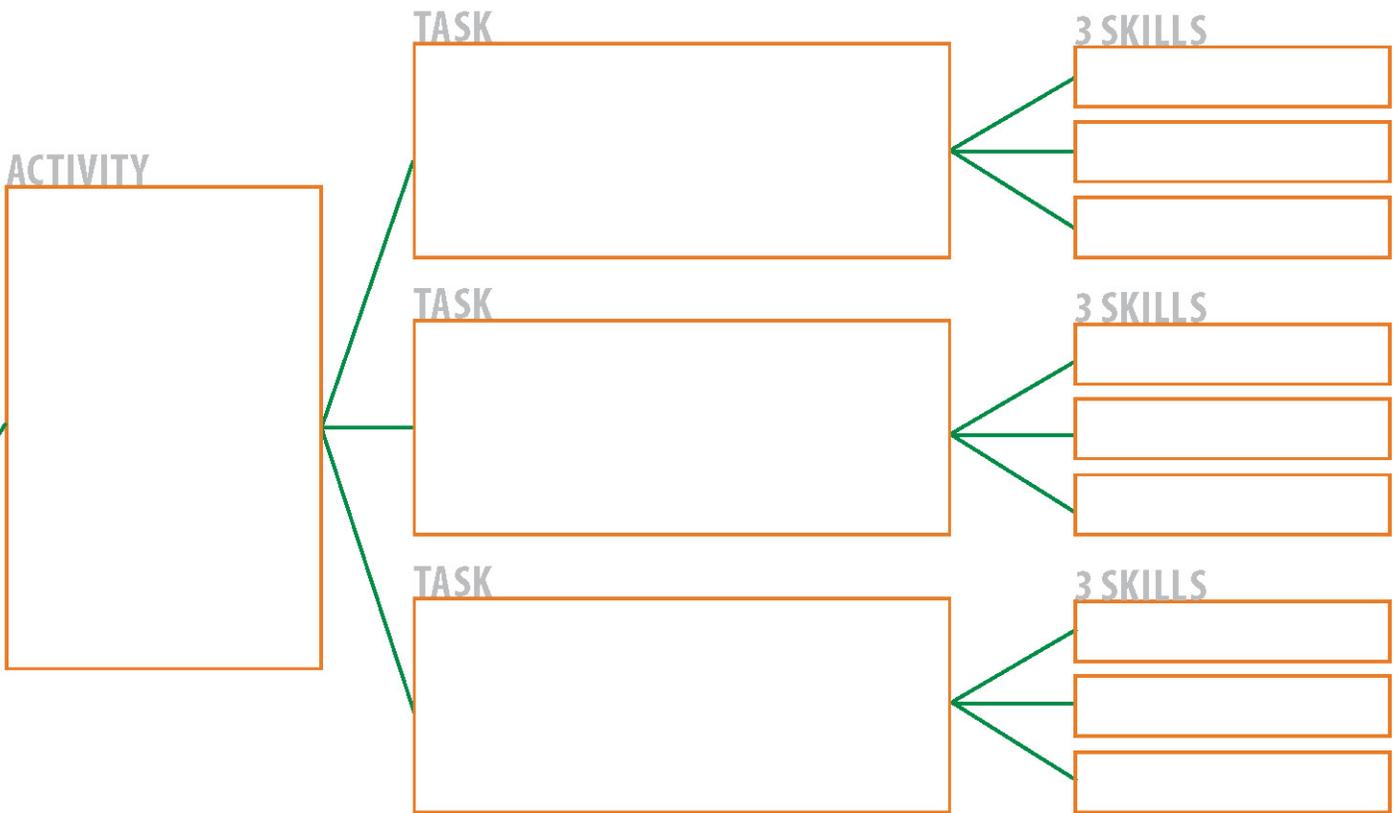
3. Choosing one of these activities, map out some of the tasks you performed and skills you used while you were in this role. Try to come up with at least 3 tasks.

## EXAMPLE



4. Looking over the map you've created, which tasks did you enjoy? Which skills did you enjoy using? Conversely, which tasks and which skills would you rather not have to rely on in your future career?
5. What themes are you seeing emerge in this list? Are these particular skills and tasks you would enjoy as a part of your future career? What kinds of career might require those skills and tasks?

# MIND MAPPING ACTIVITIES TO SKILLS





# LinkedIn Profile Checklist

**PHOTO:** It doesn't have to be fancy - just use your cellphone camera in front of a plain background. Wear a nice shirt and don't forget to smile!

**HEADLINE:** Tell people what you're excited about now and the cool things you want to do in the future.

**SUMMARY:** Describe what motivates you, what you're skilled at, and what's next.

**EXPERIENCE:** List the jobs you held, even if they were part-time, along with what you accomplished at each. Even include photos and videos from your work.

**ORGANIZATIONS:** Have you joined any clubs at school or outside? Be sure to describe what you did with each organization.

**David Xiao**  
Econ Major and Aspiring Financial Analyst  
San Francisco Bay Area | Financial Services

Previous: Berkeley Ventures  
Education: University of California, Berkeley

153 connections

www.linkedin.com/in/davidxiao/

**Background**

**Summary**

I'm a senior at Berkeley, starting to look for roles in the financial industry. As an economics major, I'm fascinated by the invisible forces that shape our world. Why does one company succeed and another fail? Is it possible to predict which idea will be the next big thing?

As such, I've taken lots of microeconomics coursework and have interned with a local venture capital firm. And now I'd like to put that experience to good use, analyzing tomorrow's up-and-coming companies.

**Experience**

**Venture Capital Internship** BERKELEY VENTURES  
Berkeley Ventures  
May 2013 – September 2013 (5 months) | Berkeley, CA

Conducted research on 20 startup companies and presented my findings to the fund's board, leading to a new \$1.5 million investment.

**INTRODUCTION TO VENTURE CAPITAL**  
David Xiao

A presentation I gave to my classmates, based on what I learned at Berkeley Ventures

**Organizations**

**Berkeley A Capella**  
Lead Singer  
March 2012 – Present

Schedule and perform at events for one of Berkeley's oldest a cappella groups, including last year's Cal-Stanford game.

**EDUCATION:** Starting with college, list all the educational experiences you've had - including summer programs.

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE & CAUSES:** Even if you weren't paid for a job, be sure to list it. Admissions officers and employers often see volunteer experience as just as valuable as paid work.

**SKILLS & EXPERTISE:** Add at least 5 key skills - and then your connections can endorse you for the things you're best at.

**HONORS & AWARDS:** If you earned a prize in or out of school, don't be shy. Let the world know about it!

**COURSES:** List the classes that show off the skills and interests you're most excited about.

**PROJECTS:** Whether you led a team assignment in school or built an app on your own, talk about what you did and how you did it.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Ask managers, professors, or classmates who've worked with you closely to write a recommendation. This gives extra credibility to your strengths and skills.

## Education

**University of California, Berkeley**  
Economics, B.A.  
2010 – 2014 (expected)



## Volunteer Experience & Causes

### Big Buddy

Skyline High School

September 2012 – May 2013 (9 months) | Education

Mentored an Oakland high school student through the college application process, helping him get into his dream school.

## Skills & Expertise

Most endorsed for...



## Honors & Awards

**The Achievement Award Program**  
UC Berkeley

Four-year scholarship awarded to community-minded students with a proven track record of academic success.

## Courses

**University of California, Berkeley**

- Microeconomic Theory (Econ 101A)
- International Monetary Economics (182)
- Public Economics (230A)

## Projects

**Venture Capital Financing in India**

May 2013

For our international Monetary Economics course, Paul and I decided to study the emerging venture capital industry in India. By looking at data from the World Bank, we were able to understand the challenges and opportunities facing this nascent sector. And we developed a series of recommendations for overcoming these challenges, which we delivered to our professor in a final term paper.

5 team members



**David Xiao**

Econ Major and Aspiring Financial Anal...



**Paul Smith**

Student at UC Berkeley

## Recommendations

Received (2) ▾

**Venture Capital Internship**  
Berkeley Ventures



**Tim Lee**

Partner

“David spent the summer with us at Berkeley Ventures and made an immediate impact. He showed us a brand new technique for firm analysis that he had just learned in school and came through with recommendations that opened our eyes to a unique set of opportunities.

We don't normally hire undergrads as interns but after working with David, we will again!

November 13, 2013, Tim managed

# INTERVIEWS

An interview is your opportunity to shine. Knowing what to expect and preparing for it will give you confidence and allow you to perform to the best of your ability. Preparation is one of the keys to a successful interview. Your career counselor can help you in practicing the questions you might receive at an interview as well as provide suggestions and tips to calm pre-interview jitters.

Employers want to learn three things about you during an interview.

**1. Can you do the job?** (your skills/ credentials)

**2. Will you do the job?** (your motivation)

**3. Are you a good fit?** (relationships)

Since no two interviews are exactly the same, your goal is to quickly assess each interaction and adapt accordingly. The interviewer will lead and give you cues. Ask questions when you are unclear.

## Attire

Most employers expect traditional interviewing attire. Interns and co-ops may dress in business casual, though still professionally. Choosing appropriate attire allows you to feel comfortable in your interactions and confident that you are making a positive first impression.

### Traditional Attire

Dark suit for conservative employers, khakis and dark jacket work well for others.

Conservative shirt and tie. Dark socks to match slacks. Dark shoes, polished.

Dark suit (slacks or khaki) with conservative blouse or a dress. Dark shoes, natural color stockings with dress or skirt, dark socks to match slacks. Low to medium heel shoes, polished.

Conservative jewelry.

### Business Casual

Business casual is one notch down from traditional interviewing attire and is acceptable for interns and co-ops at all times and graduating students attending information sessions, receptions, and social events hosted by employers.

(1) Slacks with coordinating (not matching) jacket with or without tie. (2) Slacks, shirt, and tie (no jacket).

Dark slacks or skirt with tailored shirt, blouse, or sweater.

**FAMU** FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY  
**CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER**  
**Career Expo**  
*Dress Code*

**Business Casual**  
STYLE OPTIONS

- ✓ NICE PANTS/SLACKS
- ✓ DRESSES
- ✓ TIES (OPTIONAL)
- ✗ NO JEANS, SHORTS, LEGGINGS, SUNDRESSES OR ATHLETIC WEAR

**Business Professional**  
CLOTHES SHOULD BE

- ✓ SOLID, DARK OR NEUTRAL COLORS
- ✓ LIGHT COLORS CAN BE WORN UNDERNEATH
- ✗ NO STRIPES OR BRIGHT PRINTS/COLORS

**NAILS & MAKEUP:** Natural in style  
**JEWELRY & FRAGRANCE:** Wear moderate jewelry with mild fragrance  
**HAIR:** Well groomed hairstyle  
**SHOES:** Closed-toe heels, flats, boots, or comfortable for walking in

CPDCenter.famu.edu

# INTERVIEW STYLES

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## **Behavioral interviews**

The majority of employers are now using behavioral interviews. Employers first identify the characteristics important for success in their organization. Then employers choose questions to help them identify candidates who possess these characteristics. Behavioral interviews are based on the notion that past behavior is a good predictor of future behavior. A behavioral question will ask you to recall a past situation or task, explain how you responded or the action you took, and describe the outcome or results you achieved.

### **Your Preparation for behavioral interviews:**

Which situations or tasks will you draw from? Examine past or present experiences on campus, at work, and in the community. Think through those you are likely to use as examples. Prepare an outline for each with a beginning, middle, and end - keeping in mind the employer's use of the STAR approach. Be sure the result reflects positively on you, even if the result itself was not favorable.

### **Use the STAR method to answer behavioral questions:**

**Situation or Task** Describe a specific event or situation. Give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. Draw from campus, work, or community experiences.  
**Action you took** Describe the action you took. If you are describing a group project, focus on your role.  
**Results you achieved** What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

**Your Preparation for traditional interviews:** A well-prepared resume will help you with this style of interview. Think through every accomplishment on this document. What did you learn from each experience so that you can clearly articulate this to the employer? Help an employer get to know you and all that you have to offer.

## **Traditional interviews**

A smaller group of employers conduct traditional interviews. These interviews follow the organization of your resume. Your resume is used as a guide to probe your preferences, decisions, and achievements as demonstrated through academic, work, campus, and community involvement.

# SCREENING AND SITE INTERVIEWS

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## Screening Interviews

These are used by employers to quickly gauge your fit with their position or organization. Because this interview is brief, two minutes to one hour, you must make an immediate positive impression. If mutual interest is established, you will be invited for a second interview, the selection interview.

**Phone interview:** Arrange a quiet place to make or receive your call. Use a landline rather than a cell phone when possible. Have your resume and supporting documents in front of you. Realizing you are not able to exchange non-verbal cues with the interviewer, you will need to convey your energy and enthusiasm through your voice. Hint: standing up helps! This interview is typically 5-30 minutes in length, though it can go as long as one hour.

**Career fair interview:** This is likely to be a brief interaction in a busy environment, ranging from 2-15 minutes. Prepare a brief introduction to begin your conversation. Be aware of the employer's cues as to whether it is appropriate to elaborate or wrap up. Some employers will create their phone, campus, or site interview schedules at the fair.

**Information session interview:** This is generally on to two hours in length. A formal presentation by the employer is followed by informal conversations between students and representatives. Meet the employer sessions are often scheduled the evening before on-campus interviews.

## Selection (site) interviews

The selection interview follows a successful screening interview and usually takes place at the employer's site. This interview can range from two hours (for a local employer). Most interviews are 30 minutes to one hour in length. You will have the opportunity to observe the work environment.

# INFORMAL INTERVIEWING

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## How Does it Work?

You make contact with a professional in a career field in which you think you would like to work. Career and Professional Development Center Career Specialists, professors, friends and family can be helpful simply by asking, "Do you know anyone who works in the field of ?" Once you have a name and contact information, how you approach the resource person will be very important. Ask if it would be possible for you to meet with them for no more than 30 minutes and be sure to honor this time frame.

## What are the benefits?

Informal interviewing can have both short-term and long-term benefits. You immediately gain information and insights that can be helpful in focusing your career direction. In the long run, you have established personal contact with professionals who can be resources to assist you with your job search. Also, be sure your resume is in good shape since you never know when a conversation may lead to an immediate opportunity.

## What Should I Ask?

Four basic questions can help you get started with gathering helpful information.

1. How did you get into this kind of work and what was your preparation?
2. What are the rewards and challenges of this kind of career?
3. What advice would you give a person who wants to pursue this work as a career?
4. Who else do you know who would be a good resource person for me to talk to?

Appropriate dress (at least business casual) is important since you will be making first impressions with people who could be potential job or internship resources in the near future. Always ask for a business card and be sure to send a brief note of thanks for giving you the gift of their time and insights.



# ARE YOU CAREER READY?



**Critical thinking/problem solving:** Identifies important problems and questions and gathers, analyzes, evaluates information from a variety of sources before forming a strategy, decision, or opinion.



**Research ability:** Accesses and evaluates multiple sources of information, including text and images, and synthesizes information to solve problems and create new insights.



**Oral, written, & digital communication:** Conveys meaning and responds to needs of diverse audiences through writing and speaking coherently and effectively, and develops the expression of ideas through written, oral and digital mediums.



**Teamwork/cross-cultural collaboration:** Works with and seeks involvement from people and entities with diverse experiences towards a common goal, demonstrating strong interpersonal skills, respect, and dignity for others.



**Understanding global context:** Demonstrates an understanding of complex global issues and systems, and how issues and actions have local and global implications for the future.



**Leadership:** Takes initiative, demonstrates effective decision making and informed risk taking, and motivates and encourages participation from others to work towards a shared purpose and vision.

Which competencies are most needed for your future career plans?

Which three competencies would you highlight to a future employer or graduate school?

Florida  
12 Career  
Compe

These are 12 Florida A&M identified career readiness competencies students should aspire to possess by the time they graduate. Employers are looking to hire college students and recent graduates who know how to use their talents, strengths, and interests. Master these Career Readiness Competencies and you will be prepared for a successful transition into the workplace. These competencies also fully align with the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE) national standards.

## Rank your career readiness competencies from most developed to least developed.

### A&M's Readiness Competencies

What does career readiness mean to you? How do you know when you are career ready?

#### **Professionalism/integrity:**

Demonstrates integrity, honesty, dependability and ethical responsibility, and accepts direction and personal accountability.



**Self-reflection:** Assesses, articulates, and acknowledges personal skills and abilities, and learns from past experiences and feedback to gain new insights and understandings.



**Career development:** Accesses information and opportunities for career exploration, and understands and articulates the importance of transferable skills in the job search process.



Use this space to write additional thoughts or ideas on how you can develop your competencies further.

#### **Digital information fluency:**

Demonstrates technological literacy and skills, and ethically and effectively uses technology to communicate, problem-solve, and complete tasks.



#### **Civic engagement/social responsibility:**

Participates in service/volunteer activities characterized by reciprocity, engages in critical reflection, and appropriately challenges unfair and unjust behavior to make a positive difference in the community.

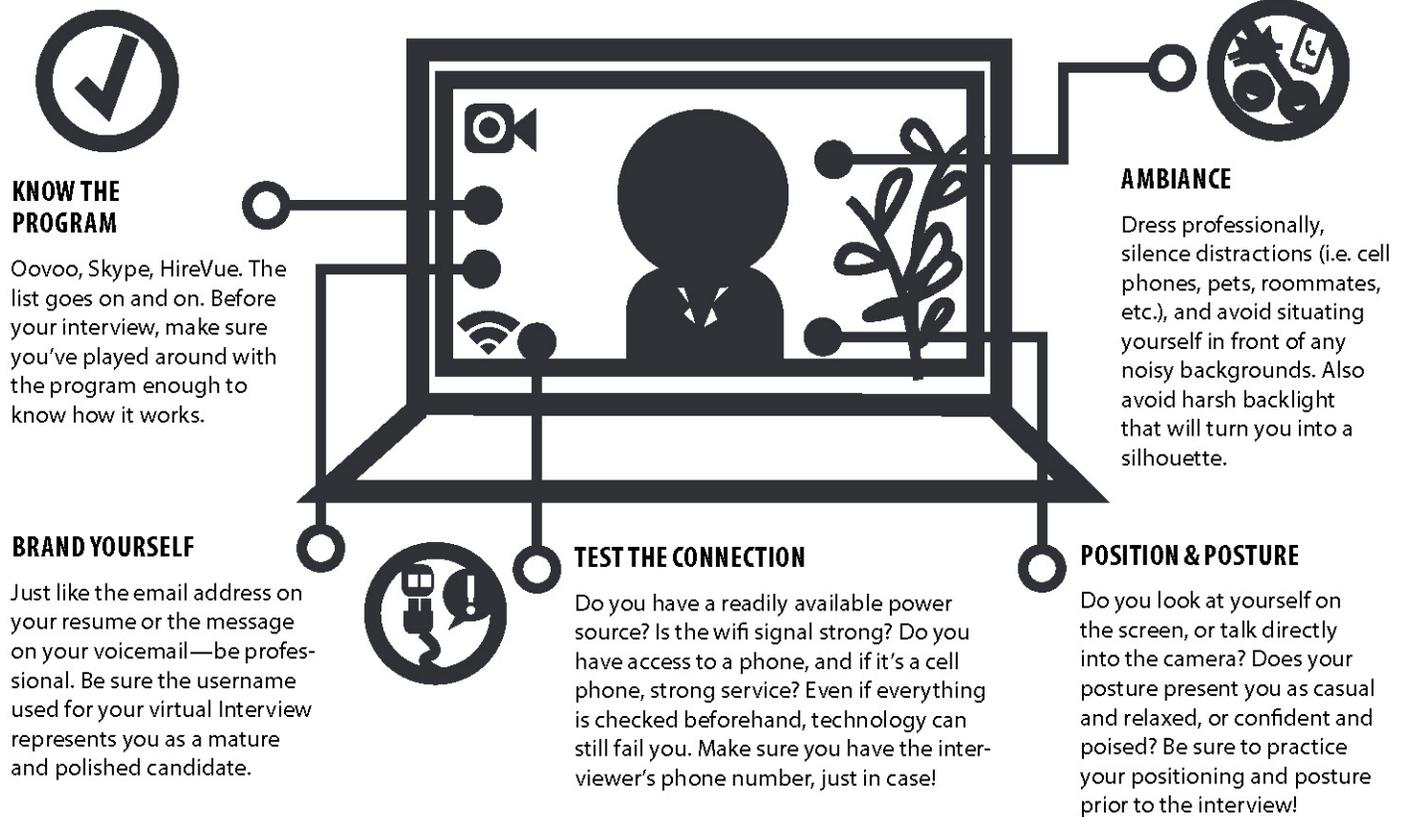


#### **Innovation/entrepreneurial thinking:**

Synthesizes existing ideas and concepts in innovative and creative ways to develop new ways of thinking or working, and engages in divergent thinking and risk taking.



# HOW TO PREPARE FOR VIDEO INTERVIEWS



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## CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS

### Before the interview

- Know your strengths and weaknesses.
- Research the organization.
- Clarify the details of the interview in advance - date, location, schedule, attire.
- Arrive 10 minutes early.
- Prepare questions to ask employers.
- Bring several copies of your resume and a list of references, if you are graduating this year; use a portfolio notebook to hold your documents and for jotting down important information.
- Bring your portfolio or samples of your work, if appropriate for your field.
- Bring an unofficial copy of your transcript.

### During the interview

- Be a good listener. Let the interviewer guide you.
- Watch your body language - smile, practice a firm handshake, maintain good eye contact, sit and stand in an attentive manner; stay focused on the conversation at hand.
- Ask for clarification if you are unsure of the question.
- Be honest if you are asked a question you are unable to

answer. Offer a thoughtful way in which you would try to find the answer.

- Be positive about yourself and your experiences.
- Display energy and enthusiasm for your field and the organization.
- Adjust your answers as the situation demands. You may use more technical terminology while speaking with someone in your field.
- Be prepared to give specific examples to back up statements you make about yourself. These can form academic, professional, and personal experiences.
- Look for opportunities to highlight your strengths and match them to their needs.
- Ask good questions.
- Thank the interviewer for his/her time and ask about next steps in the process.
- Conclude with a sincere statement of interest in the position.

### After the interview

- Evaluate your performance.
- Follow up with a thank you note within 24 hours.





### Day of the fair:

Dress professionally. Seeking a full time position? Wear a business suit (men and women). Seeking an internship? Business casual will work. Read the chapter on interview attire for more detailed descriptions.

Speak to recruiters. Don't just wander, picking up a brochure or two. Have conversations with the recruiters - they want to speak with you!

Collect business cards from everyone you speak with to follow up and send thank you notes.

If you are nervous, approach an employer that is not on your target list to use as a "practice" session. When you have developed confidence, approach your targeted employers.

Go early, if possible, when recruiters are fresh.

### After the fair:

Send thank you notes to employers of interest and follow up with the application process as directed. A complete list of career fairs, dates and participating employers can be found at the University Career Center Web site.

### Career Fair Follow-Up

When looking for a job or internship, you might wonder if you are being pushy if you contact an employer after submitting a resume. A survey conducted by Robert Half International Inc. asked 150 executives with the nation's 1,000 largest companies, "How long should a job seeker wait to follow up with the hiring manager after submitting a resume?" Eighty two percent of executives polled said job seekers should contact hiring managers within two weeks of submitting application materials, while just 5 percent said professionals should refrain from communicating once a resume has been sent.







## 12 VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR TIPS

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### Before the virtual career fair

Don't "walk" into a virtual career fair with zero preparation. These are the things you'll want to do ahead of time to set yourself up for success.

#### 1. Register ahead of time

You're going to want to register beforehand. Not only will this prevent any last minute hiccups before the career fair, but it will allow you to get a glimpse at the employers participating in the fair. Which leads us to our next tip...

#### 2. Research participating organizations

After registering, take some time to review the organizations attending the career fair. You'll want to get an idea of some of the companies you'd like to meet with. You also don't want to walk in unprepared—learn about the companies and think of questions you'll want to ask. It's extremely important -- just as in an actual job fair -- that you research employers that will be attending the virtual job fair. Many employers will also list the openings they are hoping to fill. But don't stop there; go deeper and develop a list of keywords and phrases from each employer and job listing that you can use to help you succeed.

#### 3. Prepare your resume

This is a no-brainer, yet so important. Because you're going to provide your resume to employers you meet with, you're going to want it up-to-date and spotless for the optimal first impression.

The same goes for your LinkedIn account, or a portfolio of your work samples. If the platform allows, upload your resume to your account so it is accessible and ready to hand over to any employers you meet with at the career fair.

#### 4. Practice your pitch

How will you introduce yourself? Why are you interested in the company? What types of positions are you seeking? How is your previous work experience relevant? What do you plan on asking the representatives at the virtual career fair?

You'll want to spend some time mulling over questions like these so you're ready to answer them without hesitation when the time comes. Your well-thought-out responses could impress a recruiter—and even allow you to stand out from the crowd of applicants.

Your goal with an online job fair is to chat one-on-one with recruiters -- and by chat, we mean participate in a screening interview. You should prepare short accomplishment stories and responses to typical screening interview questions. Practice your responses - even write out an outline of what you want to say -- but do not memorize responses. Keep responses concise.

## 5. Make sure your Technology is ready to go

At least a few days before the fair, test your connection speed, camera, and microphone. Some virtual career fair sites even go as far as to have a testing link on their site -- so do NOT skip this feature. You'll want to make sure your device is capable of supporting you in the virtual career fair. While it is definitely preferable to have camera capabilities in case an employer would like to speak with you face to face, you don't necessarily have to have a device with a camera.

You should also try a dry run the day before the virtual career fair to ensure smooth sailing on the big day, advises Chris Brown, vice president of Human Resources at West's Unified Communications.

You may also want headphones if you cannot attend from a quiet, private location.

## At the virtual career fair

Once you log in, how can you stand out from the crowd at a virtual career fair? Here are a few pieces of key advice.

## 6. Wear a professional outfit

You can expect to interact with employers at a virtual career fair through chat functions. However, some employers may wish to speak with you face to face. Make the most out of this opportunity to make a connection by looking professional and presentable.

## 7. Attend from a distraction-free environment

In addition to your professional attire, you will also want to plan out where you'll be attending the virtual career fair from. A quiet location is ideal—and camera capabilities mean that you'll want to ensure it's distraction-free for employers.

## 8. Be ready to put yourself out there

At virtual career fairs, it's all the more important to exert yourself to make connections.

Once an employer engages you in a chat, the ball is in your court to introduce yourself and ask questions about the organization and open positions. Attendees must present themselves to employers and feel confident doing so.

## 9. Use clear, professional business communication

Being a virtual career fair, much of your communication will be done through written interactions in the chat function of the platform. To make a great first impression, you'll want to demonstrate articulate written communication.

## 10. Demonstrate strong body language in video chats

Just like in a traditional career fair, you'll want to present yourself as a confident and competent job seeker. One way that employers pick up on this is through your body language. If you're on a video chat with a recruiter at the virtual career fair, you'll want to stay conscious of your body language.

## 11. Ask for next steps and contact information

When talking to recruiters at the career fair, don't hesitate to be forward and offer to send a copy of your resume. You can also ask about the next steps in the process—whether that means getting in touch with human resources, filling out a job application or sitting down for a formal interview.

Before parting ways with a recruiter, be sure to take down their contact information. Some employers may have it uploaded and accessible within the virtual career fair platform. If not, ask how you can stay in touch. You'll need this information for following up after the virtual career fair.

## After the virtual career fair

Don't let your efforts go to waste by neglecting to follow up with connection after the virtual career fair.

## 12. Reach out the next day with a thank you

Whether it's an email, phone call or hand-written thank-you note, be sure to reach out to the connections you made at the career fair, thanking them for their time and further expressing your interest.

Because recruiters at career fairs come in contact with many candidates and resumes, you can use this chance to refresh their memory and remind them about why you're a promising candidate, why you're interested in the company and the skills or experience you bring to the table.

You may also want to send them your resume if you haven't already, along with your portfolio or work samples if you have any. You can also stay in touch by adding the recruiter on LinkedIn.

# CREATING AN EFFECTIVE RESUME

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The resume serves as a marketing tool to highlight your relevant experience and skills, as well as your accomplishments. Your resume will not get the job for you, but it will, if effective, result in interviews. The goals of your resume should be to:

- Show information in a concise, easy to read and understand format
- Illustrate your achievements, attributes and expertise
- Provide all relevant information necessary to allow a prospective employer to identify your transferable skills

## CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

- Lists your experiences, beginning with the most recent and/or relevant and focuses on work history and activities
- The content in each section will be organized in reverse chronological order, starting with what you are currently doing and working back in time

## RESUME FORMAT

- One 8.5" x 11" page using Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman or Courier font (resumes for graduate students can be 2 pages)
- Font size should be no smaller than 10 point font and no larger than 12 point font (excluding your name)
- Size of your name should be between 14 and 16 point
- Margin size will vary between .5" and .9" (all 4 sides) depending on space needed
- Use resume templates available on **HireARattler**
- When sending electronically or uploading, save your resume as a PDF

## RESUME CONTENT

An employer may only spend 15 seconds to 2 minutes reviewing your resume. You want to make sure you're providing your information in a clear, concise, and logical manner.

- Organize the sections on your resume, and the bullets within an experience, in order of relevance, listing the most important, marketable categories/information first
- Your name, contact information, an Objective (if appropriate) and Education, in that order, will always be the first 3 sections of your resume

## NAME/CONTACT INFORMATION

- Your name will always be listed first, at the top of the page; it will be the largest piece of information on the page (between 14 and 16 point)
- Include a current or permanent mailing address (street, city, state and zip). No need to list multiple addresses
- Include a phone number you can be reached at, preferably your cell phone. Be sure to have a professional voicemail set up!
- List a professional email address
- No need to label your information (ex. Email:..... Phone:.....)

## OBJECTIVE

- Tells the reader the purpose of your resume
- Should be no longer than 2 sentences
- If seeking an internship or co-op, include the time period which you'd be available to start
- Example: Seeking a summer 2018 internship in Marketing, specifically in Public Relations

## EDUCATION

- List the institution you most recently attended (most likely will be Florida A&M)
- Include the city and state
- Provide the official name of the degree you will receive in addition to your major (ex. Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing)
- List your graduation month and year
- Include your overall GPR (always!). You can also include a major GPR and list the highest one first
- List any minors or certificates on separate lines below your degree
- If you've attended other institutions and received 30 credit hours or more, list in reverse chronological order following your most recent institution
- Do not include high school information in this section, unless as a freshman, you are including high school experiences on your resume (See the Rattler Freshman resume on page 34 as an example)

## SECTIONS MAY INCLUDE

- Experience—categories include Work, Relevant or Volunteer Experience; use your bullets to highlight what you learned, accomplished or gained. Include results, the name of the company and location as well as your position and dates of employment
- Leadership
- Activities
- Honors or Awards
- Relevant Coursework—typically listed after Education section
- Skills—computer and technological
- Languages—include skill level (ex. Fluent in Spanish-speaking, reading, writing)
- Work Authorization
- Study Abroad—typically listed after Education section

## DO NOT INCLUDE

- Personal information including photographs, age or marital status
- Abstract or intangible skills (ex. creativity, organization, communication); instead use examples to show how you've demonstrated these skills
- References—these will be available on a separate page and provided when requested by the employer. There is no need to include the statement "References Available Upon Request"
- High school information if after your sophomore year of college (Exceptions include achievements such as Eagle Scout or Gold Award and experiences or awards that are relevant to your current career goals)

## BUILDING A BULLET

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- Start with an action verb (see list on following page)
- Identify
  - What you learned
  - What you gained
  - What you accomplished
- Include results when appropriate
- Quantify! When using numbers, always show them in their number form
- The number of bullets you include for an experience will depend on the information; provide enough information so the employer knows what you're talking about, but not so much they are overwhelmed with unnecessary details

# RESUME EXAMPLE

## RATTLER NAME

1234 Hullabaloo Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32307

(850) 999-9999  
john1.freshman@famu.edu

**OBJECTIVE** Seeking an entry-level position that will lead to opportunities in management or sales.

**EDUCATION** **Florida A&M University**, Tallahassee, FL May 20xx  
Bachelor of Science in University Studies – Leadership  
Minors in English and Psychology  
Major GPR: 3.30, Cumulative GPR 3.01

If you've attended more than one college or university, use this format for listing your education.

**Valdosta State University**, Valdosta, GA September 20xx – August 20xx  
Cumulative GPR: 3.50  
**ACHIEVEMENT:** Worked full-time while in college to fund 100% of expenses

**WORK EXPERIENCE** **Office Depot**, Tallahassee, FL May 20xx – Present  
*Copy and Print Center Manager*

- Organize copy and print jobs, establish deadlines, and guide a team of 15 associates.
- Partner with store management to ensure proper functionality of department.
- Perform duties requiring efficiency and the ability to multitask under high-stress situations.
- Complete performance evaluations of employees and provide written feedback.

**Cheddar's Casual Cafe**, Tallahassee, FL March 20xx – April 20xx  
*Wait Staff Supervisor*

- Trained and supervised 12 wait staff providing consistent guidance and support to employees.
- Ensured repeat business through attentive and friendly customer service.
- Personally responsible for monetary transactions in excess of \$2,000/day.

**LEADERSHIP** **Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.**, Florida A&M University January 20xx – Present  
*Treasurer*

- Manage annual budget of over \$30,000 including 2 scholarships awarded each semester.
- Maintain detailed records on money collected including type of fund, date collected, amount collected, and purpose.

**Fish Camp**, Florida A&M University March 20xx – August 20xx  
First-year student extended orientation program  
*Chairperson*, October 20xx – August 20xx

- Interviewed, selected, and managed 24 camp counselors from an applicant pool of 3,000.
- Developed and lead training on leadership, communication, team building, and risk management.
- Maintained a budget of approximately \$1,000 and contracted camp supplies and apparel.
- Served as a liaison between university administrators, camp directors, camp counselors, and approximately 200 new students.

*Counselor*, March 20xx – September 20xx

- Advised and mentored 2 groups of 12-14 freshmen throughout 2 camps.
- Provided a support system for over 100 incoming freshmen in order to ease transition into the college experience.

**HONORS AND AWARDS** **Dean's Honor Roll**, Florida A&M University Fall 20xx – Spring 20xx  
**Distinguished Student Award**, Florida A&M University Fall 20xx

**LANGUAGES** Fluent in Spanish (speaking, writing, reading)

**WORK AUTHORIZATION** Eligible to work in U.S. for xx months with Practical Training

All international students are required to list Work Authorization on their resumes. If you're unsure of how many months you have, contact International Student Services.

# LETTERS

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The two most common letters you will use for your internship, co-op, or full-time job search are the cover letter and thank you letter. When carefully crafted and customized for each reader, these letters can be the determining factor in your selection as a candidate to interview and hire.

## Cover Letter

A cover letter accompanies your resume when you send it to an employer by e-mail or U.S. mail. It is not necessary to use a cover letter when you hand deliver your resume at a career fair or during an interview.

The cover letter is your introduction and sales pitch. Its goal is to quickly capture the interest of the reader by effectively matching your qualifications to their needs. There is no such thing as a general cover letter - a cover letter is specific and targeted to the job. Draw upon your self-knowledge and employer research to highlight relevant skills, interests, and experiences. Convey energy and enthusiasm for your field, their industry, and the specific position.

### COVER LETTER

Your Address  
City, State ZP

Date

Their name  
Title  
Organization  
Address  
City, State, ZIP

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr./ Last name:

**Paragraph 1:** This paragraph is brief; 1-3 sentences. Tell the reader why you are writing. State the specific position for which you are applying. (If unknown, describe the type of work you seek.) Mention how you heard about the opportunity or the organization. If the position is out of town, state your interest in their location.

**Your goal:** Make an immediate connection with the reader.

**Paragraph 2:** This paragraph is longer, 3-8 sentences. It may be split into two paragraphs, if needed, Show your knowledge of the employer by matching your background with their needs, as discovered through your research. Highlight relevant skills, experiences, interests, and personal qualities that present your qualifications in the best light. If you have the benefit of a job description, show you meet their requirements. Convey energy and enthusiasm for your field and their opportunity. Refer the reader to enclosed resume that will provide additional information.

**Your goal:** Show you are the ideal candidate for the position.

**Paragraph 3:** This paragraph is brief, 1-2 sentences. Close by stating your genuine interest in working for them and in obtaining an interview at their convenience. Thank the reader for their time and consideration.

**Your goal:** Convey your sincere interest and appreciation

Sincerely,  
(Signature)  
Your typed name  
Enclosure.

## THANK YOU LETTERS

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The thank you letter is your expression of appreciation. It follows an interview (within 24 hours) when you would like further consideration as a candidate. It is your opportunity to reiterate key points in your interview or background and restate your genuine interest in the position. It also follows conversations with those who have generously offered their time and expertise to help you with your job search. Thank you letters show strong follow up skills and may be sent by e-mail, sent via U.S. mail, or handwritten.

### Sample e-mail thank you letter

<b>From:</b>	mtpurcel@abc.edu
<b>Send to:</b>	perkins@ccbe-mail.org
<b>Subject:</b>	Thank You
<b>Message:</b>	<p>Dear Ms. Perkins:</p> <p>I wanted to thank you for the interview yesterday at the University Career Center at NC State. As you recall, I am working as a part-time intern at Capitol Broadcasting in Raleigh.</p> <p>The Associate position we discussed is exactly what I am looking for. It will allow me to immediately contribute the technical skills I have acquired at Capitol Broadcasting and provide an opportunity for growth in the field of media research. Again, thank you for your time and consideration. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (919) 781-1234.</p> <p>Sincerely, Mary Martin</p>

#### SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER

2115 Dixie Trail  
Raleigh, NC 27607  
(919) 782-1234  
alsimpso@abc.edu

November 30, 2008

Ms. Emma Bloomquist, Requirer  
Quintiles, Inc.  
4709 Creekstone Dr., Suite 200  
Durham, NC 27703

Dear Ms. Bloomquist:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me yesterday at the PAMS Career Fair in NC State. As you may remember, I am graduating in May with a B.S. in Statistics. You had recommended the Analyst position in the Economics Department as a career that would allow me to blend my interest in forecasting with my analytical skills.

I would like to restate my strong interest in this position, and I have attached a copy of my resume for your review. Thank you for your consideration, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

*Alex Simpson*

Alex Simpson



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- Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index
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- Forbes Best Employers for Diversity
- Newsweek's 2020 Most Responsible Companies
- 2020 Most Responsible Companies

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- Great work-life balance
- Smart-casual dress code

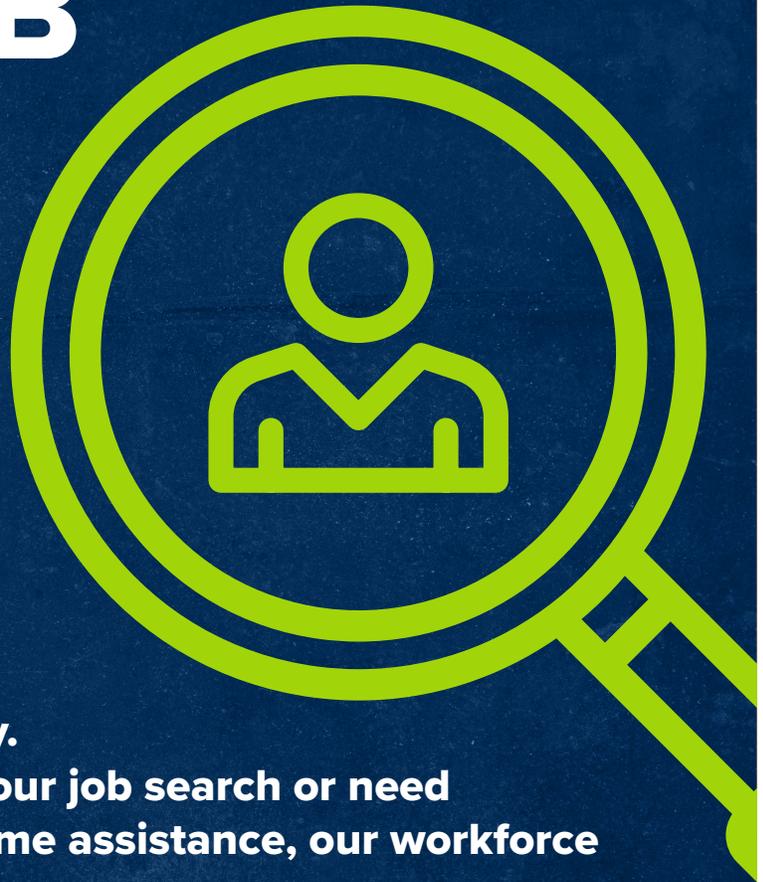
#### **INTERNSHIP & EARLY CAREER OPPORTUNITIES:**

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- Finance & Accounting
- Information Technology
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- Wealth & Asset Management
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