

CENTER FOR CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

# Student Career Guide 2023

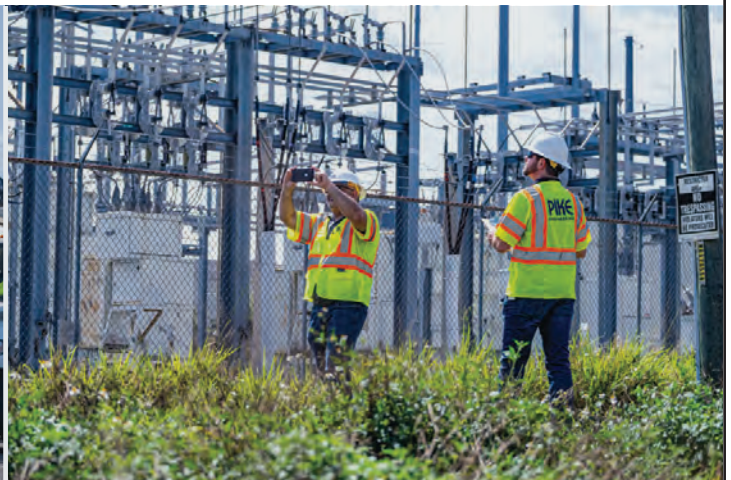


UNIVERSITY of  
**SOUTH FLORIDA**

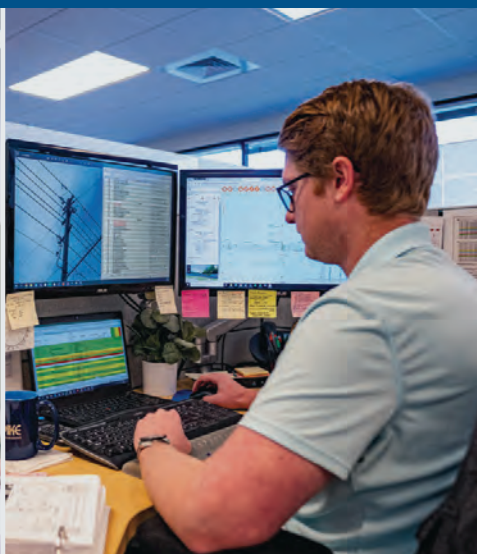


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# Why Should I Visit the Center for Career and Professional Development?

## Discover Career Options

- Utilize career coaching and job search resources.
- Identify the factors that influence your career development and assess your interests, values, personality, and skills.
- Explore majors or careers you may not be familiar with and formulate a plan to achieve your goals.
- Connect your field of study with occupations.
- Locate resources and sources of career information.

## Manage Your Career

- Meet with a career coach to establish your career goals.
- Build your skills, experiences, and accomplishments.
- Make connections with mentors and alumni.
- Network with professionals in your field of interest.

## Explore Valuable Experience

- Establish and build your resume through various experiences.
- Consider the following to grow your resume and experience:
  - Part-time job
  - Internship
  - Undergraduate research
  - Campus and community engagement
  - Leadership involvement
  - Study abroad experience

## Prepare for Life Beyond College

- Attend workshops, career fairs, and employer events.
- Search and apply for career opportunities.
- Prepare for interviews through a mock interview process.
- Build confidence by practicing salary negotiations.
- Consider graduate or professional school.



## Number of students engaged with the Center for Career and Professional Development in 2022-23:

- **Appointments/Drop-ins: 2,500 (unique students: 1,418)**
- **Workshops: 496**
- **Presentations: 1,281**
- **Career Fairs: 5,003**
- **Suit-A-Bull: 519**

## Contact Us

Visit a Career Coach virtually or in-person by making an appointment in Handshake (see page 9) or stop by for a Career Express drop-in meeting.

Visit our website at [careers.usf.edu](https://careers.usf.edu) for current appointment or drop-in hours.

### Locations:

#### Tampa campus

SVC 2088  
813-974-2171  
[tpa-careers@usf.edu](mailto:tpa-careers@usf.edu)  
Social Media: [@usftpacareers](https://twitter.com/usftpacareers)

#### St Petersburg campus

SLC 2300  
727-873-4129  
[STP-CareerCenter@usf.edu](mailto:STP-CareerCenter@usf.edu)  
Social Media: [@usfspcareers](https://twitter.com/usfspcareers)

#### Sarasota-Manatee campus

C 107  
941-359-4703  
[SAR-Career1@usf.edu](mailto:SAR-Career1@usf.edu)



# Begin Your Journey

You entered USF to earn a degree and enter the workforce with an amazing job. That journey begins now, and the **Center for Career and Professional Development** can assist with your career journey.

Engaging with the central career center and utilizing our resources is one of the most important things you can do during your time at USF. Whether you're exploring career and major options; writing a resume and cover letter; searching for the right internship, on-campus job, or starting your full-time job search; we are here to support you – and this Student Career Guide is the perfect place to start!

The Center for Career and Professional Development inspires USF Bulls to take an active role in their career development by leveraging engaging programs, meaningful experiences,

and comprehensive services, which are provided in partnership with employers, faculty, staff, and the global community.

USF students are smart, resilient, and hard-working. Use this guide to explore career pathways that match your skills and interests. By using this guide, you will learn how to:

- Explore pathways that align with your skills and interests
- Expand your career readiness competencies and experiences
- Market yourself effectively to potential employers and graduate schools.

## What We Offer

### Individual Appointments and Workshops

- On-Campus Employment Search
- Career and Major Exploration
- Internship and Co-op Search
- Résumé, CV, and Cover Letter
- Interview Tips and Preparation
- Mock Interviews
- LinkedIn Assistance
- Full-time Job Search Strategies
- Job Offer and Salary Negotiation
- Graduate and Professional School Planning

### Career Express Drop-In

While you're here at USF, you might need answers to some quick career-related questions and you may not want to wait for an appointment with a Career Coach. The Center for Career and Professional Development offers in-person, drop-in services for our students and alumni. Career Express is offered on a first-come, first-served basis and no appointment is needed.

These brief 15-minute sessions allow you to ask questions and receive assistance with:

- Articulating experiences to employers
- Reviewing your resume and CV
- Crafting your cover letters
- Developing your Handshake profile

Career Express is offered during the fall and spring semesters. For this semester's hours, please visit our website at [careers.usf.edu](https://careers.usf.edu).

### Career Fairs and Events

If you are looking for an internship or cooperative education (co-op) opportunity to gain experience, or are seeking a full-time position, we invite you to attend any of our upcoming career fairs.

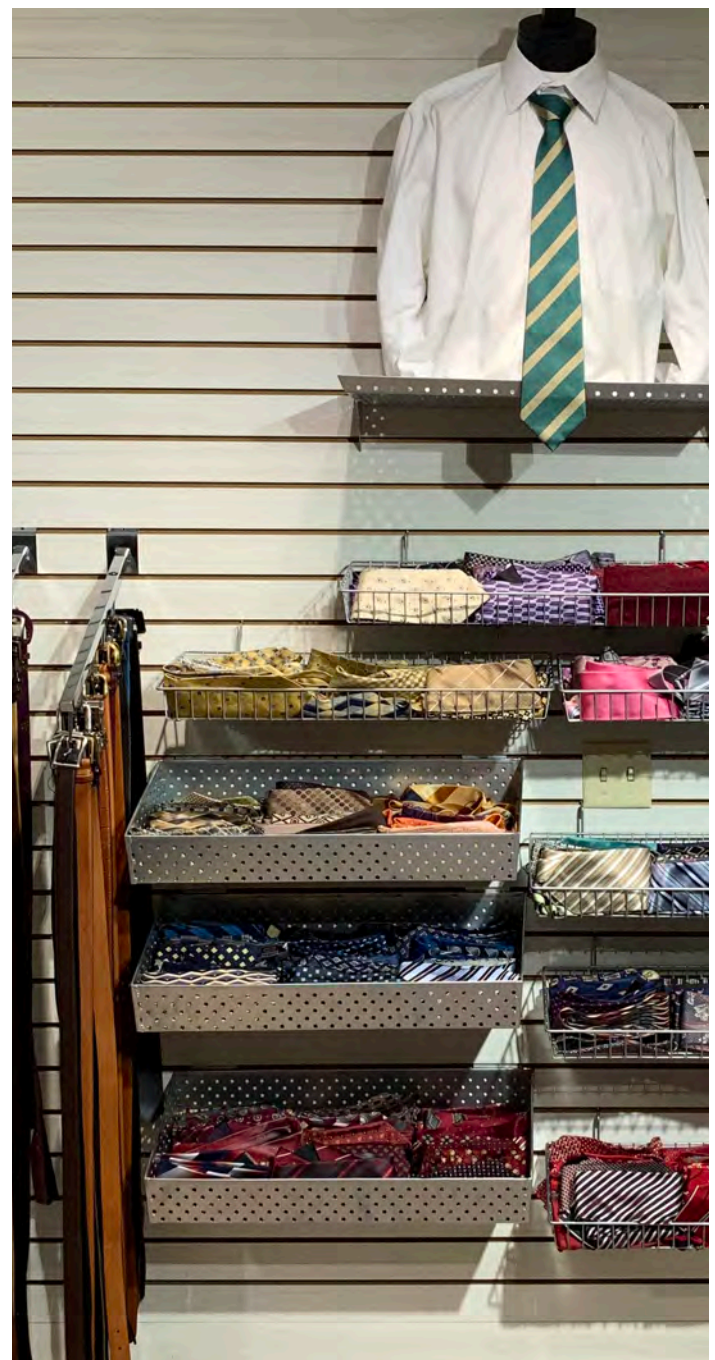
Our on-campus career fairs give you the opportunity to meet in-person with representatives from companies and learn about their available positions, what it is like to work for them, and how the application process works.

We encourage you to dress professionally and arrive prepared by researching employers, practicing your elevator pitch, and printing copies of your resume. Students and alumni from all three USF campuses are invited to attend.

Three or four career fairs occur every fall and spring, bringing more than 500 employers to campus each year. Visit our website at [careers.usf.edu](https://careers.usf.edu) for more information.

### Suit-A-Bull

Students can visit Suit-A-Bull to acquire attire that can be used for job and internship interviews, career fairs and career events, or other employment related occasions where professional clothing is required. Learn more on our website at [careers.usf.edu](https://careers.usf.edu).



## Getting Started

# Career Readiness Module



### Welcome to USF

The Centers for Career and Professional Development are here to help you explore career and internship options and develop a plan to position you for lifelong career success.

Our **Career Readiness module**, required to be completed in your first year at USF, features a brief video and information about Handshake, job and internship search resources, and the other tools and programs available to you.

You can also access the **My Florida Future** dashboard from the module, where you will find employment outcomes and estimated salaries associated with your degree.

### Your First Steps

**Set aside some time to complete the module.** Log into Canvas via [my.usf.edu](https://my.usf.edu).

After reviewing the video and information, complete the module by successfully taking the three-question affirmation quiz at the end.

**It is important that you complete this required module as quickly as possible since it is mandated by the State of Florida.**

**Then add "Visit My Campus Center for Career & Professional Development Office" to your *To Do List* this semester** to meet our team, sign up for events, and get ready to *Grab Your Future by the Horns!*

#### Tampa campus

SVC 2088  
(813) 974-2171  
[CareerServices@usf.edu](mailto:CareerServices@usf.edu)  
[careers.usf.edu](https://careers.usf.edu)

#### St Petersburg campus

SLC 2300  
(727) 873-4129  
[STP-CareerCenter@usf.edu](mailto:STP-CareerCenter@usf.edu)  
[careers.usf.edu](https://careers.usf.edu)

#### Sarasota-Manatee campus

C 107  
(941) 359-4703  
[SAR-Career1@usf.edu](mailto:SAR-Career1@usf.edu)  
[careers.usf.edu](https://careers.usf.edu)





# Handshake

Handshake is the University of South Florida’s centralized career management platform where students can research employers, search for internships, part-time and full-time jobs, network with other students, schedule career coaching appointments, RSVP for events, and much more.

## Your Career Development Begins Here!

### HANDSHAKE NAVIGATION

Handshake's homepage and simple navigation bar help you quickly find the information you are seeking.

- **Jobs:** Search for part-time on and off campus positions, full-time jobs, and internships. Be sure to use the filtering tool to tailor your results.
- **Events:** Find events from the Center for Career and Professional Development, as well as employer information sessions, workshops, mock interviews, office hours, and more.
- **Employers:** Learn about organizations that use the Handshake platform to recruit students for internships and jobs and message them with questions.
  - View and message other students who have worked for an employer.
  - See reviews from former or current employees.
  - Ask recruiters questions to learn more.
- **Career Center:** This drop-down menu offers resources to interact with the USF’s Career Coaching staff.
  - Schedule an appointment with a Career Coach.
- **My Profile:** See what your profile looks like to an employer, edit as needed, and make it public for employers to find you.
- **My Career Interests:** Update your interests to see the tailored homepage and suggested events and positions.



**THE SCHOOL OF LIFE**

**Penny Sullivan**  
School of Life  
Bachelors, Veterinary Sciences  
Graduates May 2027

**Your profile is 100% complete**

✔ Your profile is visible to employers, students and alumni across all Handshake education institutions.  
You'll be able to message students and alumni who have similar interests or experiences.  
This can be changed anytime in [settings](#).

**See Employer View**

**Your Interests**  
Only visible to employers

**JOB HUNT**  
[Are you currently looking for a job?](#)

### My Journey

Effective communicator with a passion for animals.

### Education

**School of Life** primary education  
Bachelors  
Ending May 2027  
**Major in** Veterinary Sciences

[Add School](#)

### Work & Volunteer Experience

**Handshake**  
Support Special  
Jan 2020 - Present (3 years, 1 month) | San Francisco, CA

- Delivers a smooth, personalized, & democratized customer experience to all Handshake users.
- Maintains a standard level of excellence regarding response times, resolution times, & quality of customer support experience.
- Works cross-functionality with teammates across different departments.

[Add Work Experience](#)

### Organizations & Extracurriculars

**head Coach**  
Tennis  
Jan 2020 - Jan 2021 (1 year, 1 month) | San Francisco, California, United States  
Guided a team to tournaments!

[Add An Organization](#)



### Access Handshake

- Access Handshake through the MyUSF portal or <https://usf.joinhandshake.com/>
- Activate your account
- Set your privacy accordingly; determine what access level works best for your needs.
  - **Private:** You'll be able to apply for jobs but employers won't be able to search proactively for you.
  - **Employers:** Your profile will be visible to employers. You may receive messages about potential job opportunities from employers contacting you directly after they review your profile. (STRONGLY RECOMMENDED)
  - **Community:** Your profile will be visible to employers, students, and alumni across all Handshake colleges and universities. You'll be able to message students and alumni who have similar interests or experiences.

### Complete Your Handshake Profile

- Upload a resume and make a default resume public for employers to see.
- Add a picture and a bio.
- Select as many SKILLS which you have developed. Remember that some employers search by skills instead of majors and experiences. This is a very important part of your profile.
- Add your current and/or past work experience (internships, campus jobs, etc.) since graduating high school.

- Add any clubs, organizations, community service, and residence hall involvement to show how well-rounded you are.
- Consider adding any interesting courses or projects you worked on. Employers are looking for intellectually curious students who have project management skills.

### Schedule an Appointment with a Career Coach (Desktop Option)

- Click **Career Center** on the left navigation menu.
- Click on **Appointments** from your career center's page, located below the school name.
- To request a new appointment, click the **Schedule a New Appointment** button on the page, then click on 'USF Tampa Campus - Center for Career and Professional Development'.
- Click on the desired category, then click on the desired type of appointment. A list of available appointment dates will appear based on the category and type selected.
- Select your desired Appointment medium from the dropdown menu, then enter details about the appointment in the 'What can we help you with?' section.
- You'll be taken to the appointment overview page, where you can add comments before the appointment, or cancel the appointment by clicking the red button **Cancel**.

continued



### Schedule an Appointment with a Career Coach *(Mobile Option)*

- Tap **Account** in the lower-right corner of the screen.
- Tap **Career Center**.
- Tap on **Appointments** from your Career Center's page, located below the school name.
- Tap the blue button to **Schedule A New Appointment**.
- Tap on the desired category, then tap on the desired type of appointment. A list of available appointment dates will be listed based on the category and type selected.
- You can use the Category, Type, Staff Member, and Appointment Medium menus to change selections and choose from available appointment options.
- Tap the arrows to the left and right of the **Week of [Day, Date]** dropdown to locate your preferred week, then scroll down to locate the appointment times for the selected date.
- Tap on a time that works for you from the list that appears under the date.
- Select your desired Appointment medium from the dropdown menu, then enter details about the appointment in the "What can we help you with?" section.
- When you're ready, click the green **Request** button in the lower-right corner of the screen.

# My Florida Future

My Florida Future is a college and career planning online tool dedicated to providing students and parents with a wealth of information to help make better informed decisions about educational options in the State University System of Florida.

The website is interactive and allows students to explore data at the State University System level including salary, graduate employment, student debt, and educational opportunities. Students are able to view content on the identified topics below by visiting the My Florida Future Dashboard at [www.flbog.edu/myfloridafuture/my-florida-future-dashboard/](http://www.flbog.edu/myfloridafuture/my-florida-future-dashboard/).



## Earnings Over Time

Compare post-graduate earnings for each academic program at 1, 5, and 10 years after graduation



## Beyond the Bachelor's

Explore earnings potential over time of pursuing additional education beyond the bachelor's degree



## Typical Loan Amounts

Examine the proportion of students in the university system who graduate with student debt



## Compare Earnings

Compare low, median, and high wages of multiple programs simultaneously



## Earnings by Major Group

View interquartile ranges for post-graduation earnings in a single display for quick comparison



## Loans Over Time

Explore the projected monthly student debt payments as a proportion of monthly earnings over a ten year period





# College Career Development Plan

Career planning is a process. Evaluate where you are in your own career planning process and act now to prepare yourself for the job search.

## Freshman Year

- Meet with a Career Coach to establish career needs.
- Begin developing your professional resume.
- Look for opportunities to build your resume.
- Build a Handshake profile.
- Attend a career fair to explore internship and career options and research different paths.
- Follow USF's Center for Career and Professional Development on social media @usftpacareers

## Junior Year

- Pursue a leadership role in a campus organization.
- Spend time reflecting on your experiences and the skills and Career Readiness Competencies you have developed to include on your resume and for interviews.
- Update your resume quarterly and have it reviewed by a Career Coach.
- Update the information in your Handshake account.
- Attend career fairs and employer information sessions.
- Build a LinkedIn profile and further your network by joining groups and adding contacts.
- Complete an internship or summer job that aligns with your educational and career goals.
- Visit Suit-A-Bull to have attire on hand for networking and career events.
- Visit the headshot booth in the lobby of the Center for Career and Professional Development and take a headshot, wearing professional attire, for your LinkedIn and Handshake profiles.

## Sophomore Year

- Join a career-related organization or professional association.
- Research specific careers and required qualifications.
- Attend a Resume Writing workshop for further guidance.
- Attend career center workshops, employer information sessions, and career fairs.
- Pursue internship or co-op opportunities if you feel ready and enroll in IDS 3947 or 3949/4949 to receive academic credit, if appropriate (see page 41).
- Participate in job shadowing or conduct an informational interview with a professional in your field of interest.
- Begin developing useful skills through part-time jobs, internships, and volunteering.

## Senior Year

- Tailor your cover letter and resume for the specific industry and positions you are interested in.
- Meet with a Career Coach to develop your job search strategy.
- Update your resume for the job search.
- Update Handshake account and participate in on-campus interviews.
- Attend career center workshops, career fairs, and employer information sessions.
- Research and develop a target list of potential employers.
- Schedule a mock interview to practice before the real deal.
- Develop an active network by joining a professional organization.
- Be aware of your online presence and how this may affect your job search.

# Career and Major Exploration





## Connecting to Careers

As you consider your future career and the degree best suited to support your aspirations, there is some self exploration you can do to ensure a good fit. Then tap into the resources we offer to further refine your direction and goals.

## *A great career “fit” comprises your personal interests, values, skills, and knowledge.*

### Strengths and Skills

Consider the tasks and duties you would be interested in doing on a job? What are you good at doing? What feels natural and not necessarily like work?

### Areas of Interest

What do you find enjoyable? How do you like to spend your time outside of school or work? Is there an organization, activity, or industry that is exciting to you?

### Major Does Not Equal Career

Your major is preparing you for a variety of career paths. In your major, you are learning specific content pertaining to your field of study and industry, while developing transferable skills. These skills may include the ability to think analytically, to work in diverse teams, ability to view issues from multiple perspectives, find solutions to problems, communicate complex ideas, and so much more.

### Major Skills Equal Marketable Skills

Employers might not know that they need to hire your major, but you have an opportunity to show them what you bring to their company or organization. Be able to articulate the types of skills you gained in your education and how those skills are applicable to the position in which you are interested.

### Career Values

We all know we hold values intrinsic to our lives, but have you thought about how your values are related to work? What holds more importance to you: making a lot of money or making a difference in the world? Having friends at work or are you driven by competition? Having creative independence or routine work? These values will make the difference between enjoying your job and dreading work every day. Having a solid understanding of what is most important to you in a career will help you evaluating career options and future employment settings.

### Personality

Your personality type will not dictate what you “should” do but will help you in identifying workplace settings that best align with your way or working. Do you prefer to have a set schedule or ambiguity in your day? Do you like to develop big ideas or work through the details of implementing these ideas? Do you prefer to work 1:1 or on your own, or with a large group? The more you understand your natural way of operating, the better you can align future workplace settings.



# Identify Your Values

## What do my values have to do with my career selection or choice of major?

Your values are the foundation of every aspect of your life. Therefore, your values are significant in deciding the type of work you want to do and the environment that is most conducive to your success.

Select the Top 30 values that resonate the most from the list:

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abundance      | <input type="checkbox"/> Daring         | <input type="checkbox"/> Intelligence        | <input type="checkbox"/> Reliability     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acceptance     | <input type="checkbox"/> Decisiveness   | <input type="checkbox"/> Intuition           | <input type="checkbox"/> Resilience      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability | <input type="checkbox"/> Dedication     | <input type="checkbox"/> Joy                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Resourcefulness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Achievement    | <input type="checkbox"/> Dependability  | <input type="checkbox"/> Kindness            | <input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advancement    | <input type="checkbox"/> Development    | <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge           | <input type="checkbox"/> Responsiveness  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure      | <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity      | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership          | <input type="checkbox"/> Risk Taking     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Empathy        | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning            | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ambition       | <input type="checkbox"/> Encouragement  | <input type="checkbox"/> Love                | <input type="checkbox"/> Security        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiasm     | <input type="checkbox"/> Loyalty             | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Control    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Autonomy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethics         | <input type="checkbox"/> Making a Difference | <input type="checkbox"/> Selflessness    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balance        | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mindfulness         | <input type="checkbox"/> Service         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being the Best | <input type="checkbox"/> Expressiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> Motivation          | <input type="checkbox"/> Simplicity      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benevolence    | <input type="checkbox"/> Fairness       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open-Mindedness     | <input type="checkbox"/> Spirituality    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boldness       | <input type="checkbox"/> Family         | <input type="checkbox"/> Optimism            | <input type="checkbox"/> Stability       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brilliance     | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility    | <input type="checkbox"/> Originality         | <input type="checkbox"/> Success         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calmness       | <input type="checkbox"/> Freedom        | <input type="checkbox"/> Passion             | <input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caring         | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendships    | <input type="checkbox"/> Peace               | <input type="checkbox"/> Thankfulness    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Challenge      | <input type="checkbox"/> Fun            | <input type="checkbox"/> Perfection          | <input type="checkbox"/> Thoughtfulness  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charity        | <input type="checkbox"/> Generosity     | <input type="checkbox"/> Performance         | <input type="checkbox"/> Traditionalism  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheerfulness   | <input type="checkbox"/> Grace          | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal            | <input type="checkbox"/> Trustworthiness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleverness     | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth         | <input type="checkbox"/> Playfulness         | <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration  | <input type="checkbox"/> Happiness      | <input type="checkbox"/> Popularity          | <input type="checkbox"/> Uniqueness      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commitment     | <input type="checkbox"/> Health         | <input type="checkbox"/> Power               | <input type="checkbox"/> Usefulness      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community      | <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty        | <input type="checkbox"/> Preparedness        | <input type="checkbox"/> Versatility     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compassion     | <input type="checkbox"/> Humility       | <input type="checkbox"/> Proactive           | <input type="checkbox"/> Vision          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consistency    | <input type="checkbox"/> Humor          | <input type="checkbox"/> Proactivity         | <input type="checkbox"/> Warmth          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contribution   | <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusiveness  | <input type="checkbox"/> Professionalism     | <input type="checkbox"/> Wealth          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperation    | <input type="checkbox"/> Independence   | <input type="checkbox"/> Punctuality         | <input type="checkbox"/> Well-Being      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity     | <input type="checkbox"/> Individuality  | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality             | <input type="checkbox"/> Wisdom          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Credibility    | <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation     | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition         | <input type="checkbox"/> Zeal            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curiosity      | <input type="checkbox"/> Inspiration    | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships       |  |

# Your Values

Career planning is a process. Evaluate where you are in your own career planning process and act now to prepare yourself for the job search.

## List Your Top 10 Values:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

## From Your Top 10, Choose your Top 4 Values:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_



# Journey Reflection Activity

Understanding your own unique interests, values, and motivation is important in career exploration. Answer the following questions.

**What classes do you like (high school, college)?**

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**What comes natural to you?**

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**What are you most proud of?**

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**What interests you?**

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**If there were no barriers, what would your dream job entail?**

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**What do you enjoy doing?**

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# Resources

## **Study What You Enjoy and Get Involved!**

In order to choose a major or career path you must know yourself. Knowing yourself entails identifying values, interests, personality, and skills (VIPS). To achieve long-term career satisfaction, it is important to implement all four into your future career. Personal experiences help you to identify and learn more about your VIPS.

Your major does not define your career path! You will be more motivated to attend class if you are interested in what you are studying. Engage on campus, and remember experiences help you to better understand your values, interests, personality, and skills.

Review the following tools for Career and Major Exploration. Visit our website at [careers.usf.edu](https://careers.usf.edu) to further explore the following tools.

## **Tools to Use**

### **MyPlan**

A web-based career planning resource designed to help students and professionals plan more fulfilling lives by making well-informed decisions about their education and careers. MyPlan can help you explore options and bring clarity and insight into figuring out what's right for you. The assessments in MyPlan help you explore your personality, skills, interests, and work values and provides results that relate to different occupations. You can use your results and explore the information in MyPlan on colleges, careers, and majors. Access this resource with the MyPlan Code ZD2WJJTC.

### **What Can I Do With This Major?**

This website resource features 100 major profiles with information on common career paths, types of employers that hire in the field, and strategies to maximize opportunities.

### **Occupational Information O\*NET Online**

The O\*NET Program is the nation's primary source of occupational information. The O\*NET database, containing hundreds of standardized and occupation-specific descriptors on almost 1,000 occupations covering the entire U.S. economy.

### **Occupational Outlook Handbook**

A publication of the United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics that includes information about the nature of work, working conditions, training and education, earnings, and job outlook for hundreds of different occupations in the United States.

### **Candid Career**

This online resource has thousands of career videos to help you find your dream job. You can find interview tips, job information, or career guidance for students with this awesome tool.

### **Career Coach**

This tool provides the world's most detailed information about occupations, skills in demand, and career pathways, providing labor market insight to employers, educational institutions, and government agencies.



# Resumes, CVs, and Cover Letters



# Resume

## What is a Resume?

- Marketing tool and first impression about the candidate (you)
- Primary purpose is to help you stand out and land an interview
- Provides a potential employer with your academic achievements, experiences, skills, certifications, projects, and more
- Concise and easy-to-read document in which most employers will initially spend less than 10 seconds reviewing the resume to determine a potential fit for the position

## What to Include?

Resume sections should be tailored to the position for which you are applying. However, there are some required and various optional sections that should be included on your resume.

### Required Sections

Employers look for specific content on a resume, therefore, the required sections help to quickly identify your experience, skills, and abilities should include the following.

### Contact Information

- Name—slightly larger font than the rest of the document
- Email address and cell phone number
- Address (City, State) (optional)
- LinkedIn URL (if profile is complete) (optional)

### Education

- University and city/state
- Major(s), minor(s), and concentration(s), if applicable
- Degree and month/year of graduation
- GPA - if stating Major GPA, consider including cumulative GPA, too, and do not round up!
- Relevant Coursework – include some of the unique courses and labs in your major will show content knowledge, especially if you do not have actual work experience in the area/industry or applying for an internship

### Experience

- Always include job title, name of organization, location, and dates worked
- Utilize strong action verbs to start each bullet and quantify results when possible
- Explain the actions you took and the impact these actions had on the stakeholders and organization
- Demonstrate what was learned and the skills developed, not just the tasks/jobs that were performed

- Do not limit “Experience” to jobs or employment, you can include project work or volunteer involvement
- Use bullet pointed statements to demonstrate accomplishments and demonstrate skills

### Skills

- Include computer, technical, language, science/laboratory, and production skills when applicable
- Do not list soft skills, instead incorporate those skills into your experiences through your bullets to demonstrate how they were developed

## Resume Tips

- Use Microsoft Word, not Google Docs or Pages
- Save resume as a PDF
- One page, be brief but provide sufficient information
- Font size should be between 10.5 - 11 pt., margins between 0.5-1 inch
- Consistency and clarity are essential
- Utilize strong action verbs to begin your bullet points, but vary word selection
- Tailor your resume to each position and use keywords used in the job posting
- Include numbers/percentages to quantify and results/ accomplishments as possible
- Emphasize your unique skills
- Make your name stand out it should be larger than body font and bold
- Keep your resume updated with experiences, skills, and accomplishments
- References and images should not be on resume
- Bullet pointed statements should be 1-2 lines in length and focus on impact or result
- Statements should use present tense verbiage for present positions and past tense for past positions, written in first-person, and without pronouns
- Grammar and correct spelling and essential

## Optional Sections

### Key Projects

List your projects wherever they are most relevant to the job you're applying. Key projects can highlight transferable skills.

### Leadership, Service, Volunteer

- List quality over quantity in this section
- Name the organization, role/position title, date, and a possibly a bullet describing skills, responsibilities, and/or accomplishments

### Membership or Involvement

Choose to highlight items that will emphasize your engagement, involvement, and activities most relevant to your field of interest and/or the position you are applying to.

### Honors and Awards

- Relevant accomplishments, scholarships or awards earned for exceeding average standards in either academics, co-curricular, athletics, or in a work environment
- Honors can also be included under Education instead of listed separately



# How to Write Bullet Points

## 3 RULES FOR BULLET POINTS

1

Start with an action verb

2

Describe what, how, why, outcome/result

3

Use numbers & percentages

## WHAT

### What did you do?

Situation/Task: What did you do in the role? Think about all the big and little tasks you completed or are currently doing in that experience. Everything counts!

## HOW

### How did you do it?

Actions/Skills: How did you do the task or experience? How many/often? Identify how you accomplished the task and what skills transferable skills you developed as you were completing it. Quantify your experiences!

## WHY

### Why did you do it?

Results/Purpose: Why did you do the task? Why does it relate to the job position? This element adds context and results to the tasks.



## LIST OF ACTION VERBS

LEADERSHIP	COMMUNICATION	RESEARCH	TECHNICAL	CREATIVE
Administered	Addressed	Analyzed	Adapted	Acted
Advanced	Advertised	Assessed	Applied	Amended
Assigned	Authored	Assigned	Assembled	Briefed
Assisted	Collaborated	Benchmarked	Built	Conceptualized
Chaired	Condensed	Collected	Calculated	Consulted
Coached	Consulted	Compared	Constructive	Created
Consolidated	Contacted	Conducted	Converted	Customized
Coordinated	Conveyed	Critiqued	Determined	Designed
Demonstrated	Corresponded	Detected	Designed	Determined
Developed	Defined	Determined	Engineered	Drafted
Directed	Described	Diagnosed	Fabricated	Edited
Established	Discussed	Evaluated	Fortified	Drew
Generated	Drafted	Experimented	Installed	Entertained
Guided	Elicited	Explored	Maintained	Fashioned
Headed	Influenced	Extracted	Operated	Formulated
Improved	Interviewed	Formulated	Programmed	Illustrated
Led	Lectured	Gathered	Rectified	Initiated
Managed	Marketed	Identified	Regulated	Introduced
Merged	Moderated	Interpreted	Remodeled	Invented
Originated	Negotiated	Invented	Repaired	Modeled
Oversaw	Presented	Investigated	Replaced	Originated
Provides	Proposed	Measured	Revamped	Performed
Represented	Publicized	Researched	Restored	Photographed
Reviewed	Resolved	Solved	Specialized	Wrote
Streamlined	Solicited	Summarized	Standardized	
Strengthened	Synthesized	Surveyed	Upgraded	
Supervised	Translated	Tested	Utilized	
TEACHING	ORGANIZATION	DATA	FINANCIAL	OTHER VERBS
Adapted	Adapted	Adjusted	Adjusted	Achieved
Advised	Arranged	Allocated	Allocated	Completed
Clarified	Advised	Appraised	Analyzed	Expanded
Coached	Catalogued	Assessed	Appraised	Exceeded
Communicated	Categorized	Audited	Audited	Improved
Conducted	Charted	Balanced	Balanced	Pioneered
Coordinated	Clarified	Calculated	Budgeted	Reduced
Critiqued	Classified	Computed	Calculated	Resolved
Developed	Coded	Estimated	Computed	Restored
Enabled	Communicated	Formulated	Corrected	Spearheaded
Encouraged	Compiled	Forecasted	Displayed	Succeeded
Evaluated	Evaluated	Measured	Established	Transformed
Explained	Explained	Projected	Estimated	
Facilitated	Filed	Reduced	Evaluated	
Focused	Generated		Forecasted	
Guided	Logged	<b>Helping</b>	Managed	
Individualized	Maintained	Advocated	Marketed	
Informed	Monitored	Aided	Planned	
Instilled	Organized	Assisted	Prepared	
Instructed	Processed	Cared for	Programmed	
Motivated	Recorded	Counseled	Projected	
Simulated	Reviewed	Diagnosed	Reconciled	
Taught	Routed	Provided	Reduced	
Tested	Standardized	Rehabilitated	Researched	
Trained	Systematized	Supported	Revised	
Tutored	Trained	Volunteered		
	Updated			

## NACE Career Readines Competencies

Career readiness of college graduates is of critical importance in higher education, in the labor market, and in the public arena. Career readiness is the attainment and demonstration of essential competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition to the workplace.

Conveying these competencies through your resume and application will allow you to show those viewing it that you have the qualities needed to succeed. Review the Career Readiness Competencies below with a brief overview of what each one entails.

COMPETENCY	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
 <b>Critical Thinking</b>	Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information	Manage time commitments and various responsibilities when the organization is short-staffed
 <b>Communication</b>	Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization	Take a public speaking course and utilize the writing center to exercise and develop these skills
 <b>Teamwork</b>	Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively together, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities	Challenge yourself to collaborate with other individuals in a group setting (i.e., intramurals, group project, leadership organization)
 <b>Technology</b>	Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals	Brainstorm ideas to help build and promote a digital presence for a department, office, or organization on campus
 <b>Leadership</b>	Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals	Organize a fundraiser or new opportunities to recruit and lead others, or serve on a planning committee for a club/organization
 <b>Professionalism</b>	Know that work environments differ, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace	Manage stressful situations and keep a level head as a leader of an on-campus club/organization
 <b>Career and Self Development</b>	Develop oneself and one's career through continual learning, awareness of strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking	Gain practical experience towards your professional goals through part-time work or internships
 <b>Equity and Inclusion</b>	Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills, to equitably engage people from different cultures; engage in anti-racist practices	Take a humanities course outside of your typical academic program to engage in diverse experiences and dialogue

# Rocky D. Bull

rockydbull@usf.edu | (813) 123-4567 | Tampa, FL | linkedin.com/in/rockydbull | github.com/rocky/

## EDUCATION

**Bachelor of Science in Computer Science**, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL Expected Dec 2023  
**Major GPA: 3.75 | Cumulative GPA: 3.52**

**Key specialized courses:** Software Engineering, Software Systems Design, User Interfaces, Networks, and Networks II

## SKILLS

Platforms/Operating Systems: Android, iOS, Windows 7/8/10, Mac OS X, Linux, UNIX, Ubuntu  
 Programming: C, C++, C#, Java, Javascript, HTML, CSS, SML, PHP, Python, R, Perl, Objective-C, Swift  
 Technologies/Environment: MySQL, Microsoft Access, Mathcad, MATLAB, Eclipse, Netbeans, SharpDevelop, MS Visual Studio, Microsoft .NET Framework, MS Dynamics, Netsuite ERP, SAP, Google Angular JS, LAMP Stack, Node.js, Spring Framework, Apache Tomcat, ASP.NET, MS Project  
 Network tools: Wireshark, MRTG

## RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

**Cloud Platform Software Engineering Intern**, Google, Mountain View, CA May 2022 – Aug 2022

- Applied cloud computing stacks, comprehensive software technologies, and open-source tools to troubleshoot key cloud performance issues within Google's App Engine, Compute Engine, and Cloud Storage products.
- Used Agile methodologies to build front-end, back-end, and full-stack services for three innovative cloud products and submitted them to senior management: reduced coding and increased data migration speeds.

**Web UI Developer Intern**, Disney Parks & Resorts, Lake Buena Vista, FL May 2021 – Aug 2021

- Developed and implemented new sales support tools for Disney Media Networks as member of Data Integration team.
- Built data visualization tools, designed user interface (HTML, CSS, and JavaScript), and integrated data output (XML) into business intelligence tools leading to a 15% increase in advertising sales from improved business insights.

## KEY PROJECTS

**Senior Capstone Design Project**, USF Jan 2022 – May 2022

- Led a team of three students to develop educational video game for USF Diabetes Center in Morsani College of Medicine.
- Programmed visual interface and game back end in C using Allegro game engine (over 5,000 lines of code).
- Completed an electronic game titled "Billy's Daily Shot" – now used daily by children in USF Diabetes Center waiting room.

**Mobile Application Development Project**, USF Jan 2021 – May 2021

- Elected team manager to develop iOS mobile app to gather and easily share all information on users' favorite sports teams.
- Programmed mobile app in Swift to coalesce all player stats, team schedules and records, news articles, and tweets.
- Completed and entered mobile app design into Apple's mobile app submission process.

## LEADERSHIP AND AFFILIATIONS

- **President**, IEEE Computer Society (member since 2019), USF Student Chapter Sept 2020 – Present
- **Member**, ACM (Association for Computing Machinery), USF Student Chapter Aug 2020 – Present
- **Secretary**, Women in Computer Science and Engineering, USF Student Chapter Jan 2020 – May 2021
- **Captain**, Intramural Soccer, USF Aug 2019 – Jun 2021

## HONORS AND AWARDS

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place, JPMorgan Chase sponsored USF Hack-A-Thon, Tampa, FL Apr 2021
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Poster Presentation, Annual Research Day, USF College of Engineering, Tampa, FL Feb 2020
- Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Aug 2019 – Present

# Rocky D. Bull

rockydbull@usf.edu | (813) 123-4567 | Tampa, FL | linkedin.com/in/rockydbull

## EDUCATION

**Bachelor of Science in Public Health** Expected May 2024

**Concentration: Healthcare Administration**

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

**GPA:** 3.8/4.0

**Relevant Coursework:** Intro to Epidemiology, Foundations of Global Health, Understanding U.S. Health Care, Overview of Public Health Programs & Policies

## RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

**Medical Assistant, USFCare, Tampa FL** May 2020 – Present

- Update medical records of 100+ patients through medical database systems to ensure that patients' data is accurate for doctors' use
- Administer prescribed medications to 100+ patients and discuss the various processes they must follow up on after their doctor's visit

## WORK EXPERIENCE

**Tutor, Bulls4Kids, Tampa, FL** Dec 2019 – March 2021

- Tutored 10-15 high school students in both science and non-science courses
- Prepared students for post-secondary career programs by introducing them to collegiate resources needed to apply for higher education programs

**Customer Service Associate, Target, Jacksonville FL** Jan 2020 – Dec 2021

- Welcomed guests and customers by using quality customer service and communication skills to ensure that customers felt welcomed at the store
- Provided information about the store's specials, discount programs and services and recommended products to customers based on their needs and expectations

## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

**Volunteer, USF Hospital, Tampa FL** Jan 2022 – Present

- Shadow the administrative team at the hospital and assist with data collection and record-keeping of patients through the hospital's healthcare database system

**Volunteer, Habitat for Humanity, Jacksonville FL** Dec 2021- Present

- Collaborate with a team of five volunteers to create social events and programs to generate more awareness and raise funds for the organization; generated \$5000 for the organization through the social events

## MEMBERSHIPS

- **Treasurer, BRIDGE Healthcare Clinic, USF** Aug 2021 – Present
- **Member, Public Health Student Association** Jan 2020 – Present
- **Member, The Global Health Student Association** Oct 2020 – Present

## HONORS AND AWARDS

- **USF Dean's List** Aug 2021 – Present
- **Florida Bright Futures Scholarship** Aug 2020

## SKILLS & CERTIFICATIONS

- **Computer:** Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams)
- **Certifications:** Certified Medical Interpreter, CPR Certified
- **Laboratory:** PCR Analysis, Gel Electrophoresis, Bright Field Microscopy
- **Languages:** Fluent in Spanish and Portuguese

## Resume Checklist

### Formatting

- | YES                      | NO                       | ITEM  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the resume one page?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Name at top in bold and larger font, 2nd line includes city, state, email, phone number and LinkedIn address?                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does education section follow directly after the contact information? (Relevant coursework underneath Education, if applicable)                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is formatting consistent throughout the resume (e.g., bold, font, bullet sizes, heading styles)? Are the headings and statements evenly spaced? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are verb tenses present for current experiences; past for previous experiences?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have approximately 2-4 statements in bulleted format under the Experience section?   |

### Content

- | YES                      | NO                       | ITEM  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does the resume include the applicable headings, like Education, Experience, Skills, Key Projects, Involvement, Volunteer, Honors and Awards, etc.?                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does the Education section state official degree and graduation/expected date? Is the cumulative GPA included if 3.0 or higher? Is the GPA accurate and not rounded up? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do the bulleted descriptions demonstrate major accomplishments rather than routine tasks/duties and are they quantifiable (when possible)?                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do the bulleted descriptions start with action verbs and demonstrate the use of key skills?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the resume free of personal pronouns (e.g. no references to “I”, “we”, “me”, “us”, or “my”)?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the resume error-free (grammar, typos, etc.)?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are there numbers, dollar values, or percentages used? Are keywords and industry-specific terminology utilized?   |





# Curriculum Vitae (CV)

## What is a CV?

A CV is different than a resume, both in terms of formatting and use. Typically, a CV is used for applications related to academia, such as for admittance to graduate school, teaching positions, and research grants. A CV is formatted to allow a comprehensive overview of your academic and professional history without page limits constraining your information.

## CV vs Resume

There are a few things that both a CV and Resume aim to accomplish, including:

- Highlighting your experiences and showcasing your successes
- Showing your qualifications as a candidate for a desired position
- Securing an interview

Additionally, both CVs and Resumes use similar types of language and formatting to make it easier for reviewers to find information and assess a candidate. The chart below provides an overview of the many differences between a CV and Resume

### CV

- Comprehensive account of your academic and professional history
- Professional statement that summarizes your professional goals
- Professional contact information (ex: address of educational institution)
- Complete list of your higher educational history
- No page limit

### Resume

- Tailored and relevant account of your skills that directly relate your goals
- Aimed at addressing key responsibilities mentioned in a job description, OR
- Used in a networking setting for mass distribution; highlights key experiences that are holistically representative
- Only most relevant information included
- General contact information
- Specific, relevant coursework that provides skill/value to an internship, or provides additional value to a position and not be assumed with major
- No references included
- 1-2 page limit

★ Note that internationally a resume may be referred to as a CV

## Rocky D. Bull

Tampa, FL | (813) 123-4567 | rockydbull@usf.edu | linkedin.com/in/rockydbull | github.com/rocky/

### PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

In a concise statement, summarize your academic profile such as your academic year and degree type. In addition, stating your primary short-term and long-term goals can give reviewers a better understanding of your purpose for applying.

### EDUCATION

**Degree type**, Degree name, Institution Name, City, State Month Year

**Minor:** Minor name

**Relevant Coursework:** In this section, you can include relevant coursework that pertains to the internship or research position. The coursework you choose to include will vary depending on the position you apply for.

**Master of Science, Microbiology, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL** May 2022  
**Relevant Coursework:** Advances in Cellular and Molecular Biology | Advances in Scientific Writing

**Bachelor of Science, Cell and Molecular Biology, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL** May 2020  
**Minor:** Nutrition, College of Public Health  
**Relevant Coursework:** Organic Chemistry I & II w/ Lab | Genetics w/ Lab | Microbiology | Medical Terminology | Psychology of Aging | Public Health Epidemiology

### RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

**Position Title**, Company/Institution, City, State Month Year-Month Year

*Research Mentor and/or Principle Investigator: Name*

- In 3-5 bullet points, state the summary of the position and the goals achieved by this position, including procedural methods, time allotted to the position, or topics learned.
- Did you contribute to a published article? Identify your role in contributing to the publication.
- What types of experiments or lab procedures did you gain experience with?

**Research Assistant, City Hospital, Tampa, FL** May 2021-August 2022  
**Principle Investigator:** Dr. John Smith

- Developed novel approach to [topic]
- Collaborated with a team of four peers to seek data findings for over 80 hours
- Utilized topics gained through [specific coursework] to further apply content knowledge
- Engaged in qualitative research analysis as well as scientific written communication

### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

**Name of Experience/Position**, Institution/Company, City, State Month Year-Month Year

- In a bullet point, state the summary of the position and the goal that was achieved by this role. Stick only to volunteer experiences that are most relevant to your leadership and community engagement skills and career goal. Mention the medical unit or specialty area you volunteered within, treatments witnessed, and diagnoses.

**Volunteer, City Hospital, Tampa, FL** January 2021-May 2021

- Assisted hospital staff in the labor and delivery unit with daily upkeep routine to reduce storage of supplies
- Actively learned the importance of the healthcare team through networking with hospital staff
- Exposed to surgical care post-operationally through routine room checks to ensure personal care items were adequately stocked



**SHADOWING EXPERIENCE**

**Name of Experience/Position**, Institution/Company, City, State Month Year-Month Year

*Name of Person Shadowed - Name of Unit | Number of Hours Shadowed*

- In a bullet point, state the summary of the position and the goal that was achieved by this role. Mention the medical unit or specialty area you volunteered within, treatments witnessed, and diagnoses.

**Physician Observer, City Hospital, Tampa, FL November 2019-January 2020**

***Dr. John Smith – Pediatrics | Hours: 12***

- **Dedicated over 50 hours to observing the process of medical check-ups in a small office setting to gain understanding of clinic-setting**
- **Engaged in conversation with the physician regarding treatment planning for pediatric disease/disorders**
- **Observed procedures such as annual physical check-ups and allergen testing and learned daily treatment types seen in pediatric care**

**LEADERSHIP AND CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT EXPERIENCE**

**Name of Experience/Position**, Institution/Company, City, State Month Year-Month Year

- In this bullet point, state the summary of the position and the goal of this role.

**Vice President of Operations, Pre-Health Society, Tampa, FL August 2020-May 2021**

- **Planned and facilitated meeting agenda for members to stay updated on events**
- **Led a team of four peers to efficiently plan year-long educational and informative events**
- **Utilized Microsoft Excel as a tool to track spending to determine how to properly delegate events funds**

**PRESENTATION/PUBLICATIONS**

**Name of Experience/Position**, Name of Conference, City, State Month Year

- In this bullet point, state what the presentation and publication entailed and the magnitude of the project

**Research Presenter, USF Undergraduate Research Conference, Tampa, FL October 2022**

- **Engaged in collaborative discussions regarding key findings of the qualitative data to visitors**
- **Enhanced oral presentation skills by thoroughly communicating research goals**
- **Further gained scientific writing skills through creating the poster presentation medium**

**SKILLS AND CERTIFICATIONS**

**Languages:** Indicate any languages you speak other than English and your level of fluency (intermediate, advanced, native, fluent)

**Computer programs:** This can range from any basic programs to industry-specific ones

**Certifications:** Include any certifications that are required for the position applying for or health-related positions

**Languages: Spanish (Advanced)**

**Computer: Microsoft Office (Excel, PowerPoint); WebChartMD**

**Certifications: CPR & BLS (Exp: January 2024) | Biotechnician Certified (Exp: January 2024)**

**REFERENCES**

First and Last Name, Professional Title | Organization Name | Email | Phone number

**John Smith, MPH | johnsmith@email.com | 555-555-5555**

## Rocky D. Bull

rockydbull@usf.edu | (813) 123-4567 | Tampa, FL | linkedin.com/in/rockydbull | github.com/rocky/

### PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

In a concise statement, summarize your academic profile such as your academic year and degree type. In addition, stating your primary short-term and long-term goals can give reviewers a better understanding of your purpose for applying.

### EDUCATION

#### Doctor of Philosophy, Candidate

Expected May 2025

University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN

Dissertation: *Beowulf Today: The Rise and Fall of Political Leadership*

Advisor: John W. Doe

#### Master of Science, Microbiology

May 2022

#### Bachelor of Science, Cell and Molecular Biology

May 2020

#### Minor: Nutrition, College of Public Health

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL

### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

#### Research Assistant, City Hospital, Tampa, FL

May 2021-August 2022

*Principle Investigator: Dr. John Smith*

- Developed novel approach to [topic]
- Collaborated with a team of four peers to seek data findings for over 80 hours
- Utilized topics gained through [specific coursework] to further apply content knowledge
- Engaged in qualitative research analysis using SPSS as well as scientific written communication

### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

#### Volunteer, City Hospital, Tampa, FL

January 2021-May 2021

- Performed daily upkeep routine to reduce storage of supplies under direction of hospital staff in the labor and delivery unit
- Actively learned the importance of the healthcare team through networking with hospital staff
- Exposed to surgical care post-operationally through routine room checks to ensure personal care items were adequately stocked

### SHADOWING EXPERIENCE

#### Physician Observer, City Hospital, Tampa, FL

November 2019-January 2020

*Dr. John Smith – Pediatrics / Hours: 12*

- Dedicated over 50 hours to observing the process of medical check-ups in a small office setting to gain understanding of clinic-setting including patients aged 2-20
- Discussed treatment planning for pediatric disease/ disorders with the physician to gain greater understanding of evaluation process
- Observed procedures such as annual physical check-ups and allergen testing and learned daily treatment types seen in pediatric care

## LEADERSHIP AND CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT EXPERIENCE

**Vice President of Operations, Pre-Health Society, Tampa, FL****August 2020-May2021**

- Planned and facilitated meeting agenda for over 50 members to stay updated on events
- Led a team of four peers to efficiently plan year-long educational and informative events
- Utilized Microsoft Excel as a tool to track spending to determine how to properly delegate events funds of over \$5,000

## PRESENTATIONS/PUBLICATIONS

**Research Presenter, USF Undergraduate Research Conference, Tampa, FL****October 2022**

- Critically evaluated qualitative data and created engaging poster presentation highlighting student and key findings
- Engaged in collaborative discussions regarding key findings of the qualitative data with over 100 visitors
- Enhanced oral presentation skills by thoroughly communicating research goals

## SKILLS/CERTIFICATIONS

Languages: Spanish (Advanced)

Computer: SPSS, WebChartMD, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint);

Certifications: CPR and BLS (Exp: January 2024) | Biotechnician Certified (Exp: January 2024)



# Cover Letter Guidelines

## What to Include?

Cover letters (also known as a letter of intent) are one-page documents written as part of the job or internship search.

Cover letters serve as a connector between your resume and the specific job to which you are applying. Therefore, cover letters are specific to the position, and there is not a generic, letter you can submit for each of your positions.

A cover letter is also a reflection of your writing skills, so take time and care to proofread and review your document. Your cover letter needs to be specific to the organization and position.

## A cover letter is an important tool to use when applying for a job because it:

- Introduces you to the prospective employer
- Highlights your enthusiasm for the position and allows you to tell your story
- Describes your specific skills and qualifications for the job or internship, and clearly explains why you are a good fit
- Confirms your availability to start a new position

## When Should I Send a Cover Letter?

- Always when applying for a job unless you are specifically told not to by the employer
- Applying through Handshake or another online database and the employer has requested it
- Responding to a job posting via direct mail or email
- Sending a response to a referral from a colleague, acquaintance, or friend

We recommend that you write a cover letter after you have drafted and tailored your resume or curriculum vitae (CV) for a particular job description.

## Cover Letter Tips

- Limit the cover letter to one page, if possible, unless applying to academic faculty, teaching, or research positions.
- Use the same font and formatting in the cover letter as you use in your resume.
- You should use the same header (contact information) in both a cover letter and resume.
- If providing a printed copy, use the same type of paper for both your cover letter and resume. Resume paper can be purchased at the USF Bookstore or at an office supply store.
- Use formal, professional language in a cover letter.
- Personalize each cover letter to the specific position you are applying to.
- Address your cover letter to a specific person or the hiring manager whenever possible. If you don't know their name, use one of the following examples:
  - "Dear Hiring Manager,"
  - "Dear [insert department here] Hiring Team,"
  - "Dear Recruiter,"
  - "Dear Search Committee or Committee Chair," (used for academic teaching positions)
  - "To Whom It May Concern:" (note that this salutation uses a colon and not a comma)
- Check for typos, proper grammar, and accuracy.
  - Have another person review your application materials.
- A cover letter is not a repetition of the wording on your resume.
- Send as a PDF to avoid losing formatting.
- Have your cover letter reviewed by a Career Coach.
- Make sure to sign your document (handwritten or electronic). If doing electronic, insert a photo of your signature, utilize e-sign tools, or choose a script font style.

# Rocky D. Bull

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## Date

October 23, 2023

Recruiter or Hiring Manager Name

Employer or Organization Name

Employer Mailing Address

City, State Zip Code

## Salutation

Dear Hiring Manager (or Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr. Name):

## Opening Paragraph (Introduction)

Your cover letter opening should contain a self-introduction. Write about who you are, where your expertise lies, reference where you found the job posting, why you are excited about this specific position, and why you want to apply at this company/organization. You may also include here if someone recommended you for the position. Make sure to summarize your intention and reason for your interest in the job and/or company.

## Body Paragraphs

The second paragraph of your cover letter should respond directly to the job description. Describe how your previous job experiences, skills, and abilities will help you meet the company's needs. Connect your talents to the role. To make that easier, you should include exact words and phrases from the job descriptions in your cover letter. Focus on how your skills and experience will contribute to the company's goals, not how the company can help you achieve your goals. Mention specific qualifications that you believe will be of greatest interest to the organization, slanting your remarks toward addressing specified requirements needed for success listed in the position description. Help the employer see how your qualifications and experiences meet the needs of the position. Do not simply restate your résumé. Instead, summarize your most relevant skills and experiences as they relate to the employer's needs.

## Closing Paragraph

Your cover letter closing is the call-to-action portion of your cover letter. Reiterate your interest in the position and make a request for an opportunity to talk with the employer to share more details of your experience. Provide your email address or other contact information. Thank them for spending their time reading your cover letter and considering your application.

Sincerely/Best Regards/Thank you for your consideration,

*Rocky D. Bull*

Rocky D. Bull

Your Name (Printed)

## Rocky D. Bull

[rockydbull@usf.edu](mailto:rockydbull@usf.edu) | (813) 123-4567 | Tampa, FL | [linkedin.com/in/rockydbull](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rockydbull) | [github.com/rocky/](https://github.com/rocky/)

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October 23, 2023

Mr. John Allen  
Director  
RedRover  
1122 S. Street  
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Mr. Allen:

The Social Media Coordinator position was referred to me by a colleague of yours, Dr. Phyllis Rockett, and I am excited to apply based on the description on your company website. Dr. Rockett recommended this position because of my strong interest in animal-focused non-profit as well as my qualifications and values matching those of your organization. As a communication major graduating in May, my skills and passion for animals will make me a great fit for this role.

Having worked with animals and volunteering at animal shelters throughout my life, I am very passionate about assisting your RedRover Responders program. The Responders program sends people to disaster sites to help animals that no longer have places to stay. My excellent communication writing skills that I have developed through my undergraduate coursework will prove useful to help spread the organization's mission. In addition, my social media experience developed in my previous internship paired with my technical writing coursework has equipped me with the knowledge to develop, maintain, and update your online content to be informative to your targeted audience. In addition, my writing and social media experience will help with the creation of posts and editing of other marketing materials to help build a following and recruit volunteers.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss the position in further detail. In two weeks, I will follow up via email regarding the status of my application. Please feel free to contact me directly at 813-123-4567 or by email at [rockydbull@usf.edu](mailto:rockydbull@usf.edu). Thank you for your valuable time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Rocky D. Bull*

Rocky D. Bull



# Job, Internship, and Co-op Search

## Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is a hands-on educational approach emphasizing learning through direct experience and application. The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) found that employers highly value relevant work experience when evaluating candidates for employment. Employers consider internships, cooperative education, and other forms of experiential learning as important indicators of a candidate's readiness for the workplace.



### Experiential learning provides students with the following:

- The opportunity to apply theory to practice in real-life experiences which enhances understanding, critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.
- Fosters personal growth and development by encouraging self-reflection, adaptability, and resilience while expanding cultural competence, interpersonal skills, and the ability to work in teams.
- Contributes to career exploration and development by engaging in internships or industry projects where students gain practical experience.
- Enriches the overall college experience by offering a holistic and comprehensive approach to education while preparing students for the complexities of real-world life and work experiences.

**98%** of employers agreed that experiential learning improves job readiness of college students

National Society of Experiential Education (2020)

### The benefits of experiential learning:

- 1. Network** - Increases your professional contacts
- 2. Develop** - Enhances your professional skill sets and expands your résumé
- 3. Clarify** - Narrows your job search or graduate school process
- 4. Clarity** - Refines your career goals
- 5. Discover** - Obtains understanding of industry-specific practices, norms, and trends.

The best way to learn about various industries is by engaging in the process through experiential learning. Employers and graduate programs have a positive view of experiential learning experiences. Being engaged beyond the classroom through actual experiences in the field or industry allows for skills to be enhanced and knowledge to be acquired, providing valuable opportunities to build your resume.

## Internships

Internships are typically one-time work or service experiences related to the student's major or career goal. Internships afford students the opportunity to gain hands-on experience while providing learning and development. Internships can position you as a competitive candidate for full-time jobs or graduate or professional school admission. The internship plan generally involves students working in professional settings under the supervision and monitoring of practicing professionals.

### Not sure what you want to do?

There are many employers with internship opportunities that are not major-specific, which means that you may qualify based on your interest, your transferable skills, and your disposition. It is a great way to explore a career option while gaining transferable skills and experience.

### Academic Credit for Internships:

- Check with your academic advisor to determine if there is an internship course (and resources) available to you through your academic department.
- IDS 3947 Internship Course offered through the Center for Career and Professional Development. This course should only be considered if you have already checked with and referred by your academic advisor. Access to the course is by permit only and you must have an eligible offer from an employer before you receive the permit. Details about the course can be accessed on [www.usf.edu/career-services/students/internships.aspx](http://www.usf.edu/career-services/students/internships.aspx).

### Need to find an internship?

Log into Handshake using MyUSF. Make sure your profile is up to date and has a current resume so you can search for opportunities that employers have posted to recruit USF students.

Make use of our services and events to assist you in pursuing the experiential learning option that is right for you! Need to talk to someone about your interests and options? Meet with a Career Coach to prepare yourself for an internship search and learn how to find internship opportunities.

### Internships lead to stronger retention rates if interns are later hired by the same organization

**67.7%** of internal interns were retained

**51.7%** of external interns were retained

**35.7%** of employees with no internship experience were retained

**57.6%**

Average percent of eligible interns converted to full-time equivalent 2023 NACE Internship and Co-op Survey Report

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2021)

2023 NACE Internship and Co-op Survey Report

# Cooperative Education

Cooperative Education (Co-op) is a program administered by the Center for Career and Professional Development that integrates hands-on, paid, career-related work experience with your academic program and provides you with valuable training in your chosen career field.

What makes a Co-op different from an internship? Co-op is always paid and is typically a multi-semester experience with increasing levels of responsibility.

Co-op is offered as both part-time or full-time. Access to the course is by permit only and you must have an eligible Co-op offer from an employer before you receive the permit to register. The course is documented on your official academic transcripts and is graded as “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory.”

When participating in the Co-op program, it is required that you continue to maintain academic progress toward graduation.

## Co-op Options

There are many employers with internship opportunities that are not major-specific, which means that you may qualify based on your interest, your transferable skills, and your disposition. It is a great way to explore a career option while gaining transferable skills and experience. There are two options for Co-op:

### Parallel

- Work a minimum of 15, preferably 20, on-site hours at an approved Co-op site that results in a minimum of 240 on-site training hours for the semester
- Enroll in the IDS 3949 Cooperative Education Course (variable 0-2 credit hours\*\*) and Enroll (and complete) at least 6 credit hours of additional coursework
- International Students: Enroll and complete a minimum of 12 credit hours (Graduate Students: minimum of 9 credit hours) and must work no more than 20 hrs. per week

### Alternating

- Work a minimum of 33 on-site hours at an approved Co-op site that results in a minimum of 480 on-site training hours for the semester
- Enroll in the IDS 4949 Cooperative Education Course (variable 0-3 credit hours\*\*). No additional course enrollment (credit hours) is required. If you plan on taking the course for “0” credit hours with no additional course enrollment, it is recommended that you take one course (online or evening) to avoid paying a 1 credit hour Co-op course fee\*\*\* and to also maintain academic progress toward graduation.

*Please Note:* International Students using Curricular Practical Training (CPT) for Co-op must register for at least 1 credit hour per instructions from International Services Office.

Additional details about Co-op can be accessed on the Center for Career and Professional Development Co-op webpage <https://www.usf.edu/career-services/students/coop.aspx>

## Student Employment

Student employment refers to on-campus and off-campus part-time jobs. Many students choose to work part-time on or off campus while taking classes at USF to help pay for classes or other expenses or to gain experience for their resume.

### Why Work Part-Time?

- Develop effective transferrable skills (time management, communication, teamwork, decision-making)
- Establish effective study habits
- Improve self-awareness, confidence, and a strong sense of self
- Enhance your employment history and gain skills that are important to employers and graduate program
- Earn pay to offset some of your expenses

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\*\* If you do not need credit, it is recommended to enroll in “0” credit hours. If you chose to enroll in the course for credits then you should consult your academic advisor to ensure it is counting towards the degree requirements you want it to count towards. Credit hours can also be important when considering any scholarships, financial aid, or other benefits you receive. It is your responsibility to make sure that you check with these offices based on any benefits you receive.

\*\*\* The University requires students who are enrolled in ONLY a “0” credit course, with no other course enrollment, pay for 1 credit hour.

## Part-time Jobs On and Off Campus

**On-campus employment** offers both domestic and international student's various opportunities to work and gain hands-on experience and skills which are transferrable and beneficial to employers. On-campus work is flexible and takes your academic responsibilities and class schedule into consideration.

**Off-campus employment** can offer additional job options relevant to your major or intended career path. Tampa is home to a variety of employers across industries, and they interact with the Center for Career and Professional Development and engage with our students in the job search process.

Also, studies have shown that a student's academic performance is positively impacted by working part-time.

## Federal Work-Study (FWS)

The Federal Work-Study program is administered by the Office of Financial Aid. The FWS program allows eligible undergraduate students who show financial need to earn a portion of their educational expenses through meaningful employment.

FWS is a federally funded student aid program that provides part-time employment while students are enrolled in school to help pay day-to-day expenses.

Students who are awarded FWS receive a paycheck based on hours worked. FWS is awarded for fall and spring semesters only. SWS (Summer Work Study) is a separate program and is awarded during the spring semester.

For more information visit:

<https://www.usf.edu/financial-aid/know-this/fws/index.aspx>

## Scams

### Detecting Fraudulent Job Opportunities (usf.edu)

If you think that you have received information about a job opportunity that may be fraudulent, you can contact our office to confirm its legitimacy.

Regardless of whether you are actively job seeking, you may receive emails, phone calls or texts, or other notifications of potentially fraudulent job opportunities. Here are a few things you should keep in mind if you receive a message that you believe could be a scam.

- If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- No application or interview process? Probably not a real job.
- Keep an eye out for "spoofed" messages.
- Know when to give out your information.
- You should never have to give money to get a job.
- If you've responded to a scam, if all they have is your name, email address, physical address, and/or phone number, you may want **to report the scam to the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) via their online form**. If there has been any kind of monetary exchange, you may need to reach out to your local police department's non-emergency line. Then notify USF Career Services so that we can help get the word out to other students as needed,



# Job Search Process

The job search process is intentional, it takes time, patience, perseverance, and a lot of work. There are various ways to proceed with locating employment opportunities. To ensure you are using your time effectively and efficiently, utilize both online and in-person tools and methods to identify opportunities and employers that align with your skills, interests, and values.

Are you ready to search for your internship or job? First, you need to determine your preferences in the following areas: Industry, Function, Location, Compensation.

## **INDUSTRY**

What industries interest me most?

Where are these industries most prevalent?

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When do these industries recruit?

Which employers hire for this industry?

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## **FUNCTION**

What tasks am I comfortable performing daily?

What titles align with the position in which I'm interested?

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What skills do I have for these positions?

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## **LOCATION**

Where would I like to reside in order of preference (consider if I am willing to relocate)?

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## **COMPENSATION**

National average salary range for position of interest/industry: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

What salary range is acceptable? \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Range of rentals in my top locations: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to \$ \_\_\_\_\_



Also, it's important to know when and where to look for the opportunities that interest you by understanding how, when, and where industries tend to recruit and post opportunities.

## General Recruiting Timelines

These are the general hiring timelines for internship and full-time positions, there are **always** exceptions.

FALL RECRUITING	SPRING-SUMMER RECRUITING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accounting</li> <li>• Actuarial</li> <li>• Consulting</li> <li>• Corporate Finance</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Engineering Fields</li> <li>• Financial Services</li> <li>• Government (requiring security background checks)</li> <li>• Healthcare</li> <li>• Insurance</li> <li>• Investment Banking</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Postgraduate Service</li> <li>• Print Journalism (for prestigious internships/fellowships)</li> <li>• Real State Investment</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising</li> <li>• Architecture</li> <li>• Design Fields</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Entertainment/Media</li> <li>• Government/Policy</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Insurance</li> <li>• Law-related</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Nonprofit Sector</li> <li>• Postgraduate Service</li> <li>• Service</li> <li>• Print Journalism</li> <li>• Public Relations</li> <li>• Publishing</li> <li>• Real Estate Development</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Retail/Consumer Products</li> <li>• Sports/Recreation</li> <li>• Sales</li> <li>• Technology</li> </ul>

# Job Search Strategies

## Where to Search?

Online job searching is an effective way to search and apply for new opportunities. Consider the following platforms when starting your job search.

### Handshake

Get access to full-time, part-time, and internship postings by using your Handshake account.

### CareerShift

CareerShift helps job seekers successfully navigate the published and hidden job market to find career opportunities. CareerShift offers an online set of integrated applications, including a robust company and contact database, where users can find current job connections and make meaningful new connections with USF alumni and other professionals. There is also an option to filter employment options by organizations who have sponsored H1B visas in the past.

### GoinGlobal

GoinGlobal is an online website that gives students and faculty access to career resources and travel guides in more than 40 countries and 53 cities in the United States and Canada.

### Career Coach Tool

Career Coach is a job aggregator that will search all public job postings using your job title, keyword, or location criteria and connect you with contacts in the organization.

### Candid Career

This online service is like your own personal YouTube channel for career advice, interviews with professionals about their jobs and career paths, and short clips about what it's like to work in different industries!

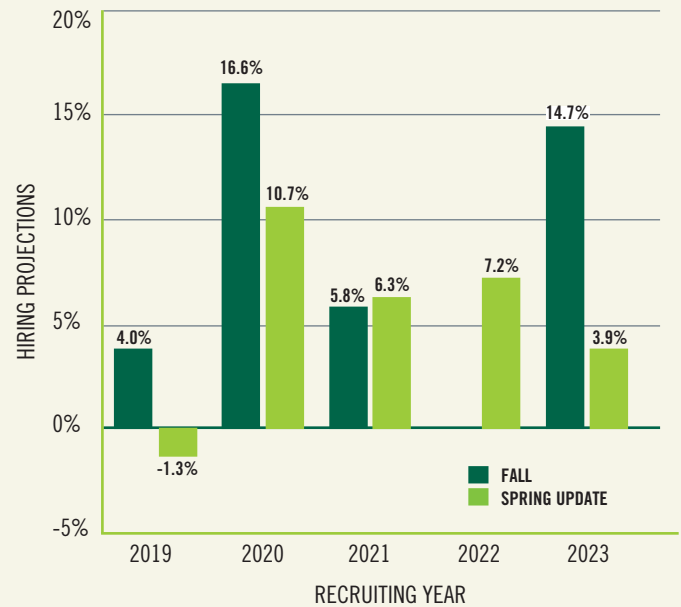
### Occupational Outlook Handbook

Provides information on what workers do; the work environment; education, training, and other qualifications; pay; the job outlook; information on state and area data; similar occupations; and sources of additional information for more than 300 occupational profiles.

### O\*NET OnLine

O\*NET OnLine has detailed descriptions of the world of work for use by job seekers, workforce development and HR professionals, students, developers, researchers, and more!

Job Outlook Hiring Projects, 2019- 2023



SOURCE: Job Outlook 2023 Spring Update, National Association of Colleges and Employers

These resources can be found on the Center for Career and Professional Development's website at [careers.usf.edu](http://careers.usf.edu).

## Company Websites

A company's website has valuable information. Visit the websites of companies that interest you and search for openings on their "Career or Job" pages.

## Other Resources

Glassdoor.com – A job and recruiting site that operates online jobs and career communities. It helps employees, job seekers, employers, and recruiters who are looking for career-related positions.

USAjobs.gov – connects job seekers with federal employment opportunities across the United States and around the world.

# Networking

Networking is the art of building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships. During your college career and beyond, you will have opportunities to attend professional and social events where guests “network.” Networking involves speaking with professionals in your fields of interest to explore careers and gather information. It's not about asking a person for a job or internship, and it isn't one-sided.

Networking is about relationship building and maintenance. There are many approaches and styles of networking which include: building new relationships, looking for interest or community groups, attending networking events, professional meetings, information sessions, and career fairs. It is estimated that 65–80 percent of jobs are found through networking.

## Why Network?

- Explore career and industries
- Gain information about your career field of interest
- To develop contacts that can help you achieve your goals.
- Learn about jobs and internship opportunities

Networking contacts can fall into one of three categories: personal, pro-personal, and professional. The type of connection you have with each contact can affect the way in which you communicate and the purpose of your communication.

## How do I reach out to contacts?

While email is best for someone you don't know well, a phone call may be appropriate for someone you speak with regularly. Include the following information in any correspondence: your introduction, who referred you/how you found the contact, why you're reaching out, what you hope to learn, and a specific request (like a brief conversation). After the initial outreach, wait a week for a reply. If you don't receive one, send a follow-up email. If you still don't receive a response, move on to another contact.

<b>How Should I Network?</b>	
<b>LinkedIn</b>	Search for "University of South Florida" and then search for alumni by location and/or employer.
<b>Handshake</b>	Find organizations of interest and reach out to employer contacts that recruit at the University of South Florida
<b>Career Shift</b>	Locate contacts from targeted organizations in the contact section



# Informational Interviewing

Informational interviewing is an effective method of collecting information on a career field from professionals currently in that industry. Informational interviewing will help you sharpen your perception of the career you are researching while assisting you in making more intentional and strategic career decisions, developing contacts in the field and industry, and measuring your compatibility with the people, environment, and culture of a specific. Do not confuse informational interviewing as a job-seeking method.

## How should I contact the professional?

### • Email

If emailing, be sure to include a subject line and use proper grammar and spelling. Always have someone else read over the email before you send it to avoid potential errors. Convey the same message as you would by phone, but make sure it is appropriate for and aligns with email message.

### • Phone Call

When you call your contact, introduce yourself and explain the purpose of your call: “Hello, thank you for taking my call. My name is Rocky D. Bull, and I am a student at the University of South Florida. I am interested in exploring the field of psychology. I was hoping you would be willing to [meet with me to discuss your position and provide me some advice and tips about entering this field] OR [I would appreciate the opportunity to conduct a job shadow]. If you are busy right now, is there a more convenient time for me to call?” “If you are not currently able to meet with me, is there someone you know who might?

## What should I cover when arranging an informational interview?

- Ask if the professional would be willing to meet with you to discuss their profession
- Briefly share your academic background, major/minor, and professional interests
- Arrange a mutually agreeable date, time, and location
- Be sure to give your phone number and email
- Obtain or clarify directions to the organization
- Inquire about parking instructions
- Ask about appropriate attire

## What happens during the informational interview?

- Meet for 20–30 minutes in the office or designated location of the professional or by phone if they prefer
- Tour the organization (if appropriate)
- Ask relevant questions and listen to advice
- Maintain contact (if meeting in person)
- Expand network by asking if there is anyone else with whom the professional would recommend for you to connect



## Sample Message

Hello [Name],

*I found your profile on LinkedIn and thought your career path working at [company] to be very noteworthy. I see we have [shared group/contact/interest] in common, so I wanted to reach out to you. I am interested in learning more about [reason for informational interview]. I would greatly appreciate an opportunity to talk with you for 15–20 minutes to ask you some questions about your experience.*

*If you're available to speak with me next week, I would be grateful for any insights you can share. Please let me know what day would work best for you.*

Thank you,  
[Your Name]





### Informational Interview Preparation

- Utilize the resources in the Center for Career and Professional Development to be informed about your career of interest
- Start with people that you are familiar with and practice
- Contact the professional well in advance to schedule an appointment
- Be prepared to respond to questions from contact

### During

- Dress appropriately and arrive 5-10 minutes early
- Refer to your list of questions if you need to; it shows preparedness
- Make positive first impressions through appearance, social skills, and punctuality
- Observe the work environment, people, dress, and culture
- Thank everyone for their time and assistance
- Ask for business cards and other contacts as appropriate

### Follow-Up

- Summarize information you gathered
- Send a written thank you note within 24 hours following the informational interview
- Keep contact informed if they expressed interest
- Contact new referral leads

### Informational Interview Questions

- How did you get started in this industry?
- What is your educational background and what previous work experiences have you had?
- What short and long-term trends affect your industry?
- What are the positive aspects of your position and this industry?
- What are the major challenges you encounter on your job? How do you deal with them?
- What professional associations represent this industry?
- Is there another professional I should talk with about the career and trends in this field?
- What are some other good sources of information about this industry — articles, reports, journals, people?
- What are the current career opportunities in this field?
- What skills, experience or other qualifications are sought by employers in this field for entry-level employees?
- What is the typical career path for entry-level hires?
- What qualities, backgrounds or achievements did they have that made them attractive candidates?
- Is training typically formal or on-the-job training?
- Can I contact you if I have further questions?
- Is there anyone else that you know who might also be willing to speak with me?

# Elevator Pitch

## What is an elevator pitch?

An elevator pitch is a way to prepare a few specific and succinct talking points to share why you are a good candidate for a career event whether virtual or in-person. The employers that you meet with will be interested in learning more about you. So, prepare now to make an impactful first impression.

An elevator pitch is a brief personal statement that motivates the person you are speaking with to want to learn more about you. It's called an elevator pitch because it's meant to be brief enough to deliver compellingly during an elevator ride to your selected floor, meaning 30 seconds to 1 minute. The elevator pitch should be an engaging, interesting, and polished discussion that can often be used to answer the interview question "tell me about yourself" in a more abbreviated manner.

## What to Include in my elevator pitch?

1. Your background, degree and studies
2. Competencies, expertise, career goals
3. Call to action

CRAFTING YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH	
<b>Name, major, role, and career goals</b>	I am a student at the University of South Florida majoring in _____. I have experience in _____. My long-term career goals surround solving problems in the _____.
<b>What are your strengths, values, and skills?</b>	While interning for a local firm I had great success in _____ for a new product, which contributed to solving problems in _____. I utilized my skills in _____ and guiding values in _____ to achieve these measurable outcomes.
<b>How can you contribute to the position and organization?</b>	As an executive with _____ company, I see that your team has a strategic focus on _____. I believe I can bring an additional perspective to help you achieve your _____ goals.
<b>Call to Action</b>	I think I am a great fit for this position and your organization, and I am excited for an opportunity to learn more about your opportunities.

## Elevator Pitch Tips

- Rewrite your speech in order to sharpen its focus.
- Make sure your pitch is concise and specific to you.
- Make it sincere and provide a glimpse into your personality.
- Speak confidently and enthusiastically.
- Make sure your delivery is clear, balanced and not rushed.
- Maintain eye contact with your listener.
- Prepare different versions of your pitch for different situations.
- Practice your speech until you're comfortable with it from beginning to end.

## When should I use an elevator pitch?

- Career Fairs
- Conferences
- Cold call opportunity
- Voicemail message
- Interview introduction
- Networking opportunity

Use the space below to draft your elevator pitch. Don't hesitate to work with a Career Coach, if you need assistance.





# Graduate and Professional School



## Why Should I Consider Graduate or Professional School?

Graduate or professional school is an advanced program of study focused on a specific academic discipline or profession. It requires original research and/or scholarship, develops intellectual relationships, and requires intense commitment, passion, and drive.

A few reasons to consider graduate school include:

- It helps you to attain your personal goals.
- You have a passion for learning or research.
- You want to specialize in an area or become an expert and generate new knowledge.
- Employers prefer or require an advanced degree in your profession.
- It offers the ability to achieve personal growth and advancement.

Explore the questions below to help guide your graduate or professional school decision.

## On-Campus Resources

There are several on-campus resources available for you as you consider different programs.

### Career Coaches

- The Career Coaches in our office can help you determine what kind of program you might be interested in pursuing in order to achieve your career goals.
- We can also help you with your application materials and preparation for interviews.
- For additional information visit: <https://www.usf.edu/career-services/students/considering-graduate-school.aspx>

### The Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is also a good resource for your application, especially if you have to write essays or personal statements. Additional information can be found at: <https://www.usf.edu/undergrad/academic-success-center/writing-studio/>

### Office of Graduate Studies

- The Office of Graduate Studies can help you understand the admissions process and requirements.
- You can take required entrance exams through the Testing Services.
- Visit the Office of Graduate Studies for additional information: <https://www.usf.edu/graduate-studies/index.aspx>

## Is Graduate or Professional School for Me?

	YES	NO
Do you know what career you would like long term?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the career you would like to pursue long-term require a higher degree?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you know what you want to study and are you curious and passionate about that particular field?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you prepared for the rigors of a graduate school program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you financially ready or have a plan in place to fund a graduate program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you know why you want to go to graduate school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you know the admission and degree requirements for the program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have the necessary requirements to enter the program you desire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you know which graduate programs have the best reputation for your field of interest?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered no or are unsure how to answer the questions above, consider making an appointment with a Career Coach on Handshake to further explore your possibilities.

# Application Process

Admissions committees are normally made up of professors who base their decisions on the following:

- Statement of Purpose
- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Letters of recommendation
- Standardized test scores, e.g. the GRE or GMAT
- TOEFL or IELTS for international students
- Transcripts
- Previous work experience
- Research experience
- Co-curricular activities
- Résumé or curriculum vitae (CV)

When submitting the application, complete a draft of each application first. Make sure you type all paper applications; do not hand-write. Mail all materials well in advance of deadlines and make copies of everything included in the application packet. Print copies of your completed electronic applications. Proofread, proofread, proofread!

## Recommendation Letters

Most applications will require two or three recommendation letters. Keep these tips in mind when deciding whom you will ask to write your letters:

- Choose someone who knows you well and can write a specific, positive letter.
- Ask early and politely.
- Provide your CV/résumé and statement of purpose to each recommender.
- Clearly communicate the deadline to your recommenders.
- Contact recommenders a few weeks after the initial contact if you haven't yet received anything from them and ask if they need additional info.
- Let them know when you get accepted!

## Statement of Purpose

A statement of purpose, also known as a personal statement or letter of intent, demonstrates your unique qualifications to an admissions committee. It clearly illustrates your writing ability, creativity, and career goals. Admissions will look for insightful, interesting, and individualized statements that provide concrete evidence of your competence and motivation. This is your only opportunity to let the admissions committee get to know you. This is your chance to personally introduce yourself and make a good impression.

The Writing Studio in the Library can help you write a meaningful Statement of Purpose.

## Steps for Writing a Statement of Purpose

- Write a Draft
  - Read the question(s) and requirements carefully.
  - Write without regard for length.
- Get Feedback
  - Professors and the Writing Center are here to help!
- Revise
  - Think about your audience. What is unique about your statement?
  - Eliminate clichés and generalities.
  - Avoid repetition.
  - Focus on creating an image of yourself as a person, student, and scholar/professional.
  - Consider word count, and if need be, be a brutal editor.
- PROOFREAD!

## What to Include:

- Information about yourself.
- Your career goals.
- Why are you interested in the field of study.
- Why are you interested in the particular program.
- What you have learned from experiences related to the field (employment, volunteer activities, research).
- What skills (leadership, technology, writing) or personal qualities (integrity, initiative, flexibility, perseverance) you have that would enhance your success in this program and industry.
- What else makes you a strong applicant.

## Getting Started

Take some time to reflect on the following to help facilitate your writing process.

## Personal History

- Think about your life experiences and achievements relevant to your career choice or application to graduate school. Life experiences are unique events which relate to your professional goals.
- Think about the people who have influenced your decision to pursue this field or who have had a significant impact on your values as they relate to this choice.

## Academic Life

- Research interests and prior experience
- Academic accomplishments and recognitions
- Faculty, staff, mentors, or others who have influenced you most academically

## Work Experience

Consider previous jobs, internships, volunteer experience, and co-curricular activities that have influenced your career choice or career goals.

## Helpful Questions

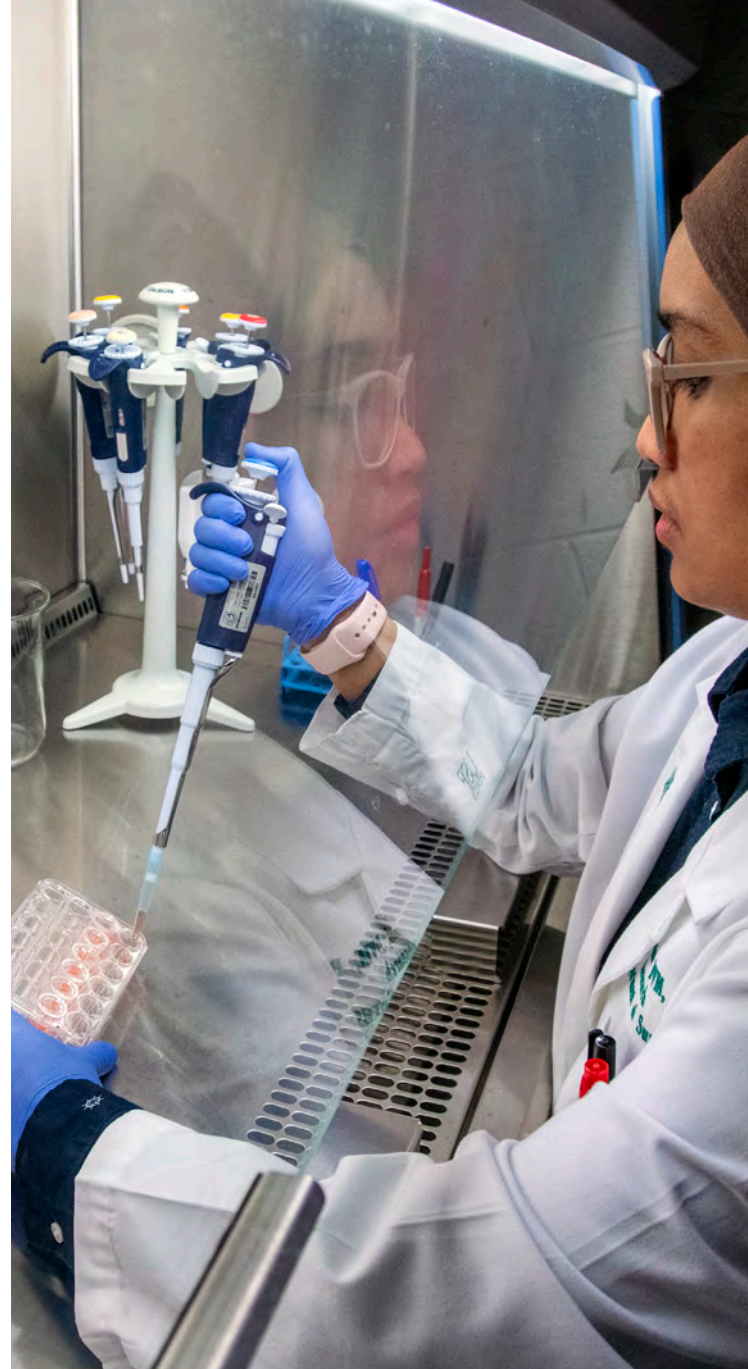
- What are your short- and long-term goals?
- How did you learn about the field?
- What stimulated your interest in this field?
- What is special, distinctive, unique, or impressive about you or your life story?
- Have you overcome any unusual obstacles or hardships?
- What is the most important thing for an admissions committee to know about you?
- Why do you want to apply to this program?
- What values of this program do you find intriguing and how do they have your own values?

## Personal Statement Tips

- Read the application carefully.
- Follow the directions provided to guide your writing.
- Adhere to the page and word limits.
- Focus on the depth of the content with specific examples.
- Choose an easily readable font style and size.
- Statement should be written in first person.
- Concentrate on capturing the reader's interest through the opening paragraph.
- Identify your strengths and clearly articulate what sets you apart from other applicants.
- Tailor the essay for each school and clearly state reasons for pursuing a degree from that school.
- Proofread for typos and grammatical errors.

## Personal Statement Review

You may schedule an appointment through Handshake with a Career Coach to have your personal statement reviewed.



## EVALUATION OF A STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Did my opening paragraph capture the reader's attention?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Does my statement include a topic sentence for each paragraph?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Does my statement address the questions being asked in the application?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Did I provide concrete examples that support my assertions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Did I explain what influenced my career choice, what led me to this program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Did I explain how this program will help me achieve my post-graduate career goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Is it well-written (tone, verb agreement) and well-organized?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Is it error free (grammar, formatting, typos)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Does it reflect my qualifications?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Is the statement positive?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Does it reflect an authentic representation of me and my goal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

# Interviewing and Job Offer Evaluation





# Interview Preparation

Interviews are used for both full-time and internship opportunities, as well as service, graduate or professional school, and other opportunities. Interviews are perhaps one of the most significant aspects of the hiring and evaluation process. Both you and the interviewer have specific goals in this process.

## Your Goals

- Demonstrate that you are a match for the position by showing your skills and interpersonal qualities
- Provide specific examples of past work, research, or other experiences
- Determine if the position and organization are a good fit for you

## Interviewer's Goals

- Determine if you have the skills to perform the job well and fit within an organization
- Assess your motivation to do the job
- Determine if you are a fit for the position and with the organization's culture

Preparation is the most important part of your job or internship interview. Preparation can make a significant difference in your having a successful interview. The following information will guide you through the interview process and provide you with the foundation needed to ace your interview process.

### Know Yourself

Before your interview, know what you have to offer the potential employer. This is foundational to your interview preparation. There are a few things you must do as you prepare.

1. Evaluate your strengths and know how those strengths translate into skills that will benefit your prospective employer in this role.
2. Know your areas of development or weakness. An employer will most likely inquire about your areas of development, and you should be ready to discuss and how you have worked to address these weaknesses.
3. Prepare to talk about your short- and long-term goals and your career interests.
4. Practice explaining how your co-curricular activities and previous professional experiences are examples of skills that are transferrable to the position of interest.
5. Be prepared to tell an employer why you are interested in this position with this employer and why you are the best fit.

### Know the Employer

This is an opportunity for you to demonstrate the research you have done on the employer, which highlights your research skills. Find out as much as possible about the organization, company, agency, institution, and position that you are interviewing for. Now that you have done some work, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the organization's purpose?
- What products or services does the organization provide?
- What is the size of the organization?

- What is their organizational structure?
- Does the structure allow for development and growth?
- Who are the organization's leaders or key stakeholders?

Then, understand how the position you are applying for is aligned with the organization. Research some of the challenges, opportunities, and policies that impact the organization. This will allow you to have a broad understanding of the overall organization and you can ask informed questions during your interview, showing the employer the depth of research conducted. This will also increase your self-confidence in the interview process because you are knowledgeable about the organization and able to sufficiently respond to questions.

### Know Interview Format

If the interview format is not outlined, ask the recruiter to ensure you know the type of interview format you can expect. The interview format may vary depending on the organization, position, resources, and a plethora of other factors. For many positions, multiple interviews will be part of the hiring process. Some positions will also include personality or skills-based testing and this information should be provided in the initial stages of the process.

When you set up an interview appointment, be sure to ask about the format being used. Also, ask who will be present to include names, titles, and departments. Make sure you know the following:

- The type of interview: Is it a one-on-one, panel, or group interview?
- Should I bring writing samples to the interview?
- Are tests a component of the interview?
- What is the length of the interview process?
- How much time is allowed for the actual interview?
- Are there multiple interviews?
- Confirm the interview location and check the directions days before to ensure you know the best route to travel.



### Know What to Wear

What you wear to an interview makes a lasting impression and helps you feel confident. Wear clothing that is clean, pressed, and businesslike. In most cases, businesslike translates to a suit or similar attire. If you are uncertain about what to wear to an interview, look at the company’s website to learn more about the company culture and get ideas and plan to dress 1-2 levels more formally than their everyday attire. If you do not have businesslike attire, please visit Suit-A-Bull, a free professional clothing center for USF students and alumni, located in the Student Services Building (SVC) second floor on the Tampa campus. You can review additional information about Suit-A-Bull by visiting our website at [careers.usf.edu](http://careers.usf.edu).

## Interview Modality

All interviews are different. However, what you should remember when preparing for your interview, is that it will most like take place in one of the following ways: phone, video conference, or in-person. Each format presents its own unique opportunities, so let’s explore.

### Phone Interview

Telephone interviewing presents its own challenges, namely the lack of visible feedback. Pay especially close attention to your tone and the rapidity of your speech.

- Smile while talking. As forced as it may sound, smiling while talking will help to charge your language with positivity that you would otherwise give in person.
- Silence is ok. When you are on the phone, silence seems to stretch forever. When you’re in person, you can see the

interviewer writing, being distracted, etc., but over the phone you get none of that. When you’re finished with your response, be ok with the seemingly infinite silence that follows. Most likely the employer is taking notes or needs to unmute.

- Use a landline if possible. Cell phones have the uncanny ability to go out when you need them most.
- Use cheat sheets. During a phone interview, you have the chance to have your employer research and notes in front of you to reference. You can also take notes to remember key elements that seem to resonate with the employer.
- Be in a quiet environment. Encourage your roommates to leave and take pets with them, remove all distractions and sit down during your interview. If needed, connect with the CCPD to use a private interview space.

### Video Conference Interview

This is a burgeoning trend in recruiting practices and you need to be prepared. These may be live via Zoom or Teams, or prerecorded, similar to Big Interview.

- Dress as if it were in person. Yes, that includes pants and shoes. Clothes set the tone and you do not need to get too casual.
- Control the environment. Do your best to control noise and visual distractions. Interview in front of blank space as much as able and send the roommates and household pets away.
- Look into the camera. As tempting as it may be to look at the screen while talking, look into the camera, that is the “eye” you should be attempting to make contact with.

- Use an ethernet cable. Avoid conducting over Wi-Fi if possible. Temperamental connection issues might reflect poorly upon you.
- Use the Center for Career and Professional Development if you are unable to find a quiet space free of distraction or use one of our cameras. Feel free to use our facilities to conduct the interview. Please call 813-974-2171 to take advantage of the resource.

### In-Person Interview

In-person interviews may take place with one person or with a group. Make eye contact with everyone. This simple task can be particularly vexing, but it is the best way to showcase that you are plugged into what they are saying and are trying to connect when you are speaking as well.

- Be prepared for a panel. Paneled interviews are not uncommon; be ready to actively engage with all the people in the room. Direct most of your eye contact toward the person who asked the question, but be sure to hit upon the other members as well.
- Be on-time (5 minutes early) and shake hands confidently.
- Seeing the interviewer take notes is not a bad thing. Their notes are often innocuous, instead of sinister, and mostly help them remember something you said for later debate.
- Be overdressed vs. underdressed. It is much easier to scale back an outfit than to upscale it. Confirm dress expectations well in advance.

# Interview Styles

There are several different styles of interviewing which add depth and substance to the information employers are gathering on candidates.

### Skill Assessment Questions

- Questions that test your ability and knowledge in various skills and your previous application and experience with those skills. E.g.- technical skills, software, programming, etc.
  - Focus on speaking about knowledge and current/previous experience with that skill. Relate it to the role.
  - Be genuine, knowledgeable, and show commitment to growth
- ### Personality-based Questions
- Questions that test your ability to reflect on and articulate your self, your career goals, purpose, etc.
  - Focus on speaking about yourself and displaying self-awareness, self-confidence, and commitment to growth.
  - Be authentic, keep it simple and genuine

### Behavioral-based Questions

- Questions that test your ability to reflect and activate critical thinking skills
- Focus on how you handled various work situations in the past. Your response will reveal your skills, abilities, and knowledge
- Be specific and results-oriented, preferably in experiences relevant to the position
- Tell a story using the STAR(LA) method; experiment with the worksheet below.

STARLA Technique Worksheet			
STAR(LA) Method			
<b>Situation</b>	Describe the situation in which the event took place.	<b>Results</b>	Explain the result of your actions.
<b>Task</b>	Describe the task you were asked to complete.	<b>Learning</b>	How it relates to your field/interview and question
<b>Action</b>	Explain what action you took to complete the task or solve the problem.	<b>Application</b>	How would you apply this to field, position, or program

**Situation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Action:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Task:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Results:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Learning:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Application:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Interview Questions

There is no way to prepare for every interview question that they may ask. A good trick is to write down what you want them to know about you and review this right before you go into the interview. Find a way to bring this information into the conversation. Be sure to focus on the positive (end with a positive thought with each question), keep it professional (no slang or cursing), and let your personality shine through.

## Common Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself. Another way of asking, “What brought you here?” “Why are you pursuing this opportunity?”
  - Think past, present, and future in connection to why you are in the room.
- What is your greatest strength/weakness, and how will it affect your performance in this program?
  - Mention the strength, give an example, and connect it back to the position.
  - For weakness in essence, what is a challenge for you and how are you working on that challenge? (Do not use a weakness that is part of the position’s responsibilities)
- Why are you interested in our organization? Industry?
  - Show interest and what you know about the company.
- What work experience has been the most valuable to you and why?
  - Show an area that you enjoyed and grew. Demonstrate that you enjoy being challenged and are open to growth opportunities.
- How do you think you have changed personally in the past (five) years?
  - This question is proof of self-reflection and awareness. Stay professional and be genuine.
- What challenges are you looking for in a position?
  - Think about areas you would like to gain experience in and what you are looking to achieve in the future. What can help you get there?
- What three trends do you see in the future for our industry?
  - This is a test to see if you are interested in the industry and are staying active in current trends.
- Why do you feel you will be successful in this program?
  - How will you stand out and what do you have to contribute to the program? This is your chance to show what makes you unique.

- What characteristics do you think are important for this position?
  - This is another way to ask about your strengths. Name what you think is important in this role and how you can demonstrate this.
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
  - Stay away from personal responses and focus on yourself as a professional in 5 years. Avoid mentioning big moves or other employers and focus on growing responsibilities in this organization.
- What has been the biggest accomplishment in your life and why?
  - This gives a glimpse into who you are and what you have achieved. Be sure to show resilience and why it was important to you.
- Why should I hire you?
  - Great last question to sell yourself and share anything you may have forgotten. What makes you stand out and why would you be an asset in this role?

## Behavioral Based Questions

- Tell me about a time you failed.
  - This is not a question to see you fail, it is measuring your resilience and how you deal with perceived failure and rebound.
- Give an example of a problem you have solved and the process you used.
  - Walk them through your thought process and how you evaluate and solve problems.
- Describe a situation in which you had a conflict with another individual and how you dealt with it.
  - They are looking to know how you have dealt with conflict in the past to determine how you would do so in the workplace. Be sure to be specific and avoid placing blame. Name the emotion or conflict, how you de-escalated, and what was the outcome.
- What idea have you developed and implemented that was particularly creative or innovative?
  - How have you contributed and how do you persuade others to take action? Be specific and show impact.
- Tell me about a team project of which you are particularly proud and your contribution.
  - This assesses you as a team member and how you work with others to achieve a goal. It is okay to mention a conflict/failure as long as you end on a positive note how you resolved.

- What types of situations put you under pressure, and how do you deal with the pressure?
  - Showcase how you plan and prioritize as well as maintain self-care.
- Describe a time when you added value to an existing work process.
  - Demonstrate how you can assess current operations and streamline them to make things more effective.
- Describe a leadership role you have held and tell me why you committed your time to it.
  - What are you passionate about and how have you prioritized it in your life?
- Describe one of the toughest competitive situations you have faced and how you handled it.
  - Be careful- if the job is competitive in nature, showcase that. If it is more team involvement, focus on working as a team.
- Describe a situation in which you were criticized, and how you responded.
  - Show that you can take constructive feedback and make needed adjustments. Avoid discussing an argument.
- Tell me about a time you went above the call of duty.
  - Customer service and teamwork are important in most positions. Demonstrate either of them here to give the employer a positive impression of you.

## How to answer “Tell me about yourself.”

**Structure your answer by sharing present, past, and future strengths.**

1. Briefly share where you presently are in your life, education, and career/career goals.
2. Mention important aspects from your recent past that add value to your story and the position.
3. Describe how the current position fits within your interests and career goals.
4. Mention strengths that you have developed through your experiences that relate to the role and company.

You can find various job interview questions listed in order of importance based on the skills and qualities needed to do the job. Search [www.jobinterviewquestions.com/](http://www.jobinterviewquestions.com/) for details.

## Common Interview Questions

### What interviewers ask you

1. Describe yourself. How does your background qualify you for this job?
2. What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
3. Why this job? Why this organization?
4. How would your peers describe you?
5. What makes you think you will succeed in this organization?
6. Why should we hire you? What do you bring to this job?

### What they really want to know

1. Can you take a lot of information, organize it quickly in your head, and present it in a concise and articulate manner?
2. Are you able to assess yourself and identify methods for self-improvement?
3. Have you done your homework and are you interested in this employer or position and are you likely to stick around.
4. How do you see yourself? Are you a leader or a follower? How will you fit into a team.
5. Have you accurately identified the skills and expertise needed to succeed? Can you prove you have them?
6. How are your promotion and persuasion skills? Are you believable? If you can't sell yourself, how will you be able to sell our products/company/ideas?

Modified from The Muse Editors (2023), Your 2023 Guide to the Most Common Interview Questions and Answers

# Questions to Ask the Interviewer

During an interview, you will typically be given an opportunity to ask questions of the interviewer. Take advantage of this opportunity, you should always be prepared to ask questions. The questions you ask will help you gain additional information to assist in your career decision-making process. Your questions should focus on the industry, the organization, and the position.

## Industry Questions

- In what ways has this organization been most successful in terms of products/services over the past several years compared to competitors in (this industry)?
- What opportunities and challenges do you see over the next two years regarding (this industry)?
- What kind of changes do you expect to see in (this industry) over the next two to three years?

## Organization Questions

- Could you talk about the key data that drives goal setting and strategic planning for the organization?
- How would you describe the culture of your organization?
- How does your organization support continuing education?
- How would you describe the management style in this company/department?

## Position Questions

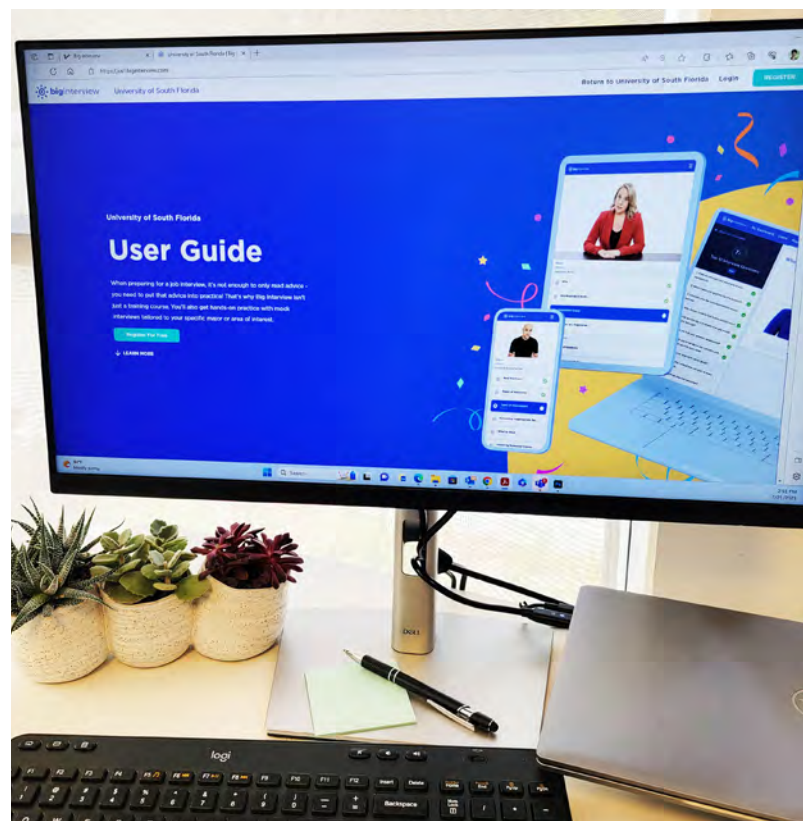
- Describe the training associated with this position? How is an employee assessed during this training?
- What does the day-to-day schedule look like for this position?
- What does success look like in three months, six months and one year into this position?
- What characteristics best describe individuals who are successful in this position?
- How is job performance evaluated?
- What are the key deliverables or outcomes this position must achieve?
- Where does this position fit into the organizational structure?
- Where might a person who has been in this position expect to be in five years?

## Practice Online Interviewing with Big Interview

When preparing for a job interview, it's not enough to just read advice — you need to put that advice into practice! For interview preparation and practice, we recommend that you use the virtual tool Big Interview, which you have free access to as a USF student, <https://www.usf.edu/career-services/students/biginterview.aspx>. Big Interview provides an AI-powered assessment of your mock interview sessions, which can be tailored to your specific industry, job interests, and experience level.

Big Interview can help you feel confident before your interview. With thousands of questions available - including general questions and specific job and skill related ones - you can create practice interviews that closely mirror the actual interview you're preparing for.

Simply record your response, and then let Big Interview's AI tool give you feedback on areas of improvement, such as eye contact, filler words, and pace of speech. Utilizing Big Interview is a perfect way to conquer your anxiety, gain confidence, and approach any job interview well prepared.



### Practice These Questions

Write down notes about what you want to share in an interview. Be sure to back up your answers with evidence (stories) and use the STAR method where appropriate.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why are you interested in this opportunity with our organization?
3. Tell me about the experience that has most prepared you for this position.
4. What are your greatest strengths?
5. What project or experience are you most proud of?

### Get Feedback

Now that you have prepared for these questions, give this sheet to a friend, family member or trusted advisor. Have them ask you a question and write down notes on your response.

1. What did you like about this person's answer?
2. What is one way they could improve their answer?
3. How did they connect their story to the position they are interviewing for?
4. Nonverbal communication: Did you notice any nonverbal cues this person should be aware of?

# Interview Tips

Interviewing can be a challenging and sometimes intimidating process, so review these reminders as you prepare to help alleviate some of the pressures of interviewing.

- Know yourself!
- Do your research.
- Practice your interview.
- Prepare your attire for the interview. Simple classic outfits win over “fashion” every time. It’s always important to dress for the “next” position during the interview process. If you do not have appropriate attire, please visit Suit-A-Bull, a free professional clothing center for USF students and alumni.
- Have a couple of interview outfits so you’ll have options if asked back for a second interview
- Make sure you demonstrate, do not merely state what you can do, show what you have done.
- Provide examples and meaningful stories which showcase your skills and experiences.
- Be sure to thoroughly answer all questions asked.
- Bring something to write with (a padfolio) in case you need to write down questions, so you remember what was asked.
- Bring copies of your resume and cover letter, on nice quality paper.
- If the employer does not mention salary and benefits, then you should not either. This is not the setting to discuss either.
- Wear light or no cologne/perfume as some people have allergies.
- No gum chewing.
- Before the interview, turn off cell phone, not on vibrate.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes early and take a look at yourself before entering the actual location for the interview.
- Remember, the interview begins when you enter the building.
- Take a deep breath and Ace the Interview

## Common Interview Mistakes

- **Missing the phone/video screening or interview**
- **Sending a generic (post interview) follow-up or not following up enough**
- **Following up too much**
- **Not asking any questions**
- **Not showing industry knowledge**



95%

Percent of employers citing Communication as most important competency  
Job Outlook 2023

## During the Interview

### Be Prepared to Talk Salary

One question you should be ready to address is expected salary. On your résumé, it is not proper to mention salaries, but in an interview, you might be asked to state a figure. Use the resources listed in this guide to determine salary range or meet with a Career Coach (<https://www.usf.edu/career-services/students/coaching.aspx>) who can help you prepare for your interview.

### Non-Verbal Communication

Along with attire, non-verbal communication is also an important factor to keep in mind while interviewing.

- Be aware of your body language and smile
- Be relaxed, but exude energy
- Have a firm handshake if extended
- Avoid distracting body motions, such as adjusting hair, clothes, and touching face
- Make eye contact when speaking with the interviewer(s)
- Sit comfortably, but attentively with good posture



## Ending of the Interview

Interviews end in different ways. Some interviewers might look at their watch, which is a cue for you that the interview is nearing an end; some interviewers are direct by holding out their hand and thanking you for coming. When the interview is over, thank the interviewer(s) for taking time to talk with you. Re-emphasize your interest in the position and your appreciation for being considered, then follow up with a thank you note or email as soon as possible.

## After the Interview

The initial interview is over, but the work to close out the process successfully continues!

A thank you note restating your interest in the position and organization should be sent within 24 hours of the interview. Sending a thank you note is an opportunity to express your gratitude for the offer and reiterate your interest. Email or handwritten notes are acceptable. Thank-you notes should be sent after phone screening calls, as well. Follow up if you haven't heard a response in the time frame indicated to inquire about the status of the position. A note should be sent to each person with whom you spoke referencing something different that was discussed during the interview.

No other action should be taken until at least one week beyond the date they expressed feedback would be provided. At that time, a phone call is appropriate to determine if a decision has been made.

## Thank You Note Example

*Dear Mr./Dr., Interview Participant,*

*It was a pleasure to meet with you about the \_\_\_\_\_ position at XYZ Organization. I especially appreciated talking with you about ...*

*If given the opportunity, I am confident I can make valuable contributions to your organization. Thank you for the time you committed to my interviewing. I look forward to hearing from you about this position.*

*Sincerely,*

*Rocky D. Bull*

# 57%

of job seekers do not send thank you notes following interviews. Doing so could help you to stand out as a candidate!

## Take Notes to Make Each Interview a Learning Experience

As soon as possible after the interview, write down what you have learned. Ask yourself:

- Which points interested the employer?
- Did I present my skills and qualifications well?
- Did I talk too much? Too little?
- What questions did I find more difficult to answer?
- Which questions do I need to provide more content?
- Did I follow the lead of the person leading the interview?
- How can I improve my next interview?



# Evaluating Offers

## When You Receive an Offer

After receiving an offer, you must start to assess the offer. You may ask yourself: Should I take it? How do I decide between multiple offers? How do I accept or decline the offer? When you receive an offer, you are not required to accept the first offer you receive nor every offer you receive. Before accepting a position, carefully evaluate if the position is the right fit for you at this time.

### Follow the steps below for how to respond to an offer in the moment:

1. Thank the employer and express your excitement.
2. Ask for the details of the offer (salary and benefits package) and if they can send it to you in writing.
3. Request some time to review the offer and think things over. Find out when they would like your decision.
4. Thank them again and let them know when you will get back to them. After that conversation, you now have time to consider if you want the position and take a look at the details to ensure you are making the right decision. Use the questions in the adjacent box to consider if the position and the offer are the best fit for you.

## Assess the Offer

The time between receiving and accepting an offer is the time to negotiate. Not all positions are negotiable, however, you should look at the offer to determine if it is reasonable. A negotiation is a conversation. You should bring research and reasons that explain why you are worth more than they are offering. It is recommended that you discuss this with a career coach or trusted mentor with experience in this area before negotiating. Consider the following:

## Deciding on Accepting an Offer

- **What is it about this particular position that excites you (rather than simply feeling general excitement about having an offer)?**
- **How will this position allow you to grow and expand your talents and skills for the future?**
- **Are the salary, benefits, and work environment a fit with your values, lifestyle and needs?**

	Know your value
	Know your target salary and benefits
	Know your audience
	Develop a strategy
	Practice

- Focus on the value you bring to the organization (special skills, knowledge, training, education, or experience).
- How does the offer compare to other offers you've received for similar positions?
- How does the offer compare to industry standards?

## Write a Value Statement

A value statement is your way of expressing an evidence-based statement to support your target salary. This might be used when asked about your desired salary, when counter-offering a salary offer, or when requesting a promotion or raise. A value statement will be particularly important because you want the employer to see the contributions you will make to the organization. You will always begin by expressing a value you give to an organization or evidence of your worth prior to mentioning any numbers.

## Negotiate Salary

Salary discussions initiated by the employer can take place at any time during the interview process. So be prepared and ready to discuss your salary expectations:

- During the application submission process, some organizations can ask for your salary preferences.
- During the interview process, some organizations may ask for your desired salary.
- Once an offer is made, some organizations will let you know the salary at that time.

Before applying, start researching salaries for similar positions in your area using tools such as salary.com, glassdoor.com, or jobsearchintelligence.com. It is in your best interest to let the employer share their salary expectations with you before you offer a number you have in mind. You don't want to accidentally offer a number that is lower than what they would have offered you. When

you respond, give a range with the base being the lowest salary you would be comfortable accepting and go up 20%. For example, if \$50,000 is a realistic starting salary for this type of position with your qualifications, you may ask for \$50,000-\$60,000.

“I want to thank you for this opportunity to work for XYZ company. You are my first choice and I would love to work for your team. Based on my degree and experience increasing XY for company Z during my internship, and my research for current salary trends in our area, I would be expecting a salary closer to \$50,000-\$60,000. Is there room for negotiation on this number?”

### Other Benefits

There are other benefits that should be taken into consideration is salary is non-negotiable. Please note that not all industries offer these benefits.

- Relocation
- Flex time/Hybrid work
- Insurance coverage
- Retirement Plan
- Sign-on bonus
- Stock options
- Merit increases/Performance reviews
- Parking
- Transportation costs
- Tuition reimbursement
- Professional development and certifications
- Gym memberships
- Daycare availability

- Paid holidays
- Sick leave and personal holidays
- Vacation time

If the salary offered is less than you expected, you can consider negotiating one or two other benefits. Do not select all to negotiate, as this is a time to be strategic to ensure you are able to get the position you most desire.

“If the salary cannot be adjusted, can we discuss professional development opportunities? Having a project management certification would be beneficial to this role and my own development. Would you be willing to sponsor this within the first 3 months in lieu of a salary increase?”

### Salary Finalized

After the salary has been finalized, consider the following:

- Ask for the revised offer in writing.
- After you verbally accept, write an acceptance letter.
- Once you accept a job offer, do not back out. Stop looking for jobs. Inform other companies that they should no longer be considering your application.
- Thank and update those who helped you during the search.

## Declining a Job Offer or Requesting Additional Decision Time

### Declining an Offer

While a phone call is the most appropriate method of communication to withdraw from a search process, an email or letter when withdrawing from the interview process or declining an offer is important to assure good relations with the organization.

- Withdraw from the interview process/decline an offer as soon as you know you are no longer interested, or immediately after accepting an offer from another organization
- Withdrawing/declining tactfully in a timely manner will not offend the organization
- Be positive, let them know it was a difficult decision, express your appreciation, and thank them for the opportunity.

### Requesting Additional Time

When faced with a decision to accept an offer that you feel you can't make in the time allotted, you can consider requesting more time from the employer. You may need a phone conversation with the employer about your request to extend the offer deadline, but it's wise to provide a "heads-up" to the employer regarding the nature of your request before the call.

- Make sure to express your enthusiasm and gratefulness for the offer. Odds are extremely low that the recruiter will rescind the offer just for asking - and if they do, it's probably best to steer clear of the company anyway.
- Do not wait until the last minute to ask for an extension - a week or more before the deadline is preferred.

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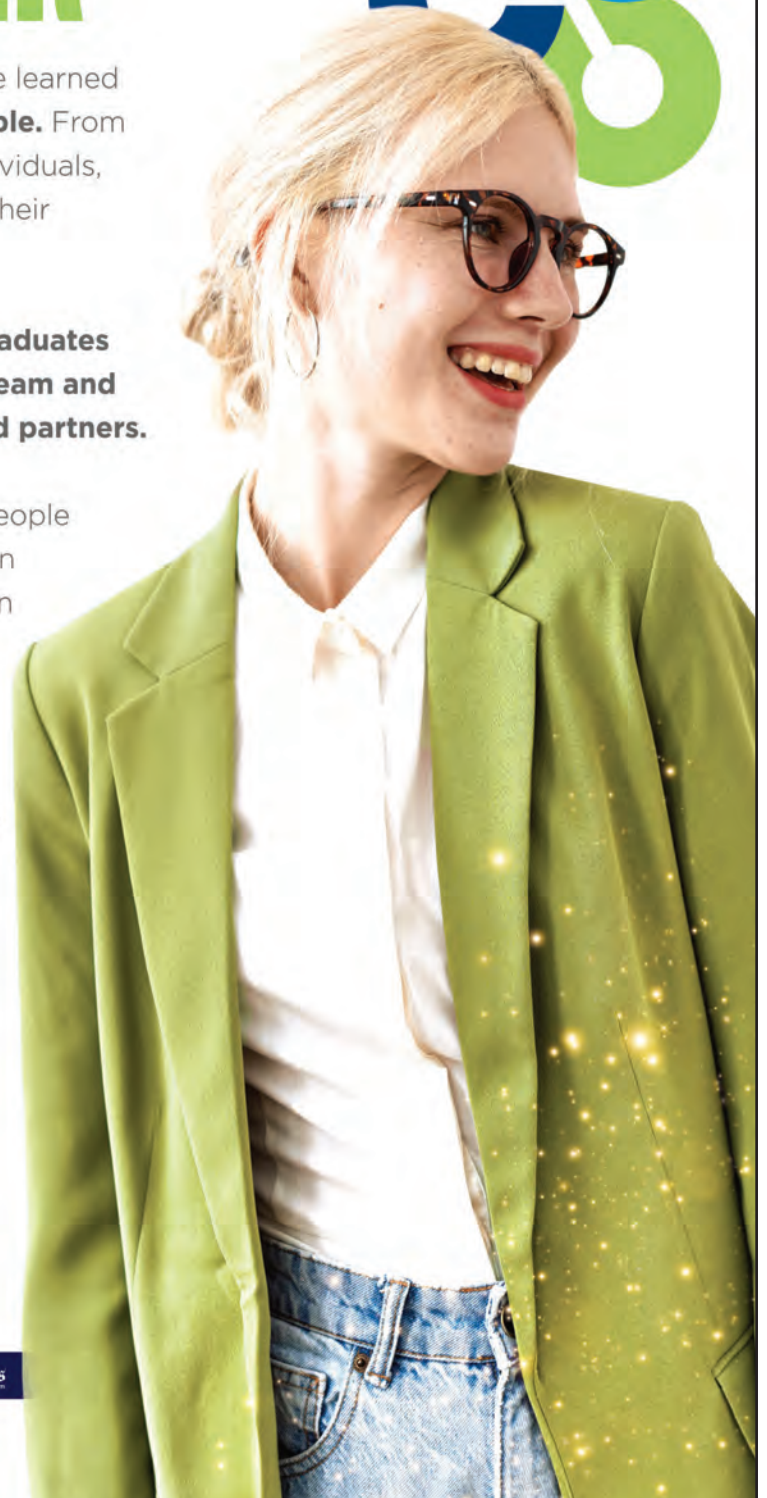
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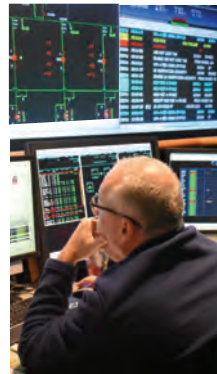
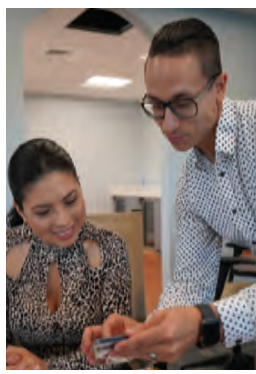
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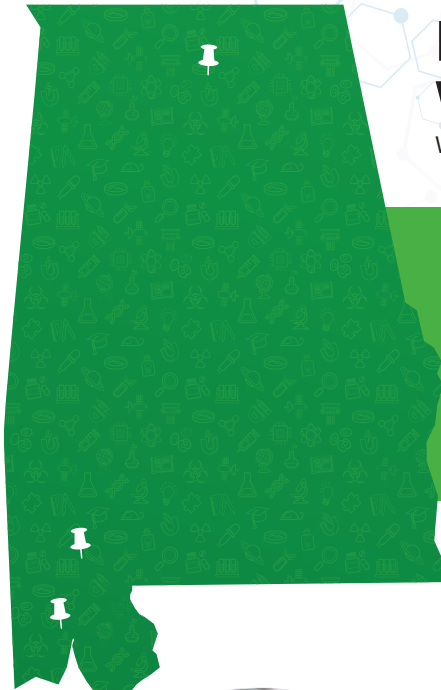
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