“Classroom to Career”

Westminster College
Career Center

developing students, creating leaders

2017-2018
Career Center Handbook
JOBS FOR TODAY- CAREERS FOR TOMORROW

Westminster College Career Services educates, prepares, and assists students and alumni as they pursue the career development and job search process in a global and dynamic world of work.

Services and Programs Include:

- Job postings for all on-campus, work-study, part-time, and off-campus employment
- Career counseling for self-assessment, career exploration, choosing a major and career decision making
- Career Resource Center, which includes a computer for assessments and job searching
- Quiet facilities for phone and webcam interviews
- Assistance with searches for full and part-time employment, internships, and community service
- Resume, curriculum vitae, and cover letter reviews
- Mock interview coaching with optional video-taping
- Fall & Spring WestPACS Job and Internship Fair
- Graduate School preparation
- Classroom presentations by staff professionals
- “Classroom to Career” Career Services Handbook

Contact Us

McKelvey Campus Center
724-946-7338
career@westminster.edu

Follow Us

facebook.com/wc.career
Twitter ~ @WCCareerCenter1

Our services are available to all Westminster undergraduate, graduate, and alumni*. Career Counselors are available by appointment, email, phone, and walk-in during the entire year.

*Current students and alumni will have unlimited access to the Titan Employment Bulletin on my.WESTMINSTER.edu.
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## Career Center

### Main Office
- Building: MCC – 3rd Floor
- Phone: 724-946-7338
- Email: [career@westminster.edu](mailto:career@westminster.edu)
- Hours: Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### Katy DeMedal
- Director, Career Center
- McKelvey Campus Center
- Phone: 724-946-6338
Choosing a Career

Career development is a process used throughout your life as you make changes in what you want to do, where and how you want to do it, and what you want in return. Jobs will come and go, and the skills required to do your work will continually change just as your interests, skills, and values change.

This process is not meant to be a short step-by-step process with a definite conclusion. You may find yourself backing up and going through some of the steps several times. Each time you cycle through the process, you are working closer toward more satisfying choices.

Throughout career development, it is common to experience confusion, anxiety and fear since career decisions often impact many facets of your life. The important thing is to recognize these concerns and overcome them by utilizing the techniques outlined in this section. Take a few minutes to find out if any of the following statements sound like you.

"My career has to meet all my needs."

A career includes all of your life pursuits, both paid and unpaid. You can end up spending a lot of time looking for "the perfect career." What you need to do is find out what is really important and balance your life so that you can satisfy desires that matter most.

"I'm stuck with this major/degree."

That's not exactly how it works. Just because you chose a major or graduated with a certain degree doesn't mean you're locked into that field. It's a degree, not a life sentence. Career counselors can help you explore your options. Despite the myth, employers do not hire majors-they hire people who have the skills necessary to do the job. That means you can choose to work in a field other than your college major.

"I have to make the absolute right decision."

Worrying about making the "correct" choice will just cause you stress. There are not absolute right or wrong answers. We all grow through life and make decisions because they seemed like the best idea at the time. The way you can end up feeling more confident is to do some research. Knowing that you have looked into it and that you are making an informed decision should lighten the burden. Also, don't make your decision solely on someone else's ideas.

"My job determines my worth."

One definition of success is being happy with what you do. It is not about satisfying others' expectations of what is "good for you." You are the one who will be doing this job, not everyone else. Focus on what works for you. If you are happy, those who care about you will be too. And, by the way, you are much more likely to be successful if you choose what you love. By doing so, you will feel more connected with purpose and fulfillment.

"My first job will determine my entire career."

On average, people have between three and five career changes in their lives. You might start out in one area and realize it's not what you wanted and try something else. That's normal.
Identifying Your Interests

Interests are ideas that capture your mind. They are what you want to think about and what you like to put your energy into. To be successful in any career, you will need to invest a great deal of energy. This is more likely to happen if you choose something that genuinely interests you.

Use these questions to help qualify possible areas of interest you might want in a job or a career.

_________________________ What do you love to do in your free time?
_________________________ Is there anything you could talk about for hours?
_________________________ Think back to the last time you stayed up until 3 a.m. in a deep conversation—what was it you were talking about?
_________________________ What school subjects do you like?
_________________________ Have you taken a class that you looked forward to going to?
_________________________ If you were at a party and a group was engaged in an intense discussion, what subject would make you want to join in?
_________________________ With what social or community group(s) do you identify or devote your attention?
_________________________ What magazines do you read?
_________________________ What section of the newspaper do you read first?
_________________________ What sections do you head to in bookstores and libraries?
_________________________ What internet sites do you like to browse?
_________________________ Are there any classes that intrigue you?
_________________________ If you were to write a book, what would it be about?
_________________________ Have you ever gotten so absorbed in doing something that you lost track of time? What were you doing?
_________________________ Are there situations in your life that were "defining moments" and have shaped your interests today?

Now, step back and look at your answers to the questions above. Reflect on your answers and write down your observations. Are there any patterns or common themes? Do you see any connection between your interests and your values?
Identifying Your Skills

Understanding your current skills and abilities is important in the career development process. Be sure to keep in mind not to limit your options based only on what you can already do. Now is the time to explore all your options and start working to also develop new skills that will make you competitive once you are ready to apply for a job. Use this list to start identifying your current skills.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS
• Motivates and empowers others to act
• Inspires trust and respect in others
• Builds effective teams
• Involves others without coercing or cajoling
• Promotes open discussion and involvement of all participants while not dominating
• Facilitates and manages group interactions
• Delegates effectively

PERSUADING SKILLS
• Communicates effectively to justify a position or influence a decision
• Able to sell products and promote ideas
• Effective in lobbying for change

MEDIATION SKILLS
• Helps those with opposite viewpoints reach mutual agreements, either through consensus or compromise
• Deals with conflict in an open, honest, and positive way

INTERVIEWING SKILLS
• Asks and responds to questions effectively, able to make others feel relaxed and creates a feeling of trust

CARE GIVING SKILLS
• Identifies and responds appropriately to the need for care, counseling, treatment, or therapy
• Patient and empathizes with others
• Gives sensitive care to people who are sick or elderly or who have severe disabilities

CLIENT SERVICE SKILLS
• Builds a relationship of mutual trust with clients
• Understands or perceives clients’ needs
• Acts as an advocate for clients
• Handles complaints and concerns in a sensitive way
• Tailors services to meet the needs of an individual’s goals

ANALYTICAL/LOGICAL THINKING SKILLS
• Draws specific conclusions from a set of general observations (deductive reasoning)
• Draws general conclusions from set of specific facts (inductive reasoning)
• Examines data to understand inter-relationships and correlations
• Synthesizes information and ideas
• Clarifies the nature of a problem, evaluates alternatives, proposes viable solutions, and determines the outcome of the various options

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CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

- Reviews different points of view or ideas and makes objective judgments
- Examines underlying assumptions
- Formulates a question, analyzes a problem, or defines a situation with clarity, accuracy, and fairness
- Reviews or develops policy and programs
  Identifies all possible options, weighs the pros and cons, assesses feasibility, and chooses the most viable option

CREATIVE THINKING SKILLS

- Generates new ideas, invents new things, and creates new images or designs
- Designs new approaches to solve problems
  Makes connections between seemingly unrelated things
- Reshapes goals to reveal new possibilities
- Uses wit and humor effectively

PLANNING SKILLS

- Lays out a step-by-step process for achieving a goal
- Establishes objectives and needs, evaluates options, and chooses the best option
- Analyzes all the requirements (i.e., human, financial, and material resources) to accomplish specific goals
- Establishes realistic timetables and schedules

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Organizes information, people, or things in a systematic way
- Establishes priorities and meets deadlines
- Develops or streamlines procedures
- Monitors progress and effectiveness

ADVANCED WRITING SKILLS

- Selects, interprets, organizes, and synthesizes key ideas
- Adjusts style, form, and content to a particular audience
- Drafts non-routine correspondence and complex reports
- Writes in a creative way for the general public
- Edits written text to ensure that the message is as clear, concise, and accurate as possible

RESEARCH SKILLS

- Develops appropriate methodology and implements a plan
- Knows how to find and collect relevant background information
- Able to identify people who have relevant information
- Knows how to collect and compile data
- Analyzes data, summarizes findings, and writes a report

ADMINISTRATIVE/Clerical SKILLS

- Operates computers and other basic office equipment
- Designs and maintains filing and control systems

FINANCIAL SKILLS

- Keeps accurate financial records
- Manages a budget
- Establishes and maintains accounting and auditing procedures
- Prepares and interprets financial statements and reports
- Monitors inventory flow

LANGUAGE SKILLS

- Fluent in language(s) other than the one dominant in the organization

PERCEPTUAL SKILLS

- Visualizes new formats and shapes
- Estimates physical space

ADVANCED COMPUTER SKILLS

- Learns new software quickly
- Manipulates data in a computer system

TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS

- Understands technical specifications; reads technical manuals with ease
- Maintains computer or other systems; analyzes potential dysfunctions and troubleshoots potential problems
- Suggests modifications to an existing system or designs a new system to improve performance

PERFORMING SKILLS

- Entertains, amuses and inspires an audience
- Acts, sings, or plays an instrument in public

ARTISTIC SKILLS

- Draws diagrams and illustrations
- Uses color and design creatively
- Designs displays and publicity material

MECHANICAL SKILLS

- Installs, repairs, operates, and monitors the performance of equipment and mechanical devices

ADAPTABILITY SKILLS

- Capacity to adapt to new situations and settings and to tolerate change well
- Sees change as an opportunity, rather than as a problem
Self-Assessments

Can’t figure out what major you want to choose? The Career Center offers many options for you.

MyPlan: One option is to take the on-line self-assessment called Focus. This assessment, offered on the Career Center website, can help you explore many aspects about yourself as you search for a fulfilling major and career.
http://www.westminster.edu/campus/services/career-center-new/index.cfm
Click on Explore Majors and then MyPlan to get started.

Self-Directed Search: This easy-to-use, comprehensive career exploration tool asks questions about the individual’s aspirations, activities, competencies, occupations, and other self-estimates. The resulting three-letter Summary Code, which designates the three personality types an individual most closely resembles, can then be used to help the individual find his or her occupational match.

O*Net Online: The O*NET program is the nation’s primary source of occupational information. Central to the project is the O*NET database, containing information on hundreds of standardized and occupation-specific descriptors. The database, which is available to the public at no cost, is continually updated by surveying a broad range of workers from each occupation. Information from this database forms the heart of O*NET OnLine, an interactive application for exploring and searching occupations. The database also provides the basis for our Career Exploration Tools, a set of valuable assessment instruments for workers and students looking to find or change careers. has detailed descriptions of the world of work for use by job seekers, workforce development and HR professionals, students, researchers, and more!
https://www.onetonline.org/

Choosing a Major

Choosing a major is not the same as choosing a career. What you get from completing a degree are skills, knowledge, interesting experiences, and the ability to be an independent learner. What you do with them is entirely up to you. It is true, however, that some professions do require certain degrees or certifications, such as teaching, engineering, architecture, or nursing, to name a few.

Basically, the more a career requires specialized expertise, the more necessary it is to have a related degree. Don’t worry if you already have a major or have to choose one soon and you really have no idea what you want to do. If you choose a major that excites you, most likely you will work harder, do better, and find something that you truly enjoy.

Keep in mind that your first job after graduation is probably only the first step of many toward realizing your career goals. The creation of new job titles and career fields is continuous, so selecting a career is not a one-time decision, but an ongoing process.

“To-Do” List

FOUR-YEAR GUIDELINE

FIRST YEAR:
- Meet with a career counselor to assess your interests and to help you decide on a major
- Use MyPlan, the computerized self-assessment program
- “Sit in” on a class to explore a major
- Attend the Majors Fair
- Browse the books, tapes, resources in the Career Center for information on majors/careers
- Become involved in on-campus activities
- Request list of former internship sites from Career Center to aid in planning an internship
- Begin to document your achievements for a co-curricular transcript/e-portfolio
- Find a summer job in your field to explore a career and gain experience

SOPHOMORE YEAR:
- Shadow someone in a career that you wish to explore
  (Career Center staff will help to arrange it)
- Attend workshops on resume/cover letter writing and interviewing
- Seek individual assistance at the Career Center to develop your resume
- Participate in the annual spring “Internship/Summer Job” event
- Search on Career Center website to find internships and PT jobs
- Seek out leadership roles on and off campus
- Update information for resume and e-portfolio
- Create a LinkedIn profile, and join the WC alumni group
- Serve an internship
Developing Your Skills

Obtaining a college degree is an important step in pursuing your career goals. However, a degree is no longer enough to be competitive. It is equally as important to develop your skills and abilities through experiences such as campus and community involvement, part-time work and internships.

When evaluating a candidate’s ability, employers look beyond just knowledge gained in the classroom. They look for significant skills such as teamwork, communication and organization. Most employers consider these skills equally as important as a degree and will often ask you to demonstrate in an interview how you have obtained these skills.

Making the connection from college to your career is easier than you think. Once you have decided on a major, it is time to enhance your employable skills by gaining experience through various activities.

In addition to developing your skills, you are building a network of people who can help you throughout your career development and job search process.

Campus Involvement

Involvement in a student organization is a great way to develop valuable skills and expose yourself to your chosen field of study. Westminster College has more than 100 academic, social, and special interest student organizations that provide an excellent opportunity to develop leadership skills and network with industry professionals.

Class Projects

Many capstone classes offer students a chance to practice the concepts they are learning in class in a real-life context. It may feel like you are only doing it for class credit; however, a class project can be a great chance to demonstrate your knowledge of a subject area.

Part-time/On-campus Employment

Having previous work experience is a critical aspect of gaining future employment. Part-time, temporary and even summer jobs offer an opportunity to develop important skills and demonstrate your ability to perform well as an employee. Many college students downplay their work experience thinking that it is not significant unless it is career-related. However, every job requires you to use many important skills, such as teamwork, communication, initiative, and adaptability. Do not underestimate the value of these part-time jobs. For example, “cashiering” demonstrates responsibility, organization, communication and computer skills.

“To-Do” List

FOUR-YEAR GUIDELINE

JUNIOR YEAR:
- Research potential employers/internships
- Attend Career Center informational programs, panels and special events
- Attend graduate school fairs; note application deadlines for graduate schools
- Research graduate school scholarship/fellowship opportunities
- Attend Job Fairs for internship opportunities
- Update your resume and e-portfolio information
- Attend Career Center workshops to develop job search skills
- Attend Professional Networking Symposium
- Review on-line PT Job and Internship opportunities
- Update your LinkedIn profile
- Serve another internship

SENIOR YEAR:
- Attend “Senior Seminar” to sharpen the skills of the job or graduate school search
- Apply to graduate schools early, if planning to continue education
- Apply for graduate school scholarships/fellowships, if appropriate
- Participate in a mock interview and/or a videotaped mock interview
- Attend “Dine ‘n Shine/Dress for Success/Life Skills” program
- Update your resume and create or update your e-portfolio
- Participate in on-campus interviews with prospective employers
- Communicate with alumni for informational interviews
- Visit Career Center’s on-line Job Bulletin for employment opportunities
- Attend Job Fairs
- Utilize LinkedIn
- Serve yet another internship
International Programs

Study Abroad
Participating in a study abroad program is a significant and exciting part of completing a university degree. Graduates can gain an edge in the job market with their more in-depth understanding of language, culture and diversity. Internship opportunities may also be available, further enhancing your international work experience. Proper paperwork and registration for internships is still required through the Career Center.

For more information contact:
International Programs office – Dr. Jamie McMinn @ 724-946-7121 or mcminnig@westminster.edu

Informational Interviews

The purpose of informational interviewing is to learn more about an occupation or industry in which you are interested. An informational interview is not a time to ask for a job. However, it can lead to building a network of professionals inside a field or company which may open up opportunities for future employment.

To arrange an informational interview, email, call or send a letter to the person you would like to interview. Most people remember what it was like to be in your shoes and are happy to help. If the person declines your offer, simply ask if they can refer you to someone else and thank the person for his/her time.

Examples of Questions to Ask

What training is required for this type of work?
What personal qualities or abilities are important to being successful in this field/position/company?
How did you end up in this position?
What has been your career path?
What do you do on a typical day in this position?
What part of this job do you find the most challenging or satisfying?
What are the "hot topics" in this field?
How many hours do you typically work in a week?
What is the corporate culture here?
What advice would you give a person entering this field?
How does your job fit into the organization?
How do you find out about job openings in this field?

Top 10 Skills Employers Look for in a Candidate

According to research by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), these are ten top skills that employers are looking for in an ideal candidate:

- Communication skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Honesty/Integrity
- Teamwork skills
- Motivation/Initiative
- Strong work ethic
- Analytical skills
- Flexibility/Adaptability
- Computer skills
- Self-Confidence/Maturity
A Sample Script for Setting up an Informational Interview

"Hello, my name is and I am currently a junior at Westminster College. I am majoring in Broadcast Communications and I am interested in your field of work.

I am trying to determine my future career direction and was wondering if you would mind sharing your insight with me. Would you be willing to spend 20 to 30 minutes with me to discuss your experiences?

I am happy to meet you at your office at a time that is convenient for you."

Dress professionally when going to your informational interview. Bring a notebook and prepared questions. Be punctual and polite. Remember to listen attentively and express your gratitude to the person for sharing his or her time and insight. Be sure to get his or her business card and send a follow-up thank-you call, e-mail or letter.

Shadowing

Shadowing or externships can vary in length, but usually last one or two days. A typical externship involves shadowing a professional through a normal day's activities and may include informational interviews, a tour of the facility, and participation in actual office projects.

Shadowing is different from an internship. It is usually short-term (one to two days), offers no pay or academic credit, and is hosted by volunteers in various organizations to help students gain an insider's view of a career field. Taking advantage of an externship experience can help students assess the day-to-day life of a professional career field they are considering. An externship can also be a foot in the door to a company you are interested in applying to at a later date.

Internships

Typically, an internship lasts for at least a semester or summer and no more than one year. Decidedly different than a part-time job, internships are designed to connect your classroom experiences to the real world through hands-on projects and mentoring relationships. Internships may be for pay and/or for academic credit.

Benefits of an Internship

- Helps you develop a competitive edge over other candidates in the hiring process
- Broadens your career knowledge and can strengthen your career decision
- Socializes you to the world of work including ethics and professionalism
- Reinforces classroom learning and assists you in going from simply knowing something to being able to apply that knowledge
- Gives you a realistic picture of what a career will actually be like

Preparing for an Internship

Take the appropriate classes in order to build a framework for your internship. Participate in informational interviewing, job shadowing, and externships to gain exposure to your field. Decide which type of internship is best for you: academic or not-for-credit internship.

Finding an Internship

To find the appropriate internship for you, utilize many resources, including "The Internship and PT Job Newsletter", company websites, and job search engines such as indeed.com or careerbuilder.com. Network with alumni, family, friends, your current employer, faculty, and academic advisors to learn about possible internship opportunities. You should also contact your academic advisor and/or the Career Center.

Academic Internships

Academic internships are credit-bearing internships offered through academic departments. Currently, all departments offer credit internships. Each academic department sets its own criteria for awarding credit for internship experiences. This criteria can vary from keeping a log, writing a final paper, or presenting a comprehensive portfolio of learning.

Take the quiz, Are You Ready for an Internship?, to see if an internship is your next step.
Are You Ready for an Internship?

Take the Internship Readiness Quiz to determine whether or not you are ready and what you need to do to prepare yourself.

Please rate each statement on a 0 – 4 scale:

0 =Strongly Disagree, 1 = Disagree, 2 = Uncertain, 3 =Agree, 4 =Strongly Agree

1) I would like to extend what I am learning beyond what is possible in the classroom.

2) I sometimes wonder how what I have been learning in the classroom applies to the real world.

3) I have prepared for the internship by completing general coursework related to the nature of the internship.

4) I would like to identify areas for further coursework.

5) I can adequately devote enough time to both coursework and internship work.

6) I have researched the industry and/or a particular career path to support my interest in an internship through library and internet resources, visiting my Career Services office, and/or conducting informational interviews, job shadowing, and externships.

7) I have begun developing related skills through activities such as participation in clubs and associations, volunteerism, and other work.

8) I can articulate my learning objectives and goals for the internship.

9) I would like to affirm or disaffirm a particular career path.

10) I would like to gain work experience for future employment.

Total Points

Scale:

32+------------------- Ready for an internship

28-31 .................. Need to consider potential obstacles before starting an internship

24-27................... Careful planning and rethinking of priorities will be necessary to begin an internship under 24.............. Consideration of other options may be best
RESUMES

Formatting Your Resume
The purpose of a resume is to get an interview, not a job. Typically, an employer will only spend 30 to 60 seconds looking at your resume before deciding whether or not to consider you for an interview. You want the employer to immediately see that you have the necessary background and qualifications.

There are many ways to organize and format your resume so that you highlight the most relevant skills and experiences. To get you started, there are three basic types of resumes—the chronological, functional, and hybrid resume.

Chronological Resume
Most common resume type and is preferred by most employers.
Lists your work experience in descending order starting with your most recent job.
This resume format stresses your work history.

Functional Resume
Highlights your skills rather than your work history.
The trick to having a successful functional resume is to demonstrate how you have obtained a certain skill or ability through class work, volunteer or leadership experience.
This format is often used if you have limited work experience or if you are trying to break into a new career field and want to highlight your transferable skills.

Curriculum Vitae
Recommended for use by graduate students. A far more comprehensive resume that elaborates on education and includes specialized training, presentations, publications, research, posters, and conferences.
Usually used for academic and medical occupations.

In most cases, a one-page resume is sufficient to convey the most significant information. Sometimes, it can be difficult to choose what to leave off; however, you don’t want the employer to get bogged down reading a lengthy resume.
Individuals with more experience may need two pages if they have enough relevant information to fill at least half of the second page.

• Use standard font styles such as Times New Roman or Arial. All text on your resume should be the same size (10 to 12 point) except your name which should be larger.

Resume Templates
Resume templates, like the ones you find on the internet, are not recommended. Templates force your information into a specific format and do not necessarily allow you to highlight your unique qualifications in the most effective way. Because templates utilize text blocks, the information is hard to manipulate around the page when you want to update your information.

Instead, create your resume in a blank, Microsoft Word document and follow the general guidelines in this section.

• All margins should be the same. One-inch margins are a good starting point, but you can go slightly smaller if necessary.
• Use bullet points to highlight information.
• Section headings should be in bold and may also be capitalized or underlined for emphasis.

Addressing Gaps in Your Resume
No doubt you have heard the phrase, “Don’t have gaps in your resume.” Employers understand that getting your education is your full-time job right now. Throughout high school and college, employers expect that you may have taken periods of time off and they look at more than just work experience when evaluating your qualifications. Do not worry about small gaps of time on your resume while you are pursuing your education.

Having wide gaps in your resume is more of a concern once you have completed your education and started your career. With that said, there are legitimate reasons to take time off of work and it does not necessarily mean that an employer will look negatively upon a gap. Here are some tips for addressing extensive gaps in your resume:

✓ Gaps less than six months do not need to be explained.
✓ Explain extensive gaps in a cover letter, email, or interview if you’re able to secure one.
✓ Use years instead of months on your resume.
✓ Incorporate transferable skills that you have developed during your time off.
Resume Sections

Contact Information
• Include your name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address at the top of the resume.
• Make your name stand out by slightly increasing the font size (14 to 18 point) or making it bold.
• Use a professional e-mail address such as your name or use your Westminster College email.

Objective/Resume Summary
• Objectives are optional and typically unnecessary. If you choose to include an objective, it should be a short phrase that outlines your career goals related to the position you are applying for. You do not need an objective if your resume clearly shows your skills, accomplishments, and experience related to the job.

• An alternative to an objective is a resume summary, which is also optional. A resume summary is a two to four sentence statement that provides an overall view of your background and skills.

• Objectives or resume summaries can be used if a space filler is needed; however, it is important to keep in mind that if you use either one of these elements, you will want to tailor your objective or resume summary to the position you are applying for.

Education
• List your academic background in descending chronological order (most recent first).
• List each degree and the date you obtained that degree. If you are still working toward your degree, list the degree you are seeking along with your expected graduation date.
• You may want to emphasize a particular major or concentration within your degree.
• List the full name of the college or university you are attending and the location.
• Include your GPA if above a 3.0.
• Including high school or transfer information after the sophomore year is not necessary unless there are exceptional accomplishments or extensive experience that is relevant to the position for which you are applying.
• You may want to add a subheading called “Relevant Coursework” to list classes you have taken that illustrate your academic background in a particular area. It is very common for people in technical fields to have extensive “Projects” sections.

Highlighting Your Skills
The secret to writing an effective resume is to tailor your resume in a way that best highlights the most relevant information to the position for which you are applying. Unlike an employment application, a resume does not necessarily list every experience you have ever had; instead, it should focus on only the most important information targeted to match the requirements of the job you are seeking. Create section headings to reflect your background. For example, if you are applying for a manager position and have previous experience, you should create a section named “Managerial/Leadership Experience.”

Work Experience
• List your job title and the name of the company on the left-hand side of the page. You can make either title or company stand out by italicizing or bolding the information.
• List the time period of your employment using the month and year. Consider listing on the right-hand side of the page for a cleaner look.
• Use strong, action-oriented words and short phrases to describe your experience. Incorporate language from the actual job description into your resume to show how your experience is directly related to the skills required for that position.
• Quantify results and list accomplishments whenever possible.
• Utilize bullet points to make the information flow.
• Place the most relevant skills at the top of each skill set so employers can find it as easy as possible.

Activities/Honors/Volunteer Experience
• Related, unpaid experience is equally as important as work experience. List relevant leadership and/or volunteer experiences just as you would list a job. Include your title, organization name, dates, and important skills.
• Extracurricular, volunteer, athletic, and/or leadership activities can be included in a single section or separate sections, depending on how many of each you have to show.
• You can simply list your experiences or describe them in greater detail depending on the relevant skills you would like to highlight.

Computer/Language/Technical Skills
• This section is used to show concrete skills, including language proficiency, computer, technical, laboratory, or others that are relevant to the position.
• Do not include “soft skills” such as communication, leadership, or problem solving. They are too vague to add value to the resume presentation.
Often, resumes and/or online applications are initially screened through a computer database by key words to determine if you have the experience necessary for the position before your resume is viewed by an actual person. Use key words and industry language to ensure that your resume or application makes it through the initial screening process.

### Submitting Your Resume Electronically

E-mail your resume as a PDF document when possible. Utilize your name in the file name when saving your documents. Follow up with a simple e-mail to the employer to ensure that he/she received your materials. If the employer requests a text, or scannable resume, keep formatting simple and avoid underlining, italics, bullet points, bolding and lines.

### Online Applications

Online applications are a common way to apply for a position with a company or organization. Many of the same guidelines that you use for a resume are true for an online application as well. Just like a resume, an online application is the first impression that you give an employer. It is a reflection of your professionalism, maturity, and attention to detail.

It is essential that you complete all of the fields in an online application. Do not leave any blank. Do not say “See Resume.” Online applications can take anywhere from one to two hours to complete, so take your time and be sure to tailor your application to the position for which you are applying. Use key words from the job description. Check your spelling and grammar and use appropriate punctuation.

Be honest on your application. Answer all the questions about criminal record, driving record, and reason for leaving a previous position honestly. Employers will discuss the circumstances of your responses during the interview but it is important that you are straightforward from the beginning. When answering questions about your previous experiences, be positive and talk about the lessons you have learned.

Attach a resume and cover letter with your application and follow up with a personal email to a recruiter, if possible, letting him or her know that you have submitted your online application.

### References

When employers ask for a reference, they are asking for the name of someone who they can contact to learn more about you. It is very important that you choose your references carefully.

### Choosing Your References

- When choosing your references, select three to five individuals who know you professionally, such as a supervisor, professor, and/or advisor.
- It is very important that you ask permission prior to listing someone as a reference because you want to make sure that he or she will give you a positive reference.
- It is a good idea to notify your references prior to an interview to let them know that they may be contacted.
- You may want to e-mail each reference a copy of the job description for which you are applying and another copy of your resume.

### Including Your References

- When including your references with a resume, list them on a separate page with the title “References” as a heading.
- Whenever you include a second page with a resume, it is a good idea to put your name on the top of the page in case your pages get separated.
- List the name, job title, company, address, phone number and professional email of each person.

Bring your list of references with you to interviews, and have them available to include with applications.

### On-line Portfolio

To stay up to date with today’s technology, employers may ask you to supply them with a video resume rather than a paper one. Just like a regular resume, this should be a brief introduction of a job application, describing your qualifications, experiences, and interest to the employer, through digital means. This is a great way to demonstrate your public speaking skills, interpersonal skills, and technical skills to a potential employer.

### Tips on How to Make a Video Resume:

- Should be one to three minutes long
- Creativity can help you stand out, but be careful not to be unprofessional
- Don’t read your resume
- Be dressed professionally
- Make sure the background is free of noise
- Start your video with your name
- Speak clearly and not too fast
- State what your future endeavors are and why you are the best candidate for the company
- Thank the viewers for their consideration
REFERENCES

Guidelines

✓ Create a separate page for your references on paper that matches your resume and cover letter

✓ **Always** ask permission before using an individual’s name as a reference, and ask for his or her preferred contact information

✓ Center information on page

✓ List name, title, employer or organization, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address for each reference

✓ Do not use relatives or friends as references; use people who know about your work-related abilities on the job or in the classroom

✓ Request letters of reference from individuals who will provide candid and positive recommendations

✓ Former employers, internship or volunteer project supervisors, and faculty are good choices

✓ 3 to 5 references are appropriate

✓ Have your page of references prepared in the event you are asked to provide them and to take with you to interviews

✓ Ordinarily, references should not be submitted unless requested as part of the application process
References for

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ought@ussteel.com

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Chair, Communication Studies, Theatre, & Art Department
Westminster College
New Wilmington, PA 16172
(724) 946-7239- office
(724) 946-5555 – home
barnerdl@westminster.edu
Common Action Verbs to Name Your Skills

Use this list of more than 200 adverbs to describe your skills to an employer when creating your resume and cover letter. This list is just to get you started, and by no means is it all-inclusive.

**COMMUNICATION/PEOPLE SKILLS**
- Addressed
- Advertised
- Arbitrated
- Arranged
- Articulated
- Authored
- Clarified
- Collaborated
- Communicated
- Composed
- Condensed
- Conferred
- Contracted
- Conveyed
- Convinced
- Corresponded
- Created
- Debated
- Defined
- Developed
- Directed
- Discussed
- Dispatched
- Distinguished
- Edited
- Elicited
- Enlisted
- Explained
- Expressedd
- Formulated
- Furnished
- Helped
- Identified
- Incorporated
- Influenced
- Interacted
- Interviewed
- Involved
- Joined
- Judged
- Led
- Lectured
- Listened
- Manipulated
- Marketed
- Mediated
- Moderated
- Motivated
- Observed
- Responded
- Reinforced
- Reported
- Resolved
- Solicited
- Specified
- Spoke
- Suggested
- Summarized
- Synthesized
- Translated

**CREATIVE SKILLS**
- Abstracted
- Acted
- Adapted
- Began
- Combined
- Composed
- Conceptualized
- Condensed
- Created
- Customized
- Designed
- Developed
- Devised
- Directed
- Discriminated
- Displayed
- Drew
- Entertained
- Established
- Explored
- Fashioned
- Formulated
- Founded
- Generated
- Illustrated
- Imagined
- Imported
- Initiated
- Innovated
- Instituted
- Integrated
- Introduced
- Invented
- Photographed
- Planned
- Published
- Modeled
- Modified
- Originated
- Painted
- Perceived
- Performed
- Photographed
- Planned
- Published
- Revised
- Revitalized
- Shaped
- Shared
- Set
- Solidified
- Synthesized
- Visualized
- Wrote

**MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP SKILLS**
- Accentuated
- Administered
- Advanced
- Analyzed
- Appointed
- Approved
- Assigned
- Attained
- Chaired
- Considered
- Controlled
- Converted
- Coordinated
- Cut
- Decided
- Delegated
- Developed
- Directed
- Doubled
- Eliminated
- Established
- Evaluated
- Executed
- Expanded
- Fine-Tuned
- Generated
- Handled
- Headed
- Hired
- Hosted
- Increased
- Initiated
- Inspected
- Instituted
- Led
- Managed
- Merged
- Moderated
- Motivated
- Navigated
- Oversaw
- Performed
- Planned
- Presided
- Prioritized
- Produced
- Selected
- Recommended
- Recovered
- Recruited
- Reopened
- Reconciled
- Restructured
- Reviewed
- Salvaged
- Saved
- Scheduled
- Secured
- Selected
- Streamlined
- Strengthened
- Supervised

**DATA / FINANCIAL SKILLS**
- Administered
- Adjusted
- Allocated
- Analyzed
- Appraised
- Audited
- Balanced
- Budgeted
- Calculated
- Computed
- Corrected
- Decreased
- Detailed
- Determined
- Developed
- Forecasted
- Increased
- Netted
- Planned
- Prepared
- Programmed
- Reconciled
- Reduced
- Research
- Retrieved
- Solved
### HELPING VERBS

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### ORGANIZATIONAL/DETAIL SKILLS

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### RESEARCH SKILLS

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### TEACHING SKILLS

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### TECHNICAL SKILLS

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### MANUAL SKILLS

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<td>Performed</td>
<td>Re-tooled</td>
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E- Portfolios

The E-Portfolio is a simple PowerPoint slideshow that is navigated through hyperlinks. It is a series of slides containing text, documents, pictures, graphics, and media clips combined into an exciting showcase of your education, experience, credentials, skills and achievements beyond your resume and cover letter. Once your E-Portfolio has been created, it can be burned onto a CD and easily sent to employers and/or graduate schools. It will provide the viewer with in-depth, multi-dimensional information about you in a compact, user-friendly format.

Portfolios provide samples of your work, add to your credentials, and are most common in creative fields such as art, advertising, architecture, writing and photography. Portfolios may include:

- Design work or blueprints
- Photos
- Videos
- Project reports
- Letters of commendation
- Certificates

Today’s employers in creative fields want to see that you can think strategically and creatively for the business environments you are entering. One of the most critical components of your portfolio should be a sample project detailing a major planning and design project you were given and providing the details of your planning and design strategy. Employers want to see a big idea that involved working through several planning and design phases. Illustrate how you developed touch points for the clients or customer base you were attempting to reach.

You will want to create a well-organized and neatly designed binder to represent your work:

- Photocopy content so as not to lose originals.
- Size your documents consistently for a dean presentation.
- Try using collages to illustrate visual work.
- Use color to draw attention to your portfolio.
- Use sheet protectors - using the front and back to link documents.
- Store extra items behind displayed documents.
- Employers may want you to submit your portfolios over the internet.

These free useful websites can help you to electronically submit and showcase your resume, written projects, art, and designs:
  - wordpres.com
  - portfoliogen.com
  - opresume.com
  - rcampus.com
  - behance.net
Date

Your Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Recipient's Name
Recipient's Title
Company Name Business Address
City, State, Zip Code

Specify the position for which you are applying and how you learned of the position.
If referred by a specific person, mention the name here.
State your reason for applying and why you are interested.

Refer the employer to the enclosed resume.
Highlight your skills and qualifications and how you have demonstrated them.
Provide evidence of researching the organization.
Specify your accomplishments and why the organization should hire you.

Express the fact that you are qualified for the position.
Explain how you can be contacted and invite the reader to contact you.
Reiterate your interest and express your desire to meet for an interview.

Closing Line

Written Signature

Typed Name

Enclosures:
Sample Cover Letter

Box 222 Westminster College
New Wilmington, PA 16172

June 5, 20XX

Mr. John Miller
Principal
Old Castle High School
700 N. Washington Street
Old Castle, PA 11111

Dear Mr. Miller:

I am writing to express my interest in applying for a teaching position, on the elementary level, in your school district. As a 20xx graduate of Westminster College, I have student teaching experience on the third and fifth/sixth grade level, in a rural school district. I have enclosed my resume for your review.

At the present time, I am teaching fifth and sixth grade learning support at Onion Middle School. This position enables me to provide these students with specialized instruction in basic skills they have not yet mastered. I am challenged to be creative, attentive and most of all, patient. At my previous student teaching placement I worked with third grade at Onion Memorial Elementary. That position allowed me to work with short and long term planning, creative plans and various educational technologies.

Along with my skills, I will bring a positive energy to the school and a desire to get involved and work for a common goal. In previous placements, I have demonstrated time management skills, multi-tasking, and an eagerness to work with others. Combined with my enthusiasm and commitment, I am confident that I will be a valuable member of the school community.

I believe every child deserves the opportunity to learn in the way that best suits their needs. It is my goal as a teacher to support my students in this quest and to inspire lifelong learners. I would welcome the privilege of meeting with you to discuss any positions you have available. Please contact me at (724)777-5555 or by email at menowh@wclive.westminster.edu if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Hirer Menow

Enclosure
Sample Resumes

Dee V. Dee
26 Amish Circle
New Wilmington, PA 16142
724-555-2228
deevd@wclive.westminster.com

OBJECTIVE
To obtain an internship for summer 2015 in a Management Trainee Program

EDUCATION
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
Bachelor of Science: Business Administration May 20XX GPA: 3.75

EXPERIENCE
Sales Leader/Intern
Victoria’s Secret (Limited Brand) – Pittsburgh, PA June 20XX- Present
- Train and motivate fifteen sales associates to improve selling and customer service performance.
- Proactively manage and resolve customer service matters.
- Provide leadership and assistance with floor sets, visual presentation standards, and signage placement.
- Process, catalog, and stock new inventory weekly; note discrepancies and report results to corporate office.
- Completed summer internship and offered a permanent position as Sales Leader.

Vice-President
ENACTUS, Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA Sept 20XX-Present
- Outline the goals of the club and specify tasks to be accomplished.
- Oversee and execute weekly committee meetings.
- Ensure individual member retention and growth in club through programs and recruitment events.

Resident Assistant
Student Affairs, Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA August 20XX - May 20XX
- Responded to both emergency and non-emergency resident concerns.
- Supervised forty residents in a residential living and learning community.
- Planned and conducted programming for residents.
- Mediated conflicts between residents.
- Facilitated weekly meetings.

Assistant Manager/ Server
China Buffet – Old Castle, PA June 20XX - Aug 20XX
- Managed the front house operation in high volume restaurant.
- Trained new employees and built a relationship of trust with them.
- Ensured the integrity of restaurant operation through excellence in customer service.
- Promoted from Server to Assistant Manager.

SKILLS
Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint
Fluent in Spanish

HONORS AND AWARDS
Westminster College Tower Scholarship, for academic excellence 20XX
Westminster College Dean’s List 20XX- 20XX

Leadership positions are a great way to demonstrate important skills. Use bullet points to highlight skills learned.
Tiger B. Woods

Permanent Address: 103 Golf Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15299
(412) 888-3456

School Address: Westminster College Box 1200
New Wilmington, PA 16172
woodst@pgagolf.edu

Education:
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
Bachelor of Science, anticipated May, 20XX
Major: International Business GPA: 3.50

Relevant Courses
American Workplace Business Law
Marketing Business Organization & Management
Interpersonal Communication Business and Professional Communication

Research Paper: “Marketing Golf to the Global Community,” presented to Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE), Westminster College, April 20XX

Leadership
Researcher and Assistant, International Business Department
Teaching Assistant, Westminster College Learning Center
Senator, Student Government Association
Secretary, SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise)

Work Experience
Oakmont Country Club, Oakmont, PA
Golf Professional Summer 20XX
   ❖ Taught individual golf lessons
   ❖ Conducted golf clinics

Pittsburgh City Park, Pittsburgh, PA Summer 20XX
Park Director
   ❖ Organized activities for children ages 4 to 18
   ❖ Supervised children in games and taught good sportsmanship

Valvoline Instant Oil Change, Pittsburgh, PA Summer 20XX
Certified Technician
   ❖ Trained new employees
   ❖ Processed and entered customer data

Honors/Awards
Westminster College President’s Scholarship, academic excellence
Presidents’ Athletic Conference, Outstanding Golfer 20XX
Economics and Business Department, Outstanding Sophomore Scholarship

Activities
Westminster College Golf Team, 2-Year Letter Winner
Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Volunteer
The Holcard, Westminster College newspaper, Staff Writer

Computer Skills Proficient with Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Publisher
Tony T. Titan  
15293 Olive Branch Road  
Poland, OH 10212  
330-555-8996  
titan@wclive.westminster.edu

EDUCATION  
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA  
Bachelor of Science: Biology  
May 20XX  
GPA: 3.65

RELATED EXPERIENCE  
Aquatic Biologist  
Shark Reef at Montego Bay  
Montego, FL  
August 20XX – Present  
• Convey nature conservation issues and wildlife awareness information to guests  
• Systematize and perform operant conditioning regimens with sea turtles  
• Work with a team of biologists to perform daily operations for care of exhibits  
• Prepare and analyze daily records for aquarium systems using various computer programs  
• Maintain exhibits for living specimens and prepare diets and feeding regimens for animals

University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)  
Las Vegas, NV  
Summer 20XX  
• Participated in a 10-week summer program involving research in the area of environmental microbiology

• Collaborated with faculty mentors in developing and carrying out hypothesis-based projects on microorganisms from diverse habitats  
• Received training on current molecular techniques and the ethics of science  
• Presented research results at a scientific colloquium

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE  
Springs Preserve  
Colorado Springs, CO  
May 20XX – August 20XX  
• Maintained cleanliness of park and trails  
• Led special group tours of gardens  
• Staffed information booth in Design Lab and Training Center

Spring Mountain Ranch State Park  
Reno, NV  
September 20XX- Dec 20XX  
• Assisted with trail restoration project  
• Facilitated living history programs for visitors

HONORS/AWARDS  
Beta Beta Beta, National Biological Honor Society
OBJECTIVE: To obtain an accounting internship for summer 2015

EDUCATION:
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
Bachelor of Science: Accounting
~ 100 credit hours/150 anticipated at graduation

Anticipated May 20XX
Cumulative GPA: 3.10

RELATED COURSES:
Federal Income Tax Auditing Economic Reasoning
Cost Accounting Management Info Systems Applied Calculus

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE:
Students in Free Enterprise Competition, Charlotte, NC, April 20XX
✓ Project Leader
✓ Regional Competition 1st Runner Up Award
✓ Participated in environmental project to assist our institution in saving energy costs
✓ Investigated and compared results to other organizations’ methods on similar projects
✓ Brainstormed with team to develop ways of advertising and presenting project to campus

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
Leadership Development Training, National Fraternity Institute
Eastern Michigan University, Eastern, MI, January 20XX

National Fraternal Meeting, 65th National Fraternity Grand Chapter
Dallas University, Dallas, TX, July 20XX

Diversity Workshop, Westminster College, April 20XX

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS:
Proficient: TurboTax, Microsoft Office Suite, Adobe Photo Shop, Revit Architecture

WORK EXPERIENCE:
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA, Audio Visual Support Technician, 20XX - present
S.R. Baron Billboards, Tarentum, PA, Billboard Applicator, winter 20XX-present
Conley Resort, Butler, PA, Maintenance Team, 20XX-20X

HONORS/AWARDS:
Westminster College Dean’s List

COMMUNITY SERVICE/ACTIVITIES:
National Non-Profit Organization, Vice President
Westminster College Varsity Football Team
Westminster College Youth Football Camp Volunteer
Habitat for Humanity Volunteer
Adopt-a-Highway Clean-up Volunteer
National Social Fraternity
✓ Organized a tournament and donated money to support Muscular Dystrophy awareness
✓ Won concert for college through online voting process resulting in a $5,000 donation to Mario Lemieux Foundation
Jean Splice

707 Lone Pine Drive
Girard, OH 12345
Phone: (123) 456-7890
splicejo@westminster.edu

Box 926 Westminster College
New Wilmington, PA 16172
Phone: (724) 946-1234

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science: Neuroscience
Minor: Psychology Overall GPA: 3.82
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA

Study Abroad Course:
The Ecology of Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands
- Visited the rainforests of Ecuador and 10 of the Galapagos Islands
- Studied the ecosystem of the rainforests and islands

Honors Thesis: “The Curry Spice Curcumin Reduces Oxidative Damage and Amyloid Pathology in an Alzheimer Transgenic Mouse”

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Research Methods and Analysis, Psychology 201
The Effect of Humor on Stress Levels in Undergraduate Students
- Designed and implemented assessment tool
- Analyzed data using SPSS software
- Discussed results in written report and presented findings orally to peers

Spring 20XX

Teaching Assistant, Biology 101 Lab
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
- Prepared equipment and chemicals for labs
- Assisted students in conducting lab experiments
- Read and graded lab notebooks
- Served as a resource to students

Fall 20XX

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Paris and Annecy, France
- Utilized French language skills and studied French culture

April 20XX

People to People Student Ambassador to Australia
- Traveled the east coast of Australia with a group of student delegates from the United States
- Experienced the culture of Australia

Summer 20XX

WORK EXPERIENCE

Resident Assistant
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
- Organize and present educational, cultural, and social programs to thirty-two women
- Mediate and resolve interpersonal conflicts; enforce college policies
- Collaborate with other staff members to provide a safe and respectful environment for building residents

20XX-present
Jean Splice  
Page Two

WORK EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

Server  
White Turkey Drive-In, Conneaut, OH  
- Provided pleasant and efficient customer service

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT & ACTIVITIES

Teaching Assistant, Westminster College Learning Center  
- Tutored students in the disciplines of writing, biology, chemistry, psychology, and calculus

Student Alumni Association (SAA)  
- Serve on Fundraising Committee  
- Greet and maintain relationships with Westminster alumni

Bell Choir  
20XX-present

Campus Programming Committee  
- Co-Chaired Westminster College’s Sesquicentennial Kick-Off Celebration

Student Government Association  
- Served on committee to promote campus events

Volunteer Youth Leader, New Wilmington Presbyterian Church  
- Led 1ST through 4th graders in games, crafts, music, and activities  
- Taught Bible lessons

Chapel Drama  
- Cast Member, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat

Westminster Chorale  
20XX

HONORS

Lambda Sigma, sophomore honor society

Omicron Delta Kappa, national leadership honorary, Vice President

Mortar Board, national senior honor and leadership society

Pi Sigma Pi, academic honor society

Maude Myer’s Trust Scholarship, academic

Dean’s List, all semesters

Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges

LABORATORY SKILLS

- Scanning Electron Microscopy and Darkroom Techniques
- Critical Point Drying and Sputter Coating
- Speed Vac and Freeze Drying
- Centrifugation
- Polyacrylamide Gel Electrophoresis
- Western Blotting and Chemiluminescent Detection
- Nuclear Magnetic Resonance, $^{13}$C and $^1$H
- FT-Infrared, Ultraviolet-Visible, and Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy
- Gas Chromatography and High-Performance Liquid Chromatography
- Cyclic Voltammetry

COMPUTER SKILLS

Proficient in: SPSS, PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, Excel, Windows
Hunter P. Daily

200 Leasure Avenue
New Wilmington, PA 16142
Phone: (724) 717-5578
hunterdp@wclive.westminster.edu

Box 31 Westminster College
New Wilmington, PA 16142
Phone: (724) 717-5578

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science: Psychology
Minor: Writing Overall GPA: 3.946
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, Psychology Department
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
• Programmed a model for behavioral inhibition in preschoolers using E-Prime software
• Organized transcripts of preschoolers’ stress coping strategies
• Developed coding manual
• Trained students in coding techniques

Social Psychology Course
Research Project: Barack O’Bama and Americanism
Research Project: Women’s Fear of Success and Social Support (in progress)

Research Methods and Analysis Course
Research Project: Effects of Self-Efficacy Enhancement on Math Performance

Childhood and Adolescence Course
Research Project: Preschool Play

Research Skills & Techniques Acquired:
• Performed complete literature review on previous research
• Trained confederate based on methods and procedures
• Designed an E-Prime program and various Likert scale surveys to collect data
• Administered instruments and assessments to test participants
• Analyzed and interpreted data using SPSS software
• Recorded covert observations of participants
• Made inferences relative to statistical relationships
• Presented findings in oral presentations and formal reports

WORK EXPERIENCE

Office Assistant, Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
• Served as aide to the Vice President of Academic Affairs
• Performed computer design and organization work

Childcare Provider
New Wilmington, PA
• Supervised children’s safety, nutrition, and activities, including those with special needs

Camp Counselor
Ligonier Camp and Conference Center, Ligonier, PA
• Provided safety, instructional, and emotional support for a group of 10 campers per week, ages 8-10
• Guided white water rafting, rock climbing, and caving trips
• Taught soccer, hockey, volleyball, arts and crafts, drama, nature, and Bible lessons
• Co-coordinated a mission trip for an outside Church group
WORK EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

**Summer Camp Aide,** Westminster College Preschool Lab  
*Westminster College,* New Wilmington, PA  
- Facilitated art and science activities for preschoolers to encourage discovery  
- Worked with preschoolers individually to foster science skills  
- Took charge of a small group when necessary

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT & ACTIVITIES

**Teaching Assistant,** Psychology Department  
Fall 20XX-present

**Instructor,** Vacation Bible School, New Wilmington, PA  
Summers 20XX-20XX

**Continuing Membership Chair,** National Social Sorority  
Spring 20XX-present

**Co-Choreographer,** Dance Theatre  
Fall 20XX-present

**Vocalist,** Worship Praise Team, New Wilmington, PA  
Spring 20XX-present

**Construction Volunteer,** Habitat for Humanity  
20XX

**Volunteer,** Chapel Staff  
20XX

**Student Volunteer,** Westminster College Preschool Lab  
Fall 20XX; Spring 20XX

HONORS

**Psi Chi,** national psychology honor society

**Omicron Delta Kappa,** leadership and academic honor society

**Lambda Sigma,** sophomore honor society  
- Vice President of Ritual and Service

**Young Presbyterian Scholars Program,** academic excellence and leadership

**Maude Myer’s Trust Scholarship,** academic excellence

**Dean’s List,** all semesters

COMPUTER SKILLS

*Proficient in:* **SPSS,** **E-Prime,** PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, Excel
Ella M. Tary

Campus Address:
Westminster College Box 1111
New Wilmington, PA 16172
taryem@westminster.edu

Permanent Address:
6 Trail Ridge Court
Bestrong, PA 55140
taryelem@yahoo.com

EDUCATION:

Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
Bachelor of Arts: Early Childhood PreK-4 and Special Education PreK-8
Major GPA: 4.00  Cumulative GPA: 3.85  May 20XX

Certifications:
Pennsylvania: Early Childhood PreK-4, Special Education PreK-8, Middle School English

DISTINCTIVE EXPERIENCE:

Walker House, New Castle, PA
Founder and Facilitator  Fall 20XX-Present
- Established the Walker House tutoring program at Westminster College
- Manage a group of 40-50 tutors each semester
- Train tutors to work with at-risk, low income students

AmeriCorps Intern  Summer 20XX
- Hired as a result of excellence in service to the Walker House program
- Supervised camp counselors
- Created and implemented a curriculum for the summer program at the Walker House
- Coordinated activities for 45 students and 5 staff members

Tutor  Fall 20XX-Present
- Mentor at-risk students from low income families in the New Castle area
- Tutor students in all academic subjects

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Intermediate Unit IV, Grove City, PA
Autistic Support Practicum  Fall 20XX
- Traveled to six different Autistic Support classrooms and completed two weeks of field work at both New Wilmington and Hartman Elementary
- Performed curriculum based measurements and progress monitoring
- Assisted in creating and implementing a behavior management plan
- Attended multiple IEP meetings

Union School District, New Castle, PA
Practicum  Spring 20XX
- Observed and taught in a first grade classroom
- Designed and instructed a one week unit on Earth Day

Peter’s Township School District, Peter’s Township, PA
Autistic Life Skills Field Experience  Winter 20XX
- Used sign language and the Picture Exchange Communication system with non-verbal students
- Implemented the TEACH method of instruction for daily classroom activities

Loveland Area School District, Loveland, OH
Kindergarten Field Experience  Winter 20XX
- Participated in multiple IEP meetings
- Observed co-teaching method with general education and special education teacher
TEACHING EXPERIENCE CONTINUED:

**Mohawk Elementary, Bessemer, PA**

**Tutor**  
-Supported and instructed at-risk students with homework and assignments in after-school program

**New Wilmington Elementary, New Wilmington, PA**

**French Teacher**  
- Instructed students in basic French including counting and colors

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- Council for Exceptional Children, *Member*
- Project Learning Tree Science Certification
- New Wilmington Elementary School Family Literacy Night
- Shenango Elementary School Family Math Night

HONORS AND AWARDS:

- Trustees’ Scholarship, *for academic excellence*
- AmeriCorps Scholarship, *for excellence in leadership*
- Kappa Delta Pi, *education honorary*
- Omicron Delta Kappa, *leadership honorary*
- Dean’s List, *all semesters*
- Scholars in Service Scholarship, *for 450 hours in community service*
- Pi Sigma Pi, *senior honorary*
- Lambda Sigma, *sophomore honorary*
- Zelienople Rotary Scholarship, *for academic excellence*

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND LEADERSHIP:

- Chapel Staff, *Service Team Manager*
  - Organize service and worship opportunities for the campus
- SWAT- Student Westminster Admissions Team
- Adopt-a-Grandparent program at Shenango on the Green Nursing Home, *Volunteer*
- Civic Engagement Council, *Student Representative*
- Religious Life Council, *Student Representative*
- Seekers (Christian Fellowship Organization)

LANGUAGE SKILLS:

- Advance knowledge of written and spoken *French*

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS:

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<th>BoardMaker</th>
<th>WebQuest</th>
<th>Web Design</th>
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<td>Publisher</td>
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OTHER EXPERIENCE:

**Child Care Provider, Private Family, New Wilmington, PA,**  
- Supervised and mentored a nonverbal child with Autism  
  - Fall 20XX-Spring 20XX

**Nanny, Private Family, Blue Ash, OH,**  
- Provided care and supervision for two girls  
  - Summer 20XX
Reid A. Book

Campus Address
Box 1882 Westminster College
New Wilmington, PA 16172
(724) 777-9999

Permanent Address
4111 West Shannock Street
Zelienople, PA 11161
bookra22@wclive.westminster.edu

QUALIFICATIONS:
- Developed understanding of the psychological and sociological factors that shape literacy acquisition
- Able to utilize a battery of assessment measures to understand and address students’ literacy needs
- Consultant in planning the direction and supervision of a school’s reading program
- Interpret the philosophy, methods, and materials of literacy program for parents and the community
- Ability to analyze, design, implement, and evaluate literacy curricula

EDUCATION:
Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
Master of Education: Reading Specialist May 20XX GPA: 4.00

Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA
Bachelor of Arts: Early Childhood and Special Education May 20XX GPA: 3.90

CERTIFICATIONS:
Pennsylvania Reading Specialist PK-12
Pennsylvania Teaching Certification PreK-4 and Special Education Certification PK-8

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Conference, New Orleans, LA
- Presented research conducted in Westminster College preschool lab

Mohawk Elementary School, iPad Scavenger Family Night
Mohawk Elementary School, Dr. Seuss Family Night
Mohawk Elementary School, Kindergarten Carnival Family Night
New Wilmington Elementary Family Reading Nights, Fall 2012, 2013

TEACHING AND RELATED EXPERIENCE:
Student Teaching, Kindergarten Classroom
Mohawk Elementary School, Bessemer, PA Spring 20XX
- Planned and Taught a unit on chicks’ development and hatching
- Prepared and taught RTI, reading and math lessons to kindergarten students
- Created and utilized Smartboard games and activities to teach blending and letter sound correspondence during reading instruction

Student Teaching, K-3 Learning Support Classroom
Mohawk Elementary School, Bessemer, PA Spring 20XX
- Prepared and modified language arts lessons to students with Autism, specific learning disabilities, other health impairments and emotional disturbance
- Co-taught daily with supervising instructor
- Taught RTI to first grade students ½ hour daily
- Attend and observed Individual Evaluation Plan meeting
- Taught PSSA skills at an afterschool tutoring workshop
TEACHING AND RELATED EXPERIENCE (Con’t):

**Special Education Practicum Experience, 9th -12th Grade**
Hickory High School, Hermitage, PA
- Tutored individual students and managed behaviors in the emotional support classroom
- Created and taught a social story to a student in the life skills classroom

**Camp Counselor**
Royal Family Kids Camp, Pulaski, PA
- Completed training on emotional and behavioral issues in preparation for campers
  through case study exploration and discussion
- Provided emotional support and guidance to two campers who had been abused
- Performed small bible study group and devotionals

**Field Experience, Learning Support Classroom, K-3rd Grade**
Wilmington Area School District, New Wilmington, PA

**Practicum Experience, 4th Grade**
Hubbard Elementary School, Hubbard, OH

**Field Experience, 2nd Grade**
Wilmington Area School District, New Wilmington, PA

**Student Aide**
Westminster College Preschool Lab, New Wilmington, PA
- Instructed lessons and worked with children ages 3-5
- Facilitated learning through play
- Cleaned and prepared the preschool classroom for daily activities
- Conducted and recorded observations

**HONORS/AWARDS:**
- Westminster College Dean’s List
- Mortar Board, *Senior Honors Society*
- Trustee Merit Scholarship, National Merit Scholarship
- Lambda Sigma Sophomore Leadership Honors Society, *Vice President of Service and Ritual*
- Pi Sigma Pi, *Honors Society*
- Newman Civic Fellows Award Recipient 20XX
- Delta Kappa Gamma Society Scholarship Recipient 20XX
- Wilmington Area High School, Class of 2008 Salutatorian

**LEADERSHIP/ACTIVITIES:**
- Children’s Church Teacher, *New Wilmington Presbyterian Church*, 20XX
- Youth Group Leader, *New Wilmington Presbyterian Church*, 20XX-20XX
- National Social Sorority Vice President of New Member Education
  Vice President of Alumnae Relations
- Student Alumni Association, President and Philanthropy Chair
- Student Government Association, Senator, 2 years
- Student Westminster Admissions Team, campus tour guide, 4 years
- Fresh Start Leader, first year orientation, 3 years
- Habitat for Humanity, 3 year volunteer
- Young Presbyterian Scholars Program
- Community Fellows, AmeriCorps program participant
JOB SEARCH

Before You Start Your Search

Job searching can be an overwhelming process and may take longer than you would like. You have probably heard the phrase, “Looking for a full-time job is a full-time job.” Conducting a job search does not necessarily take 40 hours a week, but it does require that you put in the work it takes to be a competitive candidate.

It is more important than ever to do everything in your power to enhance your presentation as a candidate and to utilize a combination of job search methods to ensure your success.

1- Know Yourself
You will be more successful in your job search if you are confident that your experience and skills qualify you for the position for which you are applying. To do this, you must have a clear idea of your skills, interests, accomplishments, experience, goals, and values. For clarity, you may want to see a career counselor in Career Services.

2- Match Yourself to the Right Position
Thoroughly research the position and organization to which you are applying. Think about products and services offered, growth, competitors, number of employees, organizational structure, geographic locations, working climate, benefits, community involvement, and anything else that you consider important.

3- Pay Attention to Detail
Tailor your resume, cover letter, online application, and interview answers specifically to each position for which you have applied.

4- Be Focused
Be persistent and follow-up. Keep careful records of your job search process, including all materials used in the job search: resumes, references, recommendation letters, cover letters, job postings, research conducted on employers, correspondence from employers, and any other relevant materials.

5- Have a Positive Attitude
Be flexible in a tough job market. This could mean being willing to relocate, expand your horizon from the ideal job to more tangentially related areas, or accept a more entry-level position than anticipated. College graduates are promotable.

Keep perspective and know that behind every slowdown and downturn in history there is a recovery, so keep your eye on the long run.

Working Your Network

It has frequently been said that 80 percent of jobs that exist are not advertised. Often employers will rely on referrals and professional networks for the limited positions they have to fill. Networking is key to finding opportunities in a tight job market as fewer positions are advertised.

Networking is not asking for a job; it is developing a broad range of contacts. The key to networking starts before the job search. For college students, involvement on campus is one way to build a cadre of supportive colleagues and alumni. In particular, students should pursue involvement with professional associations related to their field of study, both on and off campus. Professional associations bring leaders of organizations to meetings and these can be key contacts for referral to professional opportunities.

Networking is not a magical process, but rather the art of opening up conversation and engaging another individual. Be curious about the individuals you meet and engage them in questions about themselves and their careers. Follow up with individuals who interest you. Share your appreciation and ask for more information. You may want to arrange an informational interview, a face-to-face meeting, to get first-hand information and advice about pursuing your career field of interest. Most important, smile and present yourself positively and professionally.

In a nutshell, networking is simply talking to people. People love to share their expertise and knowledge when they can. They have been in your shoes and remember how hard it was. The easiest way to break the ice is to start with the people you know — friends, trusted colleagues, relatives, former classmates, professors, and advisors.

Arranging personal visits to professionals in your field of interest, attending professional events and educational sessions and visiting employment centers or departments where you desire to work can make a major difference in employment leads and eventual job offers.

It’s not who you know...It’s who knows you!
Job Bulletin

As a current Westminster student or alumni, you have access to an online recruiting system designed specifically for you, called Titan Employment Bulletin.

Additional Job Search Websites
Check out the following job search resources:

- Imagine Pittsburgh – imaginepittsburgh.com
- Beyond – beyond.com
- CareerBuilder - careerbuilder.com
- Craigslist - craigslist.com
- FastWeb – fastweb.com
- Indeed - indeed.com
- JobCentral - jobcentral.com
- JobServe - jobservce.com
- Jobster - jobster.com
- LinkedIn - linkedin.com
- Monster - monster.com
- Oodle – oodle.com
- SimplyHired - simplyhired.com
- SnagAJob - snagajob.com
- USAJobs - usajobs.gov
- Yahoo - HotJobs - us.careers.yahoo.com

On-Campus Interviews

On-campus interviews are an important tool to save you time and energy in your job search process. Recruiters from across the region come to Westminster College to interview qualified candidates to fill their full-time, part-time and internship openings. On-campus interview opportunities are available through various postings as well as the Internship and Part Job Newsletter which is currently emailed weekly to students.

Many employers coming to campus will also host information sessions for candidates and others who want to learn more about their organizations. These presentations are an integral part of the interview process and an excellent way for you to meet recruiters interested in hiring Westminster students and alumni.
**Career Fairs**

The Career Center, along with a consortium of 14 other schools, hosts two main career fairs each academic year for students and alumni of all majors. These events attract employers and are ideal for graduating seniors and alumni looking for full-time employment, as well as undergraduate students looking for internships and career-related experience.

All students are encouraged to attend in order to network with human resources and corporate personnel – you can obtain career information, learn about current and future openings, gather information critical to your job search, and possibly apply for a job.

The Western PA Collegiate Job & Internship Fair is the largest job fair in the Pittsburgh region for college students and alumni. It is hosted by a consortium of colleges in Western PA and is open to current students and alumni.

**Please join us for the 2017-2018 Fairs:**

**Western PA Collegiate Job & Internship Fair**

Wednesday, October 11, 2017  
10am - 3pm  
Monroeville Convention Center  
Monroeville, PA

**Westminster College 2018 Summer Job Fair**

Tuesday, February 6, 2018  
Berlin Lounge  
11:00am-1:30pm

**Westminster College 2018 Job and Internship Fair**

Thursday, February 22, 2018  
MCC Witherspoon Rooms  
12:30pm-2:00pm

**Western PA Collegiate Job & Internship Fair**

Wednesday, March 14, 2018  
10am - 3pm  
Monroeville Convention Center  
Monroeville, PA

**PERC Teacher Job Fair**

Wednesday, March 28, 2018  
9:30am - 3pm  
Monroeville Convention Center  
Monroeville, PA

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**Career Fair Tips**

Review the list of attending organizations on the Career Services website and research those of interest. A list of attending employers can be found on the Western PA C S website: www.westpacs.org.

Make sure your resume has been proofread and is ready to sell your skills. Visit Career Services to have a counselor review your resume to make sure it is ready to share with potential employers.

Bring enough copies of your resume so you can present one to each organization that interests you; keep in mind, there may be last-minute additions at the event.

Prepare a 30-second introduction about yourself that quickly tells the employer the kind of position in which you are interested.

Practice your interviewing skills. Even though this is a fair, the employer still may ask you questions about experience so you need to be prepared. You may also be invited for an interview following the fair.

Dress to impress! This will be your first impression with the employers you meet and you want it to be a positive one. Comfortable shoes are recommended since you will be walking and standing, but make sure they are still professional.

Pursue company-specific questions to ask employers and start building relationships that can lead to opportunities later.

Collect business cards and follow up with organization
Social Networking Sites

Job seekers need to be attentive to their online presence as much as their in-person presence. It can never be assumed that sites like Facebook.com or Twitter are private and only for social connections. Make sure that you would be comfortable sharing what is found on your social networking sites with potential employers.

Don’t post photos or descriptions of yourself involved in illegal activity—drugs, underage drinking, or violence.

Don’t post political or religious opinions or preferences.

Make sure any information about degrees or credentials posted is accurate and verifiable.

Don’t post photos, stories, or Internet links you wouldn’t want a potential boss to see.

Don’t post your age, marital status, or parental status.

Although federal and state laws protect against discrimination based on those factors, such protection can erode after self-disclosure in a public forum.

✓ Be careful what you name a personal web page.

✓ Use privacy settings to restrict information.

On the flip side, social networking sites are increasingly being used for professional networking and job searching. LinkedIn is one example of a networking site designed for professionals and businesses to connect with one another. In addition, many students are utilizing Facebook as a means for job searching.

Recruitment Policies

Recruiters spend much time, money, and effort locating the right people for their organizations through the use of WESTMINSTER COLLEGE Career Center.

In order for the Career Center to attract and retain organizations interested in hiring WESTMINSTER COLLEGE students and alumni, you must act with the highest degree of professionalism. This includes providing accurate information and following through on all commitments made.

Interview appointments

On-campus interviews scheduled through the Career Center or at Westminster career fairs are important commitments on behalf of both the candidates and the recruiters. A student/alumnus who fails to show up for an appointment or cancels with less than 24 hours’ notice damages the college’s reputation, wastes the recruiter’s time, and may cost another student/alumnus a job or internship opportunity.

Cancellations with less than 24 hours’ notice will normally require a letter of apology to the recruiter. Failure to follow these guidelines can lead to suspension from future on-campus interviews.

Best Companies To Work For

Where do you want to work? Spend time researching the industries you are interested in and find out which companies have the best ratings. The following sites can be useful resources to help you rank companies according to size, growth potential, innovation, diversity and other key factors.

fortune.com
forbes.com
collegegrad.com
workingmother.com
black-collegian.com
latinastyle.com
diversityinc.com
aarp.org
flexibilityalliance.org
**Job Search Success Checklist**

**Step 1: Know Yourself and Where You Want to Work**

- [ ] Identified my personal strengths, skills, interests and values by completing a self-assessment
- [ ] Made a list of possible job titles/fields of interest, typical entry-level jobs and salaries
- [ ] Researched organizations or companies for which I would like to work
- [ ] Clarified my career goals by meeting with a Career Services staff member

**Step 2: Prepare for Your Search**

- [ ] Had my resume and cover letter reviewed by Career Services
- [ ] Activated my LinkedIn account and uploaded my resume
- [ ] Developed my "30-second speech" for short encounters with employers
- [ ] Identified three individuals who can serve as references
- [ ] Completed a mock interview with Career Services
- [ ] Obtained an interview outfit that is appropriate for the field in which I plan to work
- [ ] Ensured the professionalism of my voice mail message, email address, and social networking site

**Step 3: Start Searching**

- [ ] Joined professional associations in my field of interest and attended networking events
- [ ] Regularly checked The Job Bulletin or Internship & PT Job Newsletter for career opportunities and on-campus interviewing activities
- [ ] Attended a career fairs hosted by WestPAC's
- [ ] Developed a system for keeping track of my contacts, interviews and other job search activities
- [ ] Followed up on every interesting job lead immediately
- [ ] Developed a list of potential networking contacts and kept in touch with them
INTerviewing

Preparing for Your Interview
Interviews provide a chance for a potential employer to learn more about you and for you to learn more about an employer. At this point, the employer has reviewed your resume and is familiar with your qualifications. Employers are looking more at your “soft skills” such as interpersonal skills, teamwork, and professionalism. The interview allows you to showcase your communication skills by articulating the qualifications that you think make you the best candidate for the position and company.

Employers are looking for a good fit—someone who has the right background and personality to blend in well with the company. Attitude and personality are just as important as qualifications. Be yourself, but be your best self. Preparing for an interview is equally as important as the interview itself and will help you feel relaxed and more confident during the interview.

Know Yourself
Spend some time familiarizing yourself with your qualifications and accomplishments by looking over your resume. Get to know your personal attributes and skills by taking a self-assessment. Think about your career goals—where do you see yourself down the road?

Research the Company
Doing your homework not only impresses the recruiter, but it also helps you choose the company that is most suited to you. Demonstrating the fact that you have researched a company can set you apart from other candidates. Employers want people who know something about their company before they step into the interview room.

Prepare Answers to Interview Questions
Review a list of common interview questions and practice your answers. Not every interview will be the same, but preparing answers to some common questions will help you focus on the most important information to convey during an interview.

Practice answering questions in front of a mirror or role-play with a career counselor or a close friend who can give you constructive feedback. The important thing is not to memorize your answers word for word but to become familiar enough with the information that you can confidently express yourself to the employer. Practice your interviewing skills by participating in a videotaped mock interview through Career Services.

Prepare Questions to Ask the Employer
At the end of almost every interview, the employer will ask you if you have any questions for them. This is a great time to show off your knowledge of the company and your enthusiasm for the position. Asking intelligent questions lets the interviewer know that you are interested, which could set you apart from other candidates. It’s always a good idea to prepare a few questions in advance.

What do you like most about working for this company?
What attracted you to this company?
What are your company’s goals in the next few years?
What qualities are you looking for in a successful candidate for this position?
Could you describe a typical day in this position?
Who are the people I’d be working with in this position, and what are their roles?

Questions to Avoid
Avoid asking questions about salary, vacation, holidays, and/or sick day schedules. Let the employer approach these issues first. You want to show your interest in the employer and position and not your own personal desires.

Phone/Webcam Interviews
Phone and webcam interviews are used to screen candidates early in the interview process as a cost-saving technique before inviting candidates for an on-site interview. They can be with one person or a panel of people and can last anywhere from 10 minutes to one hour.

Helpful tips for phone and webcam interviews:
• Give yourself a minimum of 30 minutes when scheduling your interview. You do not want to cut the interviewer off or rush through your interview.
• Make sure that your phone or laptop is fully charged or plugged in.
• Create a quiet place free of distractions from pets, visitors, television, children, or other phone calls. If need be, you may use the Career Services facilities to have your interview.
• Have your resume, job description, questions for the interviewer, pen, paper and other prepared notes in front of you. However, don’t get distracted by shuffling papers during the interview.
• Make a note of everyone on the other end of the interview when they introduce themselves and use their names throughout the interview whenever possible.
For phone interviews:
- Do not interrupt your interview to take another call if you have call waiting.
- Be aware that walking around the room may affect your signal. It is recommended to use a landline to avoid dropped calls.
- Answer the call with your name to avoid an awkward start to the interview.
- Smile when you talk—your enthusiasm will be heard by the interview.
- You can’t count on clues from an interviewer’s body language, so avoid being too long-winded. Pauses are a normal part of phone interviews because the interviewer is trying to avoid interrupting you. Stay focused, calm, and friendly.

For webcam interviews:
- Create a professional webcam username.
- Login early so the employer knows you are prepared.
- Dress professionally from head to toe. The employer may ask for a full-body shot.
- Look directly into the camera and avoid wandering eyes. Avoid leaving the camera view until the interview is completely finished.
- Be sure to set up the camera view in a professional, clean setting.
- Adjust any light sources in the room to highlight your face, with no lights shining into the camera.
- Test out your webcam, microphone, and speakers before your interview to make sure they are working properly. Practice with a Career Counselor or friend so that you can make sure the equipment is working on the other end.
- Make sure your area has a strong internet connection to avoid dropped calls.
- Don’t forget to use positive body language, just as if you were having the interview in person: good posture, hand gestures, and facial expressions.

Interviewing Tips

Dress professionally and be well-groomed.
Arrive at least 10 minutes early. Drive the route the day before if necessary.
Bring extra copies of your resume and your references.
Carry a leather-bound folder for taking notes or carrying handouts.
Present positive body language by smiling and making eye contact.
Make a good impression by shaking hands and remembering and using people’s names.
Treat everyone with whom you come in contact respectfully, including the receptionist at the front desk.
Make small talk easily so you will come across as easy-going and relaxed.

You may be concerned that you are not the “suit and tie” type. Your individuality is important, but you will have plenty of opportunity to display your unique style once you have the job. Use the interview to determine the culture of the company, including dress policies, but do not give the employer any reason to select someone else over you before they have had a chance to get to know you.

Avoid Strong Fragrances— Wear deodorant, but don’t wear perfume, cologne, or aftershave. The interviewer may not have the same taste as you, and you don’t want to overpower the room.

Be Well-Groomed— Clean nails, showered, good breath, and a neat hairstyle are always crucial. Shined shoes and fresh clothes that are crisply ironed are also important. Bring some mints.

Test-Drive Your Interview Outfit— It’s a good idea to “try out” your interview outfit once or twice before the interview so you know how you feel in it while walking, sitting, and standing. Also, make sure your suit fits well. If it doesn’t, have it altered. A well-fitted suit looks professional and gives you confidence.

Avoid Items That Scream "Student" — Backpacks, gigantic water bottles, and other campus gear are not necessary at an interview. Also, turn your cell phone OFF! Even a cell phone on vibrate is enough of a nuisance and distraction during an interview to turn off a potential employer.

Less Is More — Keep your look simple. Wear minimal jewelry and no visible body piercings or tattoos.

Dressing Professionally

Most experts agree that 80 percent of an interviewer’s opinion of a candidate is based solely on his or her first impression. Professional dress, positive body language, and a well-groomed appearance are important components of that first impression.

Dress codes vary by company and industry, making it difficult to decide the most appropriate interview attire. Some employers have adopted “business casual” dress policies for everyday wear, but that doesn’t mean you should dress casually for the interview. Always dress business professional!
Hair neatly trimmed and styled; facial hair neatly groomed; avoid cologne

Conservative, two-piece suit in a dark color - navy, black or gray

Minimal jewelry; neatly groomed nails

Subtle shirt; coordinating necktie with a subtle pattern; undershirt; matching belt

Dark leather shoes to match your suit; polished

Dark socks that fully cover calves when seated; no white athletic socks
Conservative, two-piece dark suit - navy, black, or gray (pants or skirt)

Neatly groomed nails; plain, simple handbag

Closed-toe shoes; polished; avoid heels over two inches

Hair neatly trimmed and styled; minimal makeup; avoid perfume

Shirt should be tucked in neatly

Simple, minimal jewelry; plain shell or blouse; avoid low-cut tops

Skin-colored stockings or socks; avoid bare legs; cover visible tattoos
Answering Interview Questions

It’s normal to be nervous during an interview. Take a deep breath and keep the tone conversational. Some interviewers may ask you a set of predetermined questions, and others may be more conversational and ask open-ended questions based on your resume. Find a balance between listening and speaking.

Listen and Observe — Try to follow the interviewer’s lead and watch for signals from the employer as to whether your responses are too short or too long. Adapt to the interviewer’s style.

Practice Patience- Don’t let a tough question throw you off. Don’t be afraid to ask for clarification if needed, and give yourself time to think before responding.

Stay Positive -Always speak positively of past experiences and previous employers. Emphasize what you learned from past experiences, not what you didn’t like.

Develop a Personal Theme — Know three good reasons why you are an outstanding candidate for that position and/or company and weave them into the interview.

Be Enthusiastic — Communicate your passion for this particular position, company, and industry. At the end of the interview, let the interviewer know that you are interested in this position.

Use Positive Body Language- Refer to our Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication Tips.

Be Specific: Use the STAR Method — Don’t just say, “I’m a good manager.” Give an example of how you have demonstrated good management skills. Describe a Situation, the Tasks defined in the situation, the Actions that you took, and the Results of those actions. Using examples is one of the most important components of good interviewing.

“Behavior”-Based Interview Questions

Behavior-based interviewing has become a common interviewing technique. Interviewers will ask you to describe a specific example of a past behavior in order to predict future behavior.

For example, an interviewer might ask, “Tell me about a time when you had to work under intense pressure to meet a deadline.” In this case, the interviewer wants you to describe an actual situation using specific details, how you handled the situation, and the outcome of the situation.

Tell the interviewer a good story with the details of the situation. An interesting story makes you a more memorable candidate. Coming up with detailed examples of specific past events on the spot can be difficult. Use the sample questions below as a guide to get started. Think of situations you have handled in previous work and school experiences.

Sample Behavioral Interview Questions

Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a difficult situation.

Describe a time when you had to assist a colleague.

Give me an example of a time when you had to defend your idea.

Describe a time you found it necessary to make an unpopular decision.

Give me an example of when you had to work on a team with someone you couldn’t get along with and you resolved it.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication Tips

Body Talk

- Posture: Sit up right and do not cross your arms.
- Facial Expressions: Show how you feel and don’t forget to smile.
- Accessories: Should not be played with during the interview.
- Distance: Keep a comfortable space between you and the interviewer.
- Eye Contact: Shows you’re engaged in the conversation.

Vocal Quality

- Pitch: Fluctuate to emphasize emotions or feelings.
- Rate: Do not rush.
- Pacing: Vary delivery to maintain the listener’s attention.
- Diction: Be clear and concise.
- Volume: Speak up.
- Breathing: Breathe normally before and during your interview.
- Pausing: Allows you to take breaks from talking or to gather your thoughts.
Sample Interview Questions

Here are some standard questions that you may be asked during an interview along with suggestions of how to craft your answers. It is important to practice what you will say in advance so you are comfortable when answering during the actual interview.

**Tell me about yourself.**
Keep your answer brief and concise (60-90 seconds). Highlight your academic background, work experience, and personal attributes that are relevant to the position. Express your enthusiasm for the position and your desire to work for the company.

**Why do you want to work for this company?**
Tell a story about how you first became interested in this type of work. Point out how your previous experience shows a long-term interest in this industry. Explain why their company is the best fit for you based on your experience and future goals.

**How do you stay current on issues in this industry?**
Demonstrate a natural interest in the industry by describing publications or associations that you follow.

**Where do you see yourself in three years?**
Your answer should reflect your interest in staying involved with the company so the employer knows that you are a good investment. Having future goals demonstrates motivation and focus.

**What qualifications do you have that will make you successful in this position?**
Be specific. Remember to use examples of how you have demonstrated two or three skills in your previous experience.

**What is one thing you need to work on?**
Be honest, but put a positive spin on it. Recognizing your limitations shows maturity. Tell the employer what you have learned from your experience and how you have already worked to improve this shortcoming.

**Describe your working relationship with your colleagues.**
The employer is trying to gauge your interpersonal skills. Emphasize your ability to fit in with many different personality types and your willingness to be a part of the team.

**Give an example of a challenging experience and how you overcame it.**
Tell a story about a previous work or group project experience where you were able to problem solve. Describe how you were able to adapt, be flexible and help be a part of a positive solution. An employer will want someone who is able to be proactive, troubleshoot when necessary and maintain a positive work environment.

**What do you like to do in your spare time?**
The employer will ask a question like this to find out a little more about your personality. Describe your interests so the interviewer can learn more about you, but avoid over-sharing. Focus on positive and productive activities.

**ADDITIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**
- What did you enjoy most/least about your previous job? Why?
- Do you prefer working with others or alone?
- Why are you the best person for this position?
- What did you learn about yourself in your previous jobs?
- What do you know about our company?
- Why are you interested in this position?
- Why are you interested in leaving your current position? Why did you select your major?
- What is the most difficult decision you have had to make since starting college?
- What subject do you like least/best? Why?
- How has your college experience prepared you for your career?
- How would you describe yourself?
- What motivates you?
- What are your hobbies?
- What accomplishment are you most proud of and why?
- What job or experience have you enjoyed the most and why?
- What can you contribute to this organization?
Responding to Personal Questions
Most professional interviewers are trained to ask only those questions that relate to the applicant's ability to do the job; however, you should be aware of your rights as an applicant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Origin</td>
<td>Are you authorized to work in the U.S.?</td>
<td>Are you a U.S. citizen?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In which languages are you fluent?</td>
<td>Where were you born?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(if relevant to the position)</td>
<td>What is your &quot;native&quot; tongue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Are you over the age of 181</td>
<td>How old are you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(21 if required by law)</td>
<td>What is your date of birth?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital and Family Status</td>
<td>Would you be willing to travel as necessary?</td>
<td>Are you married?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Would you be willing to relocate?</td>
<td>Do you have any children?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are you a member of any professional or trade associations related to the position?</td>
<td>Have you made child care arrangements?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>Are you a member of any social, religious, or political organizations?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Do you have any disabilities that would prevent you from performing the duties of the job?</td>
<td>Do you have any disabilities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Please describe your disability for the purpose of assessing any accommodations that need to be made.</td>
<td>Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How is your health?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arrest Record</td>
<td>Have you ever been convicted of a crime</td>
<td>Have you ever been arrested?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that is reasonably related to the job in question?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Are you able to lift 50 pounds?</td>
<td>What are your height and weight?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(if relevant to the position)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>In what branch of the armed forces did you serve?</td>
<td>Were you honorably discharged from the military?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What training or education did you receive in the military?</td>
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</table>

When faced with an illegal/personal question, you essentially have three choices:

- Answer the question, assuming you don’t mind sharing the information.
- Refuse to answer the question, knowing that you may risk appearing uncooperative or confrontational.
- Answer the underlying job-related question (recommended by the Career Center).

**Question:** Are you planning to have a family?

**Intent:** Are you willing to travel or relocate?

**Answer:** I am committed to my career and willing to travel or relocate if needed.
Following Up After the Interview

At the end of an interview, clarify any follow-up procedures such as the hiring timeline and any additional materials they may need. Be sure to get a business card of the person or persons who interviewed you so you will have the correct spelling of names when sending a thank-you note.

Reiterate your qualifications and your fit with the position and/or company. Be direct and state your interest in the position. Remember to smile and leave them with a positive feeling about your interview.

Fewer than half of candidates send a follow-up letter. Sending a thank-you letter is not only professional and polite, but it could give you the edge that sets you apart from other candidates.

Toward the end of the interviews, the employer will indicate a general time for when they will contact you. Only call the employer if the date has passed. If they did not specify a time, politely call or email asking them the status of their hiring decision.

Handling a Job Offer

Congratulations! You're hired! Verify the terms of your employment in writing. Most companies will send a letter as a standard practice. Ask the employer when you will receive a letter verifying the offer. It should confirm your salary, start date, location, job title, benefit information, and pre-employment requests such as the completion of a drug test. You should also send a letter verifying your acceptance with the same information.

Most employers complain that new graduates have unrealistic expectations about starting salaries. Research salary ranges for your field, keeping in mind geographic location. Salaries differ among metropolitan, suburban, and rural areas. Search the Internet for a cost-of-living calculator to determine the amount of money you will need to earn in a specific location to accommodate your needs.

Receiving multiple job offers is great, but it can be confusing. Ask employers how much time they are willing to give you to consider an offer before they need a decision. If offered a position, you should not be expected to make a decision on the spot. Analyze various offers by weighing the importance of certain criteria such as salary, location, job duties, benefits, opportunity for growth, company atmosphere, and work-related values job security, contribution to society, work/life balance).

If you don't get the job, don't think you wasted your time. Keep in mind that you have made important contacts within the company. You can send a short letter or e-mail to the hiring manager or human resources thanking them for their time and to keep you in mind for future positions.

Tips For Dining Out with a Potential Employer

Lunch or dinner during an interview may seem like a casual event, but in reality, this is still part of the interview. Making "small talk" is just as important as answering questions. You are being critiqued on your social skills and how well you handle yourself during a meal.

Order something that is easy to eat, not something time-consuming or messy. This is not the occasion for a whole lobster or barbecue ribs. Alcohol is not a good idea unless the host orders wine for the table. In that case, sip slowly and have only one glass.

Take your cue from the interviewer as to what to order, or ask for suggestions. Don't order the most or least expensive item on the menu.

Take small bites and you will find it's easier to answer questions or join in table talk, and always chew with your mouth closed.

Don't smoke.

Don't complain about the food, service, or the restaurant.

Mirror the interviewer's lead when it comes to table manners.

Avoid controversial topics, gossip, or inappropriate jokes.
Sample Follow-Up Letters

2222 Bridgewood Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 55555  

October 17, 20XX  

Ms. Francis Hayes, Senior Accountant  
XYZ Accounting Firm  
9354 Center Street  
Harrisburg, PA 88881  

Dear Ms. Hayes:  

Thank you for interviewing me for the accountant position with XYZ Accounting Firm. I enjoyed meeting you and learning more about your company's growing needs.  

After our conversation, I believe that my education and professional experiences fit nicely with the job requirements. My analytical skills combined with my years of experience in this field would allow me to make a significant contribution to your firm.  

I reiterate my strong interest in the position and in working for XYZ Accounting Firm. Please feel free to contact me at 702-555-1234 or sbosley@aol.com. Again, thank you for the interview and your consideration.  

Sincerely,  

(Your signature)  
Sharon Bosley  

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54 Lakewood Drive  
New Castle, PA 55555  

October 23, 20XX  

Mr. Harry Little,  
Director Technical Design Group  
Craig Engineering  
1354 Airport Road  
Cleveland, OH 34699  

Dear Mr. Little:  

I am writing to confirm my acceptance of your employment offer received on March 20 as a program engineer for Craig Engineering Systems at an annual salary of $43,000.  

As we discussed, I will report to work at 8:00 a.m. on November 15, 20XX, and will have completed the medical examination and drug testing.  

I look forward to working with you and your staff and appreciate the opportunity you have given me. Please feel free to contact me at 702-555-0987 or jim@msn.com with any additional information.  

Sincerely,  

(Your Signature)  
Jim Coldwell  

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**Thank-you letters** are used to express appreciation to an employer for the opportunity to interview, to remind the employer of your qualifications, and to reiterate your interest in the position if, in fact, you are interested.  

Thank-you letters should be sent within 24 to 48 hours after the interview and can be typed, handwritten, or e-mailed.  

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**Acceptance letters** are used to affirm your employment decision, confirm employment logistics, and express your appreciation for the opportunity.
Withdrawal letters are used to politely and professionally withdraw your name from consideration if you have accepted another offer or are certain that you would not accept an offer from the potential employer to whom you are writing.

84 Vegas Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89543
April 17, 20XX

Ms. Isabel Rodriguez, Director
Clark County Parks & Recreation Department
1811 Main Street
Las Vegas, NV 89118

Dear Ms. Rodriguez:

I am writing to inform you that I am withdrawing my application for the program coordinator position with the Clark County Parks & Recreation Department. I have decided to accept another opportunity that is a good match for my interests at this point in my career.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I enjoyed meeting you and learning more about your programs.

Sincerely,

(Your signature)

Kelly Livingston

Rejection letters are used to politely and professionally decline an employment offer and express appreciation for the opportunity.

765 Main Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 22234
September 18, 20XX

Mr. Robert Shultz, Manager
Casino Property Hotel
3456 Erie Boulevard
Erie, PA 15223

Dear Mr. Shultz:

Thank you very much for offering me the position of front desk manager with the Casino Property Hotel. I appreciate your discussing the details of the position with me and giving me time to consider your offer.

Although there are many aspects of the position that are appealing to me, I believe it is in our mutual best interests that I decline your kind offer.

Thank you for the consideration and courtesy given to me. It was a pleasure meeting you.

Sincerely,

(Your signature)

Daniel Foster
Interview Checklist

PREPARING TO ANSWER AND ASK INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Had my resume reviewed by the Career Center and made the corrections suggested by the counselor
- Completed a mock interview at the Career Center and am working hard to make changes in areas where I need improvement
- Reviewed my resume to become familiar with my qualifications and work skills so I will be more relaxed and confident during the interview
- Researched the organization that I am interviewing with
- Practiced answering some common interview questions
- Prepared examples to answer situational and behavior-based questions
- Have a minimum of 3 questions ready to ask the employer at the end of the interview and know which questions to avoid asking

PREPARING FOR THE DAY OF THE INTERVIEW

- Driven the route to the interview location and know how much time it takes to get there
- Tried on my "interview outfit" and feel assured it fits well, looks professional and is appropriate
- Have extra copies of my resume and references to take to the interview

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Know I must remain positive throughout the entire interview process

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Get a business card from the person or persons conducting the interview so I can send a thank-you letter within 24-48 hours after the interview
GRADUATE SCHOOL

During your career development and job search phases, you may find yourself considering an advance degree program in order to achieve your long term career goals. You may also consider obtaining a graduate degree in order to be more competitive in the job market. Here are some tips to help you along the way.

Preparing for a Graduate Program

Explore all of your options before choosing your graduate program. The program you choose should lead you to the job you want to do. Make sure the program you choose will give you the background and skills that you will need to be successful in your chosen career.

Once you zero in on the specific area of study you are interested in, you can start researching available programs using the following resources:

gradschools.com
petersons.com
usnews.com/usnews/edu/beyond/bchome.htm
allaboutgradschool.com

Faculty members are also a great resource. Ask your professors, advisors, and other members of your major department what programs they recommend.

What are Graduate Schools Looking For?

Each school has its own criteria when reviewing applications, but generally speaking, graduate admissions professionals are looking at GPA (grade point average), test scores, and professional or research experience in your field. In addition, you will probably be asked to submit letters of recommendation.

Academics

The first thing your graduate program is going to do is look at your grades. How did you do in your college courses? It is assumed that your grades reflect your ability to learn, and since graduate school coursework is considered more difficult than undergraduate coursework, admissions counselors are looking at your previous academic record as an indicator of your potential success in graduate school. What does this mean for you now? Do your homework. Take advantage of your professors' office hours if you are struggling with a class. Don't miss any opportunity that you have to increase your knowledge base.

Experience

Making the decision to apply to graduate school is huge. With this decision you are declaring that there is an area of interest that you want to pursue in depth and that you are willing to sacrifice your time and financial resources to become more knowledgeable.

Admissions counselors are looking for students who have a practical knowledge of their chosen area of study. They want to know that you are really interested in the field, not just choosing a program because you can't find a job or aren't ready to enter the work force. Get involved in any campus activity, club, or professional organization that will give you hands-on experience. Seek out internship opportunities that will give you career-related experience.

Test Scores

Below is a list of the common standardized tests you may have to take to apply for a graduate program. You will want to check with each program specifically to find out for sure.

Graduate School                      GRE/MAT
Business                                GMAT
Law School                               LSAT
Medical                                  MCAT
Pharmacy                                 PCAT

GRE

The Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) is a standard admissions test that measures critical thinking, analytical writing, verbal reasoning, and quantitative reasoning skills that have been acquired over a long period of time and are not related to any specific field of study.

MAT

The Miller Analogies Test (MAT) is a standardized admissions test that measures your ability to identify verbal and quantitative analogies. Some universities accept MAT scores in lieu of GRE scores.

The MAT can be taken at the Career Center. Call 724-946-7338 to make an appointment.
The Application Process

There are some general procedures that most graduate schools follow when it comes to the application process, but you need to keep in mind that each school has the right to set up its procedures in the way that works best for it. It is important not to assume that all application processes are the same.

There is usually a nonrefundable application fee. The amount varies from university to university and at some institutions may be waived under certain circumstances. Check with the school to inquire about fee waivers.

Make sure your application is accurate, thorough, and easy to read and that your essay is on point, relevant, and puts you in the best possible light. If ever there was a time to pay attention to grammar, punctuation, and spelling, this is it. If you are submitting your application online, you will have to type it.

If you are submitting your application on paper, keep in mind that the easier it is to read, the more attention the admissions committee can give to understanding who you are.

What Goes Into an Application File?

An application file usually consists of the following:

- The application form and application fee (if required)
- A Statement of Purpose (also known as a Statement of Intent or a Statement of Reason)
- Official transcript of your academic work (this will need to be sent directly from Westminster to the school to which you are applying)
- Courses-in-progress/projected coursework (if you are working on a degree at the time of your application) Samples of written work, research, or a portfolio of work (commonly required for art, creative writing, and education programs)
- Letters of recommendation
- Test scores from standardized tests such as the GRE, GMAT, or MAT

Read your application carefully to determine exactly what is required for each application you are submitting.

Writing Your Statement of Purpose

Give your essay direction with a theme or a thesis. This is the main point you want to communicate.

Before you begin writing, organize your thoughts. What do you want to write about? What interests you? Where do your passions lie? What type of order can you put to your thoughts? What concrete examples from life experience do you have to support your theme?

Start your essay with a statement that will capture the attention of your reader. It can be an anecdote, quote, question, or description.

End your essay with a conclusion that refers back to the beginning and restates your theme.

Proofread, proofread, and then proofread again. Have the Writing Center look at your document. Ask a professor, friend, or family member to critique it. Be open to suggestions that will make your essay better. Keep an open mind.

Don’t try to impress your audience with your vocabulary, and don’t rely exclusively on spell-check to catch all spelling errors. You may have spelled your word correctly but misused it in a sentence.

Make sure your essay is a reflection of who you are. Don’t make things up in order to appear to be someone you aren’t.
Preparation for Graduate School Timeline

Junior Year
- Research schools online and browse through their graduate programs/admission requirements
- Schedule campus tours
- Request catalogs and application materials from potential schools
- Decide which programs you are interested in applying to and make a list of admissions requirements
- Mark down application deadlines
- Register for standardized test
- Prepare for testing via test prep/practice test books

Senior Year- September and October
- Take standardized test
- Draft your personal essay/purpose statement
- Research financial aid options- scholarships, graduate assistantships, fellowships
  contact school's financial aid office, etc.
- Request letters of recommendation from faculty members

Senior Year- November and December
- Have your personal essay/purpose statement proofread
- Finalize your personal essay/purpose statement
- Apply for financial aid, graduate assistantships, fellowships, etc.
- Request an official transcript (with fall semester grades) from the Registrar's Office for each school you are applying to
- Submit your application after verifying you have everything you need

Senior Year – February
- Submit your FAFSA

Senior Year- April through Summer
- Request an official transcript (with spring/final semester grades) from the Registrar's Office for each school you are applying to
- Submit official transcripts to each school
- Make a pro and con list if accepted to more than one school
- Submit acceptance materials to the school you will be attending
- Notify schools you decided not to attend of your decision