



**LASSO CENTER  
CAREER BOOK**

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The mission of the Northwestern Oklahoma State Title III/LASSO Project is to provide support services to First-Time, Full-Time and continuing students promoting student engagement and academic success while providing guidance to cope with experiences and challenges encountered during the collegiate journey. The Title III/LASSO Project aims at improving student retention, graduation rates, and overall student success through the implementation of Complete College America's Purpose First Strategy.

Purpose First Strategy empowers students with resources to make informed, early choices of majors and programs of study, building early academic momentum and ultimately increasing their likelihood of success and completion by drawing a connecting line between purposeful education and confident career choices.

# Northwestern Oklahoma State University

## Title III/LASSO Project

*Enhancing Student Success, Engagement, and Purpose-Driven Education*

Northwestern Oklahoma State University has been awarded a Title III grant from the U.S. Department of Education through its Strengthening Institutions Program. The U.S. Department of Education Title III – SIP grant is designed to help higher education institutions expand their capacity to serve students. Through the LASSO Student Resource Center, program participants will receive personalized student coaching and advising, attend a Ranger Connection First Year Experience course taught by LASSO Center learning coaches, and receive enhanced career counseling.

### What does LASSO stand for?

- L—Leadership
- A—Academic
- S—Success
- S—Superior
- O—Outcomes

### What services are available through the LASSO Center?

- ⇒ **Academic advisement/Registration/Enrollment**
- ⇒ **Career coaching/Degree planning/Deciding on a major**
- ⇒ **Academic assistance/Educational goals/On-track to graduate**
- ⇒ **Student engagement with support services on and off campus**
- ⇒ **Support, guidance and motivation to overcome obstacles**

### LASSO Center Learning Coaches

Will be assigned to help you with:

- ◆ Academic advisement and the course registration/enrollment process.
- ◆ The development and implementation of education plans of action and making sure you are on-track to graduate.
- ◆ Academic progress and connecting with the appropriate support services necessary to help you be successful.
- ◆ Goal-setting, decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- ◆ Student engagement through Ranger Connection classes and helping you connect with individuals and groups throughout the campus community.
- ◆ Guidance and support in overcoming academic and nonacademic challenges.

### LASSO Center Career Coach

Will provide assistance to help you:

- ◆ Explore career and degree options, especially if you are “undecided” on a major, through the use of My Majors and Focus 2 Career resources, as well as, Ranger Connection class discussions and presentations.
- ◆ Connect with the appropriate on and off campus support to help you make informed decisions when considering a degree and career opportunities.
- ◆ Build a strong link between your educational and career goals by developing and implementing plans of action and evaluating the process to make sure you are staying on-track to achieve your goals.
- ◆ Persevere by providing guidance, support and motivation to assure you are heading in the right direction towards graduation and your career path.

**Want more information—Have questions???    We are here to assist YOU!**

Title III/LASSO Project Director—Lisa Franz, Ryerson Hall, Rm. 142, 580-327-8131

LASSO Student Resource Center—Ryerson Hall, Rm. 145

LASSO Center Staff—Mirandy Ealey, 580-327-8130; Julie Lehr, 580-327-8132;

Taylor Phillips, 580-327-8133

# How We Can Help:

**Resumes:** Everyone will need to write a resume at some point in their undergraduate career. It is to your benefit to start early so that when you need one for your job search, you will have one in the works. To avoid mistakes, discuss your individual resume needs and get your resume reviewed, visit our Career Coach in Ryerson Hall Room 145 or call 327-8133.

**Correspondence:** Writing any letter to an employer can be daunting. The LASSO Center Career Coach can help when it comes to drafting a cover letter and acceptance letter. For a sample cover letter, see page 25. To have your cover letter reviewed by the LASSO Center Career Coach, visit Ryerson Hall Room 145 or call 327-8133.

**Mock Interviews:** Interviews happen at various times in our lives, from job interviews to scholarship interviews, to entrance and exit interviews, it's important to know how to conduct yourself in one. To polish up your interview, make an appointment with the LASSO Center Career Coach. Mock interviews with our career coach will help reduce pre-interview jitters, increase confidence, and increase your preparation for the real interviews.

**Workshops:** The LASSO Center, independently or in conjunction with another department, conducts regular workshops to further your professional skills. These workshops cover topics such as: Personal introductions, LinkedIn Basics, Career Development, Resume Building, Skills Assessment, Scholarship Prep, and more.

**Career Coaching:** Determining your major can be a daunting task. Whether you're unsure what you want to do and what jobs you could pursue, or you're unsure if you're on the right career path, the LASSO Center Career Coach can help you explore major options based on your interests or find a career you love. Visit the LASSO Center in Ryerson Hall Room 145.

**Advisement:** If you need help enrolling, adding/dropping classes, getting set up with your advisor, or contacting your advisor, we can help! Swing by the LASSO Center and let us know how we can help you.

# Why Did You Decide to Go to College?

Today more jobs require post-secondary education (degrees and certificates) than ever before.. Earning a degree or certificate boosts your income potential (which means more money) and gives you the skills you need to succeed in the workforce. Employees with a post secondary education earn 74% more than those who have a high school diploma or less, and completing your certificate or degree is the key to earning power and being career ready.

Here are a few reasons to consider college!

## 1.) Higher Earnings

- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) those with Bachelor's degrees earned a median of \$1,305 a week while high school graduates earned \$781. Annually, that amounts to a difference of nearly \$30,000.
- A college degree doesn't guarantee a high salary, and wages vary widely based on your chosen major and career. However, there is a strong correlation between education and wages, those with higher degrees often out-earn those who skipped college.

## 2.) Increased Job Security

- According to BLS data from 2021, the unemployment rate for those with a college degree was 2.1% compared to 4.6% with a high school education.
- You're better equipped to weather economic turmoil with a college degree. During the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, those with high school degrees suffered greater declines in workforce participation than college grads.

## 3.) Greater life satisfaction

## 4.) Easier access to Health Insurance

- College grads are more likely to work for companies that offer health insurance benefits. According to a college board study, 64% of college graduates had access to employer-sponsored health insurance, compared to 52% of those with a High School Diploma and 33% of those who did not graduate High School.

## 5.) Expand Your Network

- Your network is your net worth. The people you know can impact your professional standing. Going to college can expand your network by giving you access to people in your chosen industry. Your professors can write recommendation letters that can help get you hired or connect you with other professionals in the industry.

## 6.) Become more independent:

- You'll be challenged to explore subjects in greater depth than you did in High School. You'll also build knowledge, skills, brainpower, discover new passions, bond with new friends and learn more about yourself.

# 10 Steps to Career Success

**1) LEARN MORE ABOUT YOURSELF:** Identify your accomplishments, values, strengths and weaknesses, and goals. For a starting point, answer the “know yourself first” questions, or meet with the career coach!

**2) START A CAREER FOLDER:** Include brochures, articles, notes, contact information, goals, and any other information pertaining to your career.

**3) IDENTIFY YOUR RESOURCES:** The LASSO Center is located on campus in Ryerson Hall – Room 145. The LASSO Center exists to provide program participants with personalized student coaching and advising, and enhanced career counseling.

**4) DEVELOP COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** Take advantage and pay attention to Speech and English classes, workshops on resume writing, and develop your written correspondence. Also, practice your public speaking skills through student organizations and other leadership positions.

**5) DEVELOP LEADERSHIP & TEAMWORK SKILLS:** Join on-campus organizations, professional societies, or volunteer in the Alva Community.

**6) BUILD YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK:** Professors, alumni, mentors and classmates can all be a part of a professional network. Any contacts from the career fair, speakers from seminars, and professionals at meetings are also included.

**7) ATTEND CAREER FAIRS:** Even if you aren’t currently seeking a position, it is a good idea to attend a Career Fair in order to network, research companies, and understand what will happen in the future.

**8) GET A JOB:** Everyone was inexperienced in their field until that first internship. Part-time positions, work-study opportunities, and even volunteer work are all opportunities on the road to your first internship. Even if the job isn’t geared toward what you want to do in the future, having a job will teach you skills to thrive and grow in your future career.

**9) PREPARE FOR THE JOB SEARCH:** Keep an updated resume on your computer for last minute opportunities that pop up. Start thinking about professionals you can ask for help from in the future and practice your interviewing skills early on.

**10) BELIEVE IN YOURSELF:** You are a valuable asset to any organization. Don’t underestimate or undervalue your knowledge and talents by comparing yourself to another person.

# Tips for Surviving College:

- Know that, while friends are essential, it is a natural process to change many friends as you advance. But you will keep a few others all your life.
- Learn to be a better friend yourself. Listen and remember as well as talk.
- Practice developing social skills, as well as academic skills.
- Remember, you are learning to be more independent. But growing is hard, even growing up. Be willing, not afraid or embarrassed, to ask for help. Getting tutored, counseled, or advised is expected. In fact, your student fees pay for this kind of help.
- Some periods are tougher than others. Count on having feelings of anxiety or depression, loneliness, and isolation. Some periods are tougher than others, but these feelings should pass. Don't act out on them by dropping out of college or doing anything harmful. Ask for help if you feel down for longer than two weeks.
- See your academic advisor each semester to make sure you are on the right track. Check out the advice of other professors, too.
- Look for campus newspaper listings and posters announcing special lectures by prominent experts. Ask questions, learn, and make friends with others interested in subjects.
- Make yourself join clubs or activities. Get the full list, usually available online or in the student center.
- Don't be overwhelmed by your professors. Learn to ask questions and speak up in class and during office hours.
- Read your college catalog and note required classes as well as ones that appeal to you. Find the best professors and take their classes.
- Keep your own personal and permanent college file of courses, credits, grade reports, transcripts, letters of recommendation, list of activities, and resume in a portfolio or plastic box. Be sure to label and keep a master copy of everything; make copies when necessary.
- Competition isn't part of college like it was in high school. You're also sitting next to people with good grades, or even people who struggled in the same classes. Join them in becoming better. Get to know your classmates.
- Employers reveal that they can train you to do almost any job; they just need you to come with demonstrated intelligence, dedication, and curiosity. Employers most need generalists who can search out answers, solve problems without detailed instructions, and supplement their software with brainpower.
- Start with what you love doing that might be based on your major or extracurricular activity.



# Know Yourself First

Knowing yourself first is important when it comes to your college experience as well as your future occupational choices. There are many variables in life, in college, and in work that help you achieve satisfaction. However, in order to do that, you need to determine your preferences and find what accommodates them: do you want a career with warmth and stability? Risky and challenging? Structured? Socializing or quiet concentration? In order to know these things, you first need to know yourself. There are plenty of personality assessments on the internet to help you know yourself a little more, but here are a few questions you can ask yourself concerning your career. (If you are interested in knowing yourself on a deeper level, you can take the Focus2Career assessment - a few pages down, or the MBTI Type Indicator -<https://www.truity.com/test/type-finder-personality-test-new>)

## What do you do?

- What do you like most about your major? If you don't have one, what would make you enjoy a major?
- Today, what is your career objective?
- What would you most like to be doing in your job?
- Do you want to work with people, data, or things?
- Do you want to do mental work or physical work?
- What do you like doing in your spare time?
- What would you like to learn most about?

## What are your skills?

- What are your strongest/most useful skills?
- What are other skills/traits you have that could help you in your job?
- What are skills/traits that others say you have?
- What are skills/traits that you would like to develop or improve?
- Are there skills you'd like to learn in order to move toward your final goal?

## What's important to you?

- What type of compensation is most important to you? How do salary, benefits, job security, opportunity for advancements, opportunities for continuing/professional development, and creative authority rank in order of importance?
- Do you want a set salary, or would you prefer to work on commission?
- What types of working conditions do you want?
- What are 3-5 occupations you would consider after college and why do they interest you?
- Who has a job that you would like to have? What do they do? Why is it appealing to you?
- Career wise, where do you want to be in 5 years? 10 years?
- If income and responsibilities weren't factors, what would you do?
- What would you like to be known for?

- Imagine that you had 3 separate lifetimes to live - what would you do with your time? Don't limit yourself to occupational titles or career fields. Determine where you'd like to live, what you'd like to do, who you'd like to spend time with, and what skills/interests would you develop/explore?

### **What does the job look like?**

- What is your ideal work environment? Do you want to work for a small business, large company, government agency, non-profit or something else?
- Do you prefer a desk job, outdoor job, remote job, or a combination?
- Do you want an office position or one that involves travel?
- Do you have a geographic preference?
- Do you want to stay in a particular city long-term, or will you want to relocate?
- Do you want to work as part of a team or by yourself?
- Do you want to follow directions or direct others?
- Do you prefer to be self-guided or closely supervised?
- Do you want a 9-5 job or one where you can set your own hours?
- Do you thrive in a high-stress atmosphere, or would you prefer something a bit more laid back?
- Do you prefer projects or regular routines?

## **Things to Consider Before Choosing a Major**

**What are/aren't your strengths?** One of the easiest ways to determine your major is to base it on your strengths. For example: if you find that you excel at numbers, you might consider a major such as accounting, economics, statistics, math education, or engineering. Another way to go at choosing a major is to think of things that are NOT your strength. If numbers aren't your forte, you will probably want to avoid any majors that strongly revolve around math or physics. Be sure to do any research around careers/majors that you are interested in to take a look at the courses you would be taking so that you know what subject it's heavy on (i.e., math, reading, computers).

**What do you enjoy doing?** Being good at something doesn't necessarily equate to *liking* it, especially over a long period of time. You might like the major as a whole, but there may be career areas within that major you don't pursue. For example, if numbers are your forte and you enjoy it, but you don't want to teach others math concepts, math education wouldn't be a career focus you'd enjoy. When you consider what you enjoy in your decision making process, your college and job career will be much more enjoyable. Even if your parents made you come to college, it's important to explore what you are interested in. After all, it will be you working jobs and going to school.

**What are you passionate about?** Your passions should play a considerable role in your decision, but remember, liking something and being passionate are two different things. Likes change over time. What you're passionate about now you may no longer be passionate about after college. Your passions, however, should motivate and excite you. Liking animals isn't enough to push you toward vet school and through the hard moments that come with it. Being passionate about providing top notch veterinarian care for people's animals, is.

**What values do you stand for?** Your values are what you stand for. They are the way you live your life. For example, if your goal is to help children in foster care be reunited with their families, or placed in loving, permanent homes, you should consider a major that contributes and helps you toward that mission; like social work. If you don't know your values, that's okay. Many discover later in life what they are. Pay attention to where your attention is drawn and what causes you to rise up in defending something or someone. What gives you life after doing it? That will give a good indication of values.

**Where do you see yourself in the future?** While this may make you roll your eyes, this is something to keep in mind. Not only do you need to think about your future career, but your location as well. Ask yourself questions like "Do I see myself living in a rural, city, or suburban location?" "Will I work in this specific area for a long period of time, or will I want to move?" "What does my future job look like based on location? Will I be able to take a vacation, or will I be in high-demand, making it hard to leave?" While you may end up moving or changing careers, having an understanding of where you want to live will help in your decision making process.

**How much do you want to be paid?** While it would be great for us to do what we love and get paid well for it, that's not how the world runs. Not every job/industry pays the same, and that's something to consider. This doesn't mean you should pick the major that promises the highest paying job. Instead, you should know what to expect money-wise from each major. What is the minimum starting wage? What's the average wage? Is this major in demand, or is it expected to be? Are wages expected to increase or decrease? What does it look like for your location? If you're located in a rural town, some jobs may not pay as much as it would in a larger city. For example, salaries for social workers vary from \$33,000 to \$68,000. The higher end of this range doesn't sound bad at all, but only 10% of social workers have that salary. That means if you're considering a major in social work, but you also care about a good and secure wage, you should prepare to work hard to make it to the 10%.

# If You're Undecided on a Major

Choosing a major can be tough. If you are unsure about a career path or want to know what is available with a specific major, here are a few assessments you can take:

**MyMajors** recommends your top ten best-fit majors based on your academic achievements, interests, and personality. To take the MyMajors Assessment, scan the QR code with your phone or click the link below.



[My Majors Assessment](#)

**Focus2Career** guides you through an intuitive and educational decision making model to help you choose majors offered at Northwestern, explore occupations and make informed career decisions. Focus2Career helps you plan for and achieve academic success throughout your lifetime. To take the Focus2Career Assessment, scan the QR code or click the link below. **Create a new account and use the access code LASSO.**



[Focus 2 Career Portal Login](#)

# Soft and Hard Skills

**Hard Skills:** These skills are specific and usually measurable skills that are needed to do a job. You will learn these skills for your future career as you take courses. Hard skills, for example, might include building websites, cooking for fine dining restaurants, performing statistical analysis, learning graphic design, mastering math, or understanding art restoration. These are also called *technical* or *applied skills*.

**Soft Skills:** These skills are also known as *transferable skills* because you can transfer them to any job you have over the course of your career. You will learn these skills as you interact with teachers, course materials, and other students during your courses or through extracurricular activities. Soft skills, for example, might include listening, reasoning, professionalism, courtesy, punctuality, or public speaking.

All jobs require soft skills and hard skills. Check out the job examples below, and then think about what hard and soft skills you will need for your future career.

<b>CHEF</b>	
Hard Skills	Soft Skills
Understand chemical reactions among ingredients	Manage time (in order not to burn anything)
Use different types of knives correctly	Communicate with other people in the kitchen
<b>TEACHER</b>	
Hard Skills	Soft Skills
Plan lessons (requires knowledge of a content area)	Be creative in developing activities engaging to students
Know how to create tests and quizzes	Work as a team with other teachers
<b>PIPEFITTER</b>	
Hard Skills	Soft Skills
Understand the mechanics of piping systems	Be detail-oriented and precise
Provide maintenance	Problem solving

# Resume Content Areas:

The strength of a good resume rests on its selection and presentation of basic content. As you organize your resume, keep in mind the needs of the employer who will be reading. Consider the job and what is required and how your skills match the job description. There are a couple types of resumes: chronological and chrono functional. Schedule an appointment with the Career Coach to determine which best fits you.

**Cover Letter:** Your cover letter is where you can show your passion for the position and the company and highlight your most relevant qualifications. A well-written cover letter will supplement your resume by focusing on why you're a well-qualified candidate for the job. Many employers require cover letters as part of the job application process. However, even when an employer does not explicitly ask for a cover letter, you should send one.

**Objective or Profile:** This is an important part of a resume and should not be overlooked. It informs potential employers of what you are looking for or eligible for and serves as a focal point from which to review and analyze your resume. It should be brief and clearly stated. Don't write a general job objective that reflects what you want from life, such as a "challenging position that will let me learn and increase my skills." Make your objective fit the job you're applying for exactly.

**Education:** Include the full title of your degree (example: Bachelor of Science in Engineering) or the degree you are working toward, institutions attended, date of expected graduation, minors or certifications and GPA. *If you have not completed a full semester at NWOSU, list your High School Graduation information as well.* Once you receive an NWOSU GPA, remove your high school experience.

**(Work) Experience:** Many students have limited work experience but have been involved in internships, volunteer, or camp leadership experience. These experiences are important to the employer and help demonstrate your skills. Be sure to include all significant work experience in reverse chronological order. Describe your work responsibilities with an emphasis on achievements using action words to communicate your skills. List the most important and more closely related responsibilities first.

**Skills:** Hard skills such as computer software, languages (spoken or otherwise), machinery knowledge and certifications will accumulate while at NWOSU. Make sure to list all relevant skills under your work experience.

**Activities, Honors, and Leadership:** These are important categories to include. If the activities involve work or leadership responsibilities, note it in some detail. The employer is interested in the skills you have developed, whether through volunteer or paid experiences. If you were elected to offices or committees, mention it.

# Resume Tips

Potential employers spend a short amount of time looking at your resume - usually less than 10 seconds. The easier the resume is to scan, the better you can hold their attention. You want to make sure to choose a format that allows you to showcase the qualifications that are most relevant to the job post.

Don't know where to start? The career experts suggest considering the essential tips below:

## Choose the Right Resume Format

- Potential employers spend a short amount of time looking at your resume - usually about 10 seconds (or less). The easier your resume is to scan, the better you can hold their attention.
- Organize your resume to highlight your features better for recruiters by choosing a format that allows you to showcase the qualifications that are most relevant to the job post.
- To eliminate blank spaces, consider including additional information that could be helpful. For college students or recent graduates, use the chronological resume format to present your most important information first.

## Tailor your resume

- A great resume should be tailored to the job and type of position that you're applying for. You don't have to change every little detail, but the resume itself should reflect the skills and experience that your potential employer would value.
- Do a word cloud ([www.tagcrowd.com](http://www.tagcrowd.com)) by cut/paste your resume and visualize, then cut/paste job descriptions and see what words the job emphasizes that you might add to your resume.
- Put bullet points after the top introduction that references key items in the job description such as "Strategic Communications", "Training and Development", "Communication Expertise", etc.
- Score your resume at [www.resumeworded.com](http://www.resumeworded.com) and receive actionable steps to make it better.

## **Include your PROFESSIONAL contact information**

This is one of the top five resume mistakes people make, according to Harvard career experts.

Always be sure to include your phone number. Do not use parentheses around your area code. That is very outdated. You can use dashes or dots between numbers. Do not put "Cell Phone" or "Home Phone" in front of the number

Always be sure to include your email address. Set up a gmail account just for job applications. It is more professional and helps you locate emails from potential employers easily. Don't put "Email" in front of the email address. DO NOT have a silly email address. If it's something you created in your childhood, or on a dare - CHANGE it. Employers do make decisions for interviews based on email addresses.

You can go the extra mile by adding your LinkedIn (just make sure it's up to date) or website that showcases examples of your work. Add it under your contact information or in the footer.

What not to include:

- A list of references: You don't even need to put "references available upon request" – hiring managers will ask for this in the hiring process and it is considered very out of date
- A picture: It doesn't matter how strong your selfie game is – including your a photo of yourself makes you look unprofessional and could introduce unconscious bias
- Age or sex: Again, keep it professional. It's a resume, not a Tinder profile
- Include a professional summary or objective below your contact information. A resume summary (or personal statement) includes 1-2 sentences that sum up your short term professional goals and why you're seeking a professional job.

## **List your education AFTER your summary**

This is where you can demonstrate to employers that you're learning skills you can apply on the job.

- Name of the school
- Location of school
- Degree you're pursuing and projected graduation date
- Relevant coursework

Relevant coursework can include relevant class projects, key topics learned, any individual achievements with a bullet-point list similar to how you format job duties.

## **Use action or power verbs**



Your resume is a marketing tool, so stick with action verbs. Avoid flowery and high-level claims like “results-oriented,” “team player,” “excellent communication skills” or “hard worker.”

The goal is to deliver specific information about what you’ve done in your previous positions that led to measurable results.

One of the errors that will almost guarantee your resume is thrown away is changing verb tenses on bullet points under a specific job.

So, for chronological resumes: Be sure every bullet on your current job begins with a PRESENT TENSE verb (even if you are no longer doing the specific work) and be sure every bullet on your past jobs begins with a PAST TENSE verb.

And for chrono-functional resumes: Be sure every bullet for current or past jobs begin with a PAST TENSE verb

Search "action verbs in resumes" or "power words in resumes" for 200+ examples

Here are a few examples of action verbs that demonstrate certain qualities and skills:

#### **Leadership:**

- ORGANIZED guest lecture series featuring over 40 prominent researchers in the field of sleep medicine
- COORDINATED media campaigns for Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat
- LED over 20 design projects for nonprofits and social enterprises in the U.S., Mexico, India, Zambia and Australia

#### **Communication:**

- PRESENTED monthly, quarterly and annual spending reports to CEO
- COLLABORATED with business teams to streamline production release strategy plans
- DIRECTED implementation of a \$50 million tech project for 10 major U.S. airports (scaled to support over 15,000 employees); increased productivity by 12% and reduced lost baggage expenses by 8%

#### **Technical:**

- LAUNCHED first paging network across India; managed operations and customer support with a team of 70 customer care agents
- BUILT new checked baggage fees model and projected revenue stream of \$12 million by forecasting changes in passenger baggage check-in behavior
- INSTALLED Macintosh systems for over 30 new hires; trained employees on usage and company computer policies

**Organizational:**

- REDUCED application testing time by 30% by automating shorter testing phases for off-cycle projects
- MONITORED a \$1 billion annual IT budget for 2012 and 2013
- PREPARED sales activity and performance reports; reduced report response time by 50%

## Resumes are about work, not just paid work

You don't have to limit your experience section to paid jobs. Include volunteer positions, internships, and extracurricular activities.

If you do have a paid job experience or relevant internships, list those first with the name of the company, its location and the length of time. Provide 2-3 bullet points highlighting achievements with action verbs during your time in those positions. Include any measurable success you had.

- Select a job title for your unpaid work and list them just as you would a paid job
- Look up job titles on ONET or LinkedIn to see how others describe their jobs
- List each work experience separately (animal shelter, grade school, family manager, etc)

**Don't**

- Never put "Volunteer" in a job title . It diminishes what you have done
- Know that if you have been out of the paid workforce, you are STILL working
- Lump all your unpaid work under one generic title
- Never put "Volunteer" in a job title . It diminishes what you have done
- Even if you have been out of the paid workforce, you are STILL working

## Headings are important

**Top of the Page:**

- Do not put your physical address (you don't want that on the Internet)
- You can put just your city, or just your state or nothing at all
- Your Name should be the largest on the page (bold, larger font)
- List your email (never put a "1" or an "0" because it looks like "L" or "O")
- List your phone (just one number, not home, work, fax)
- Write a short summary of your strengths, skills, values, interest in the job. No more than 5 lines, begin the first sentence with a power word or action word
- Don't put a heading, like "Accounting Manager". This will be in your cover letter

**WORK/JOB HEADING:**

- PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS - BOLDED
- List the company name (NOT BOLDED)
- List your job title under the company name (BOLDED)
- List only years worked right justified (list months if you have worked less than a year)
- Always Bold the headings and put them in all caps
- Center justified headings stand out more than right justified headings
- CV resumes have a different layout
- Don't go back more than 10 years on individually listed jobs
- Jobs that are 10+ years summarize in a short paragraph under your other jobs

### **EDUCATION HEADING**

- Can be EDUCATION or EDUCATION/CERTIFICATES or EDUCATION/TRAINING - BOLDED
- List the name of the Institution (NOT BOLDED)List your degree (BOLDED)
- List highest degree first
- List Credentials or Certificates after degrees
- Education is listed at the top of the page, before Professional Experience, only if you graduated from college in the last 12 months, otherwise, under Experience

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH (VOLUNTEER)**

- List positions you have held in volunteer opportunities
- List teaching, mentoring, etc you have done that is unpaid
- List sport, instrument, theatrical, etc coaching or managing

## **Make it presentable and easy to follow**

Your hiring manager's time is valuable, and a resume that's all over the place isn't worth reading all the way through. Typically, hiring managers spend 7 seconds on a resume.

### **Do:**

- Be consistent in format and content
- Balance white space
- Use consistent spacing, underlining, italics, bold and capitalization for emphasis
- List headings in order of importance
- Within headings, list information in reverse chronological order (most recent first)
- Make sure your formatting will translate properly if you converted to a PDF
- Keep it to just one page if you are just beginning your first job. If you have worked or had internships, you can make it two pages.

### **Don't:**

- Forget to proofread
- Use italics as they are hard to read
- Use a narrative style
- Use personal pronouns ("I...") **Can be used in certain circumstances**
- Start each line with a date **Dates should be right justified**
- Abbreviate **(an M.S degree looks strange - write out Master of Science)**
- Use an elaborate template with too many colors
- Use canva to create your resume

## Write for an Applicant Tracking System

As we increase in technology, more and more jobs are requiring that you submit a job application and resume through an online tracking system called the ATS.

ATS is a software used by companies to review, rank, and sort applications received for a job or internship posting. It prioritizes and ranks resumes according to their use of the specified keywords related to the job post. Resumes with the least amount of Keywords or not formatted for an ATS are ranked lowest. Here are some tips:

- Review the job description to identify character traits and skills needed to be successful in the role.
- Collect a list of keywords from the listed preferred and required qualifications in the job descriptions.
- Use standard headings such as “experience,” “skills,” and “education,” and your resume.
- Avoid complex formatting and using features such as images, columns, tables, headers and footers.
- Submit a word document - NOT a PDF so ATS can scan this format properly.
- Make multiple resumes.

## List Relevant Experience

- You don't have to limit your experience to paid jobs. Include volunteer positions, internships, and extracurricular activities that pertain to the job.
- If you do have paid job experience or relevant internships, list those FIRST with the name of the company, its location, and length of time employed.
- Provide 2-3 bullet points highlighting achievements with action verbs during your time in those positions. Include any measurable success you had in numbers where possible.
  - Example: Press Release Editing Intern, May 2018-August 2022
  - Appleton Editing Services, Cleveland, OH
  - Spearheaded a team of three interns to edit incoming press releases with short turnaround times.
  - Developed processes for AP Style guide approach to deliverables.

## List Relevant Skills

- When an employer reviews your resume, they are looking to understand WHY you would make a valuable addition to their team.
- Listing your skills is a way to quickly communicate your ability to succeed in the role.
- Include a combination of hard skills, which are abilities you learn through education and experience like software programs or foreign languages, and soft-skills, which are personality traits and skills you can apply to any job like problem-solving and time-management.
- Be sure to review the job description to identify the skills and behaviors needed to be successful.

### TEN EXAMPLES OF THE BEST RESUME SKILLS

- Active listening skills - the ability to focus completely on the person you're communicating with.
- Communication skills - abilities you use when giving and receiving different kinds of information.
- Computer skills - involve the ability to learn and operate various technologies.
- Customer Service skills - traits and practices that help you address customers need to create a positive experience.
- Interpersonal skills - important to work efficiently with others, solve problems and lead projects and teams.
- Leadership skills - require you to motivate others to complete tasks and reach milestones - often according to a schedule.
- Management skills - qualities that help you govern both tasks and people. Organized empathetic and communicates clearly to support a team.
- Problem solving skills - enable you to determine the root of a problem and quickly find an effective solution for all parties involved.
- Time Management skills - allow you to complete tasks and projects before deadlines while also maintaining a work-life balance.
- Transferable skills - qualities that are useful to any employer as you change jobs or even careers. Often include soft skills like flexibility, organization, and teamwork.

For additional resume help and feedback, contact our Career Coach or stop by Ryerson Hall 145. You can also visit [www.resumeworded.com](http://www.resumeworded.com) to score your resume and receive actionable steps and improve your resume.

# Electronic Resumes

An electronic resume may take two forms: 1.) the submission of a resume to a designated website, talent bank, or social media site, and 2.) the submission of a resume as an attachment to an email message submitted to a specific individual or email address.

When submitting resumes to online databases, it's worthwhile to periodically review and update a resume that's been posted. This keeps it "fresh" and more likely to surface in database searches.

Save several copies of your resume in different formats. Suggested formats are .docx, .pdf, and .txt. Most everyone can open a .pdf, but not everyone can open a .docx.

## Tips:

- Develop your standard resume **FIRST**.
- After saving a copy of your standard resume and creating a working copy of your electronic resume, do the following:
  - remove all graphics such as bold, italics, underlines, tabs, centering, numbers, bullets, or any other stylistic formats. CAPITALIZATION and position (the order of your resume) are the only acceptable graphics unless using a .pdf for format.
- all text should be left justified; the font should be Arial, Veranda, Tahoma, or Times New Roman.
- Consider using a keyword summary so that the resume is more likely to be selected if subject to electronic scan by keyword or loaded into a database searchable by keywords.
- Find out what will happen to your resume after they submit it electronically. If it's put into a database, will it be removed after a period of time? Will you be informed when a job matches your background? Will you have an opportunity to update your resume?
- Follow up with an original, mailed version unless the employer indicates that paper copies shouldn't be sent.
- **PROOF YOUR RESUME.**

# 10 Examples of the best Resume Skills

- 1.) **Active Listening Skills** - the ability to focus completely on the person you're communicating with.
- 2.) **Communication Skills** - abilities you use when giving and receiving different kinds of information. How you converse with others is a skill that not all people have.
- 3.) **Computer Skills** - involve the ability to learn and operate various technologies.
- 4.) **Customer Service Skills** - traits and practices that help you address customers, and create a positive experience for them. Knowing how to treat people is a big skill.
- 5.) **Interpersonal Skills** - important to work effectively with others, solve problems, and lead projects and teams.
- 6.) **Leadership Skills** - require you to motivate others to complete tasks and reach milestones - often to meet a deadline.
- 7.) **Management Skills** - qualities that help you govern both tasks and people. Organized, empathetic, and communicates clearly to support a team.
- 8.) **Problem-Solving Skills** - enables you to determine the root of a problem and quickly find an effective solution for all parties.
- 9.) **Time Management Skills** - allows you to complete tasks and projects before deadlines while also maintaining a work-life (or school-life) balance.
- 10.) **Transferable Skills** - qualities that are useful to any employer as you change jobs or even careers. Often include soft skills like flexibility, organization, and teamwork.

# Cover Letters

A cover letter is a one-page document you submit with your resume. It is a supplement to your resume, a movie trailer if you will, to your resume. You don't want to just repeat your resume information on your cover letter. Employers and hiring managers will determine whether or not they read your resume based on your cover letter - but don't exaggerate on your cover letter.

Here's the structure of a cover letter:

- 1.) Contact details
- 2.) An introduction of yourself
  - a.) Personal information - not your favorite hobbies, but a short introduction to yourself professionally
  - b.) What job you're applying for
  - c.) Where you're applying
  - d.) Why you're applying
- 3.) The Body of Your Cover Letter
  - a.) Story behind your achievements
    - i.) You want to be as factual as possible
    - ii.) Use metrics if possible to show off your achievements
  - b.) Talk about how you'll benefit the company - not how they'll benefit you.
- 4.) Conclusion
  - a.) Mention your future plans
  - b.) Thank the reader and conclude with a request to meet in person



# Cover Letter Example

Use the heading from your resume for your contact information

Mr./Ms. Name  
Title  
Company  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Name:

The first paragraph is your introduction and should be three to four sentences long. Name the position for which you are applying and indicate how you learned of the opening. State briefly why you are interested in the organization or what you know about the organization. Try to get the reader's attention. You might mention a name or refer to an article, event, or experience that led you to make this contact.

The body of your letter should be one or two paragraphs in length. This is an opportunity to outline your qualifications and skills as they relate to the job. However, do not repeat all the information on your resume. Select one or two of your most important qualifications for the position, and elaborate on the information, slanting your remarks to the employer's point of view. Give concise evidence of your functional skills and of the qualities you possess. When responding to a job announcement, include the requirements listed in the announcement to facilitate the task of matching you to the job. Refer the reader to your enclosed resume.

The final paragraph is your closing. Make a specific request for an interview. Make sure your closing is not vague but makes a specific action from the reader likely. Thank the reader for taking the time to read your letter.

Sincerely yours,  
(Your signature)  
Your typewritten name

Enclosure (Indicates your resume is in the envelope with your letter)

## Personal Statements:

This is the most important and powerful work that you will do, and it's a statement you will use for the remainder of your life. Your Personal Statement defines YOUR unique core values and strengths that you bring to any situation. You can use it on your resume, in interviews, your LinkedIn, and in other areas when someone asks you to tell them about yourself. In career development, it's important to know who you are before you decide what you want to do.

- 1.) Begin by taking the FREE VIA Character Strengths Survey [here](#), writing down the top 5 results.
- 2.) Write a paragraph for each strength/value that describes them in your own words and how you use it with others.
- 3.) Highlight 2-5 key words in each paragraph that you want to say about yourself. These highlighted words can be helpful in listing your skills on your resume or in interviews.
- 4.) Say your personal statement OUT LOUD! This will help you become more confident in who you are, helping you own your place in interviews!

### Personal Statement Example:

FIRST, I am a **strategic thinker** and **pacesetter** for teams and organizations, utilizing key characteristics of **leadership** to help team members define long term goals and short term, measurable goals. I enjoy paving the way for others in the organization to **courageously** step forward and be the best they can be.

SECOND, I am a **life-long learner** and continuously improve my **knowledge** so I can help others understand a situation or subject in a unique way. This presents me with the opportunity to expand my thinking to a new level.

THIRD, I enjoy **evaluating** operating systems extensively for any areas of improvement and **exploring creative avenues** for potential opportunities. This allows me to clearly define the most effective way the team can reach their desired goals.

FOURTH, I am passionate about speaking the **truth** and I value **confidentiality** and **dependability** as I am often sought out for advice on how to proceed. These key characteristics allow me to remain **ethical** and **trustworthy** and act as a touchstone for others as they evaluate their decisions.

FIFTH, I am a catalyst for **genuine relationships**. I help build bridges between personalities by helping others see uniqueness rather than differences. My ability to **mentor** and provide **honest feedback** allows me to encourage others as individuals and create solid relationships.

# Action Verbs

accelerated	constructed	explained	measured	reproduced
accomplished	contacted	explored	mediated	researched
achieved	continued	facilitated	modeled	resolved
acquired	contracted	figured	modified	responded
activated	convened	financed	molded	restored
adapted	conveyed	focused	monitored	retained
adjusted	coordinated	forecasted	motivated	retrieved
administered	corresponded	formed	named	reviewed
advised	counseled	formulated	negotiated	revised
allocated	created	fostered	observed	rewrote
analyzed	critiqued	founded	obtained	routed
annotated	decided	functioned	operated	scheduled
anticipated	defined	generated	ordered	searched
applied	delegated	governed	organized	selected
appraised	delivered	grouped	originated	served
arranged	demonstrated	guided	outlined	shaped
articulated	derived	helped	oversaw	shared
assembled	designed	identified	perceived	showed
assessed	detected	illustrated	performed	simplified
assigned	determined	immunized	persuaded	solicited
authored	developed	implemented	planned	solved
balanced	devised	improved	planted	specified
briefed	directed	increased	presented	spoke
budgeted	distributed	informed	presided	stimulated
built	drafted	initiated	printed	structured
cataloged	edited	instituted	produced	studied
categorized	educated	instructed	protected	supervised
chaired	effected	interpreted	provided	supported
clarified	elicited	interviewed	publicized	synthesized
cleared	encouraged	introduced	questioned	targeted
coded	established	invented	raised	taught
collaborated	evaluated	investigated	recommended	tested
compared	examined	judged	recorded	trained
compiled	executed	led	recruited	translated
completed	exhibited	listened	reduced	tutored
composed	expanded	maintained	rendered	updated
computed	expedited	managed	repaired	utilized
conducted	experienced	marketed	reported	verified
consolidated	experimented	mastered	represented	wrote

# Cover Letter Checklist

**STOP! Don't submit your cover letter until you have completed the following:**

- Does your cover letter heading include all essential information?
  - Full name
  - Professional Email
  - Phone Number
  - Date
  - Relevant Social Media
- Do you address the correct person (i.e., the hiring manager or future direct supervisor)
- Does your introductory paragraph grab the reader's attention?
  - Did you mention 2-3 of your top achievements?
  - Did you use numbers and facts to back up your experience where possible?
- Did you convey that you're the right one for the job?
  - Did you identify core requirements?
  - Did you convey how your experiences help you fit the requirements?
- Did you convince the hiring manager that you're passionate about the company?
  - Did you identify 3 things you like about the company that aren't generic?
- Did you end with a Call-to-Action and correct formal closure?

**Be careful not to...**

- Make your introduction long winded or forget to include your job objective to cause confusion about what your applying for.
- Forget to proofread your letter or use spell check.
- Write a great deal about your experiences without explaining why they are relevant. Do provide details that will let the employer know you understand what their company does or what the job entails.
- Write more than one page, forcing employers to hunt for your qualifications.
- Explain what the employer can do for you, instead of what you can do for them.
- Send the same generic cover letter to all employers.

# Resume Checklist

- Are your name, address, city, state, zip code, phone number and email address at the top of the page?
- Is the resume pleasing to the eye with an easy-to-read font size and typeface, and an easy-to-follow layout? Can an employer learn the basics about you with a 10 second glance at it?
- Did you use bullets, bold, all capitals, and/or underlining to highlight the parts you want to emphasize (e.g., job titles)?
- Did you tailor your resume for the position by including key skills and experiences the employer wants?
- Is information listed in order of importance and relevance to the requirements listed in the job description?
- Does the resume avoid generalities and provide specific information about context, actions taken, and results?
- Have you been accurate and truthful about your accomplishments rather than being too modest or exaggerating?
- Did you check the spelling of every word and make sure the grammar and punctuation are correct?
- If you know your resume will be scanned, did you omit columns, underlining, and bullets?
- Have you had the LASSO Center critique it?
- If you were the employer, would you call for an interview?

## **DO:**

- Draft a clear and well-organized document.
- Bachelor's candidate resumes should be no more than two pages of relevant information.
- Check the spelling of every word and ensure there are no errors. Customize the content for the organization of the opportunity.
- Describe duties and accomplishments in bullets.
- Keep formatting consistent throughout the document.

## **DON'T:**

- Include a picture or personal information such as weight, height, marital status, SSN, race, age, and religion.
- Use personal pronouns such as I, me, or my.
- Start bullet points with "Responsible for" or "Duties included."
- State current or previous salaries unless explicitly instructed to do so.
- Have any misspelled words or poor grammar. Proofread your document.
- Don't use Canva to create your Resume.

# 16 Essential Email Etiquette Tips

Sending any kind of message to a professor, hiring manager, a recruiter, or any type of professional contact for that matter is different from the messages you send to friends and family. Here are 16 tips to ensure you make a strong impression:

**Know when it's appropriate to send an email in the first place.** The first question you should always ask yourself is: "Does *this message need to be communicated through an email?*" If you have a simple question that you can ask in person, do that. If you can't reach out in person but you have something that warrants a longer discussion, consider reaching out by phone. You can also reach out by email to schedule a call for a longer conversation. If you have a quick question that can be conveyed in a paragraph or two, send the email.

**Provide specific information in the subject line.** The person you are reaching out to should look at the email subject line in their inbox and have a general idea of what the message is about. Avoid using emojis and inappropriate terms.

**Use your school email account or make sure your personal account is professional sounding.** You will need a professional sounding email after college anyways, so consider creating a more professional email address.

**Greet your contact properly:** You need to include a greeting. It can be as simple as "Dear Dr. Smith," or "Hello Mrs. Carter." Don't call them by their first name. Err on the side of caution and use their formal titles such as "Dr.," "Mrs.," "Mr.," or "Ms."

**Introduce yourself.** Briefly remind the person you're writing to and who you are and what your connection to them is.

**Be polite.** Make sure you add "thank you," and "please" throughout your email as necessary. Don't be demanding.

**Be brief.** Get to the point of your email quickly.

**Keep the appearance simple.** Make sure your font is basic and readable.

**Don't use acronyms:** Write your email in proper English. Avoid shorthand writing.

**Proofread your email before sending.** Make sure your email doesn't have any spelling or grammatical errors. Run your email through [www.grammarly.com](http://www.grammarly.com) if you need to, but make sure you read through the email for yourself as well.

**Send attachments that are easy to access and easily recognizable.** When you attach a file, make sure it's in a format that's easy to open on all systems. Consider sending a .pdf. Also, rename the attachment with your name and what it is. (Example: JohnDoeResume)

**Sign off politely.** Common sign offs include: "I look forward to hearing from you," "Thank you for your time," "Respectfully," "Kind regards," or "Sincerely."

**Use a professional signature if applicable.** Example: John Doe, Biology Major, Northwestern Oklahoma State University

**Don't include anything confidential or controversial.**

**Be considerate of when you send the email.** If you send an email at 10pm, don't expect a response until the next morning. Consider the office hours of the person you're corresponding with.

# Job Search

The beginning of a job or internship search can seem overwhelming, but if you break it down into pieces, it becomes less scary. As you begin the process, think about what you want and need in a position. Visit the “Know Yourself First” for more in depth questions to help you narrow your job search.

## **Create An Action Plan:**

Set S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Time-Bound) goals that include specific numbers to track your progress.

- Create a target list of companies.
- Set S.M.A.R.T. goals for completing job applications and conducting follow-ups with contacts.

## **Identify Candidates:**

- Write down the kinds of organizations for which you might like to work, including small businesses, government, research, etc.
- Identify names of people connected with the organizations that you can contact.

## **Research Prospective Employers:**

- What are the purposes of the organization?
- What are the primary products and services?
- What is the nature of the position you are investigating?
- What are the skills required?

## **Informal Interviewing:**

- Interview people who have been working in your field of interest.
- Questions to ask might include:
  - What do you like or dislike about working in the field you're in?
  - What is an “average” day for you?
  - Do you have recommendations for someone interested in this field?
  - Are there other people to contact that you'd recommend?

## **Use Personal Contacts and Referrals:**

- Talk to people you know as well as develop new contacts.
- Be careful not to misuse “networking.”
- Let EVERYONE know you're available to interview for a position if you are.

## **Develop a resume:**

- Tailor your resume to a specific position.
- Make sure the LASSO Center Career Coach reviews your resume.

**Prepare to interview correctly:**

- Be available to interview virtually, on the telephone, or in person.
- Develop a 60 second elevator pitch about yourself.
- Be professionally persistent, even if there are no immediate openings.
- Conduct detailed research on the organization with which you will be interviewing.
- Practice and obtain feedback prior to the interview with the LASSO Center Career Coach.

**Follow Up:**

- Send a thank you note within 24 hours.
- Write letters to people who have interviewed you to:
  - Obtain feedback
  - Reinforce your interest in the job
  - Gain references for other possible jobs



# Researching Companies Online

Always research a company before you interact with them at a networking event, career fair, and especially before an interview. Your knowledge of a recruiter's company will go a long way in your job search. Here is a list of questions you can draw from:

## Company Overview:

- What is the company slogan or motto?
- What does the slogan mean or how does it relate to the company industry?
- When was the company founded?
- How big is the company?

## Location Information:

- Does the company have different locations? Where are they located?
- Do different locations do different work or represent different industries? (Example: They may have Headquarters without engineering positions).
- Which locations interest you more?
- Are there opportunities to travel?

## Business Information:

- Who owns the company?
- What is the company worth?
- What sectors of the market do they do business in? (Oil & Gas, Pharmaceuticals, Energy, etc)
- Are they looking to break into new markets, or do they own a market?
- How much business is internationally based?

## Job Description:

- What is the description of the job you're applying for or wish to apply for in the future?
- What skills or qualifications are they looking for in the job description?
- What are the prerequisites for the job?

## Salary Search:

- How much does the company pay for the job description you're looking for?
- What is the average hourly rate for the region in which you'd be working?
- Are there any benefits besides pay? Benefits at the salaried level usually include health insurance, a 401K plan, and paid sick leave. Internships may have housing or educational programs associated with them.

**Company Culture:**

- Does the company have a cohort of interns, or will you be the only one?
- How do you interact with senior-level management?
- Does the company have outside-of-work activities that you would be allowed to participate in?
- Are there volunteer or community service projects the company sponsors?
- What does the company structure look like? (Example: A “flat” company emphasizes the importance of people at all levels of work. A more traditional corporation may have a strict hierarchy of job titles.)

# Top 10 Skills Employers Want:

No matter who the employers are, they all agree on which qualities are important in their employees. They all want to hire people who possess the following ten critical skills:

- 1.) Communication Skills
- 2.) Work Experience
- 3.) Motivation and Initiative
- 4.) Teamwork Skills
- 5.) Leadership Abilities
- 6.) GPA/Academic Credentials
- 7.) Technical Skills
- 8.) Interpersonal Skills
- 9.) Analytical Skills
- 10.) Ethical Behavior

## Employers Are Looking for Personal Traits, Such As:

- 1.) Can you think creatively and critically?
- 2.) Can you work collaboratively and cooperatively?
- 3.) Can you write and speak clearly?
- 4.) Do you have flexibility to manage diversity in the workforce and with clients here and globally?
- 5.) Do you have a good general education, as well as good computer skills?
- 6.) Do you show a strong work ethic?

# Basic Interview Guidelines:

Three simple steps to a successful interview:

- 1.) Prepare
- 2.) Practice
- 3.) Sell

## Prepare

- Understand and know yourself. What are your strengths and areas you need to develop? What are your career and life goals? Self-assessment is a highly valued skill in today's work environment.
- Understand and be prepared for the interpersonal dynamics of a job interview. Look at the job interview as an open exchange of information between you and the interviewer. The interviewer is as interested in your interpersonal skills and interactions as they are the qualifications you bring to the table.
- Be knowledgeable about the position, organization, and community before you go to the interview. A little research will go a long way in the job interview.
- Adjust your email address and voicemail messages. You are moving from a college environment to a professional one. The rules are different. Email addresses such as "[wildbeast@nomail.com](mailto:wildbeast@nomail.com)" and voice mailbox messages that say "Hey dude, leave a message when you hear that beep" are not appropriate when an employer wants to contact you.

## Practice

- Participate in mock interviews. Contact LASSO Center Career Coach to schedule a one on one interview.
- Practice your responses to typical interview questions. Although every interview is different, it is easy enough to know the types of questions you will be asked and practice your responses in advance.

## Sell

- Most interviews begin with the question "tell me about yourself." Use this open ended question to sell your skills, abilities, and qualifications to the interviewer. Do not talk about your personal life. Have your personal statement ready for this question.
- Demonstrate enthusiasm, a positive attitude, and a strong interest in the position. There can be no substitute for these first impression qualities in an interview.

# Types of Interviews

## Phone and Virtual Interviews

Many employers will conduct their first round of interviews via the phone or virtually. These interviews are used as a precursor to an in-person interview.

- Make sure you are in a quiet, comfortable environment where you will not be disturbed.
- Smile! Regardless of whether the employer can see you, it can help you come across as personable.
- Make sure your background isn't cluttered or messy.

## Phone Interviews

- Have your resume, job description, and notes in front of you to glance at but minimize the sound of shuffling papers.
- Be prepared for pauses and silence. If there is an extended silence between questions, you can ask confirming questions such as "Was my answer clear?"

## Virtual Interviews

- Check your internet connection, sound, and any applications before the interview to make sure they are working properly.
- Dress as if you are at an in-person interview. Look straight into the camera when talking to maintain eye contact.

## Panel/Group Interviews

Though most interviews tend to be one-on-one, some employers will ask that you interview with several members of their organization in a group setting. Be sure that your responses address everyone on the panel.

## On-Site Interviews

These interviews tend to be much more in-depth than the phone interview, lasting anywhere from an hour to a full day or longer. However, the preparation process for an on-site interview remains the same: know the employer, know yourself, and anticipate and practice possible questions.

- Give yourself plenty of time to travel to the site, taking into consideration possible traffic delays. If possible, you may want to take a test drive over to the site a few days before the interview.
- Be friendly and courteous to everyone you encounter. You never know who has input in the hiring decision.
- Employers will typically (but not always) reimburse travel expenses if your interview is in another city or state. It is important that you clarify these details with the employer when arranging the interview.

## **Case Interviews**

Case interviews focus on the way you think and how you go about addressing complex issues and problems. Typically, you will be presented with a challenging scenario (or case) with varying background or details. (Note: case interviews are often posed as questions on the application process).

Cases may come in the form of a brain teaser, market-sizing scenario, financial analysis, or management/strategy issue. Interviewers want to see your ability to be analytical, logical, quantitative, and creative.

Your listening skills, insight, communication style, and persuasive skills are key to a successful case interview. There are many strategies that go into attacking a case interview question, and the best way to prepare is to practice.

## **Interviews with a Meal**

The point of the meal interview is for you and the employer to get to know each other, and for him/her to see how you conduct yourself in a social setting. Employers will be assessing your conversational and interpersonal skills to determine how well you would fit in with the organization.

- Demeanor, language, and behavior should all be 100% professional.
- The meal you order should be in mid-price range; not the most expensive or least expensive item. You may want to ask the interviewer what he/she recommends on the menu to get a gauge.
- Avoid items that are challenging or messy to eat, such as pasta or dishes with a lot of cheese.
- Even if the employer is drinking alcohol, you should still refrain.
- If the service is slow or the food is not exactly how you ordered it, avoid complaining or making an issue of it.
- It is customary for the employer to pay for the meal. Make sure you show your appreciation.

# Interview Tips

Below is a list of tips to help you prepare for your interview:

- Prepare a list of your top qualities - choose 5 qualities, skills, and other areas. Think of how you've demonstrated each of these in past jobs, volunteer positions, academic projects, school activities, etc. This will help you feel more confident sharing your strengths and skills if you're asked.
- Describe why you find the job appealing. State how it's related to your career goals and/or academic studies.
- Schedule a mock interview with the Career Coach in LASSO to prepare for the real thing.
- Schedule your interview carefully - make sure you have enough time to get to and from your interview if you have classes that day. Always plan for interruptions or barriers to getting to your interview, so schedule additional time to get there.
- Have your interviewers contact information handy. Some things out of your control happen. Having the contact information handy is helpful so you can keep in touch.
- Dress appropriately - make sure you look professional and put together for your interview. Plan your time accordingly - make sure you have time to go to class, get ready, and go to the interview.
- Bring a copy of your cover letter and resume. You won't always need to give them this copy, but have it on hand just in case there's an additional person in the interview.
- Turn your phone and watch OFF. Don't have anything on you that will be a distraction. Take your headphones out too.
- Be polite, professional, and attentive. Sit up straight and be pleasant to be around - even if you don't feel confident, excited or happy.
- Be upfront about WHEN you can work. Don't take on more hours than feasible. If your availability isn't a right fit for the employer, it is better for them to know as soon as possible so you can look for other positions and they can look for another employee.
- Send a thank you afterward - don't wait. Email them immediately and say "thank you" and express your excitement about the possibility of working with them.
- **BE ON TIME.** Arrive 5-7 minutes early. If it's zoom, have it pulled up 5 minutes ahead of time and make sure there's nothing distracting in the background.

# Types of Questions Asked in Interviews

**Traditional Questions** help the employer get a better sense of who you are. Similar to the bullets of your resume that describe your experiences in detail, you need to back up your interview answers with specific, tangible examples.

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you choose your field of study?
- What are your greatest strengths and areas of challenge?
- What has been your greatest accomplishment/setback?
- Which class did you find most challenging/enjoyable?
- Do you feel your GPA adequately represents your abilities?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- How will you add value to our organization?
- Why are you interested in this field/our organization?
- What do you know about our organization that isn't on our website?
- Who are our key competitors?
- What do you think it takes to be a great leader?

**Behavioral Questions** are designed to help the interviewer get a clear understanding of how you handle different situations. Unlike traditional questions that can focus on hypothetical situations, behavioral questions rely solely on your past experiences. The premise is that past behavior can be used to predict future behavior.

**“Tell me about a time when you...”**

- Made a difficult/ethical decision.
- Dealt with a difficult team member or customer.
- Failed to meet a deadline.
- Demonstrated leadership skills.
- Received negative feedback.
- Overcame an obstacle.
- Had to have an uncomfortable conversation with a coworker (or group project partner).
- Went above and beyond what was expected of you.
- Persuaded someone to change their mind.
- Had to stick to a decision you did not agree with.



# Responding to Challenging Questions:

## **Tell Me About Yourself**

This is most often the first question you will be asked and can often be the most difficult to answer. It is not an invitation to share your life story (age, birthplace, family information, etc) but should focus on where you've been and where you're going regarding your education and career goals.

**Example:** "I will be graduating this May with a degree in Elementary Education. For the last two summers, I have served as an intern with a local non-profit organization teaching reading skills to children in the Alva community. I have also been active in \_\_\_\_\_club. My goal now is to teach second grade students that will allow me to grow as a teacher while also serving budding minds."

## **What Are Your Salary Expectations?**

You should do your homework and know what a typical starting salary is for the job (and location) to which you are applying. Rather than a fixed number, give a salary range and justify it by mentioning the research you have done. Remember, salaries will also depend on the location of the job. You might not get the high salary in a rural town that you would in a big city.

**Example:** "Based on the research I have done and the nature of the position, I am targeting a starting salary in the \$55,000 - \$60,000 range."

## **What Are Your Greatest Strengths?**

Support your answers with detailed examples that relate to the job at hand.

**Example:** "My greatest strengths are leadership, communication, and team-building. For the past two years, I have been a Resident Advisor, where I oversee the safety and wellbeing of X number of students. In this role, I serve as a mentor, mediator, supervisor, and program director. I oversee town-hall style meetings for my floor and frequently have to make tough decisions to solve problems among residents."

**What Is Your Greatest Weakness?**

What the employer is really questioning here is your self-awareness and self-improvement. They are not interested in hearing you confess your flaws, nor are they looking for a perfectionist with “no weaknesses.” The best strategy is to pick a related example from your life that demonstrates growth, and ideally, your ability to turn a weakness into a strength. Your answer should be genuine, honest, and professionally related (nothing too personal).

**Example:** “One area that I am continually working to improve is my public speaking skills. When I first began college, the thought of speaking in front of a large group giving a presentation was enough to cause me stress. However, over the last two years, I have challenged myself to get out of my comfort zone and overcome this fear. In addition to taking a public speaking class, I have challenged myself to take opportunities to present to groups as often as I can. These experiences have helped me become more comfortable addressing large audiences.”

**Why Should I Hire You?**

This is a chance to reiterate the skills and qualities you would bring to the employer, as well as an opportunity to explain why you are the best candidate for the job. It is challenging because although you don’t know your competition, your answer needs to reflect on how you are unique among the candidates they are considering. This is often the last question asked, so make sure you “go for it” by showing enthusiasm for the job and how you will contribute.

**Example:** “As I mentioned earlier, I have strong skills in communication, leadership and teamwork. I can make immediate contributions to your organization because I know the sales territory I would be responsible for and my demonstrated abilities to build rapport with people would increase your clientele.”

# What NOT to do in an Interview:

- Dress like a student.
- Chew gum.
- Leave your cellphone on and answer it.
- Slump or fidget in your chair.
- Know nothing about the company and think you can wing it.
- Wait for a question you really want to answer.
- Do not explain how your courses and experience with clubs, work, and volunteering fit in with the company's needs. You can explain situations you've experienced and how you dealt with it, but you don't have to mention the clubs.
- Ask what they will do for you – money, benefits, vacation – before the job is offered to you.
- Answer in monosyllables, say “like” many times in every sentence, and otherwise be inarticulate or slovenly in your speech.
- Do not ask any questions about the job, responsibilities, or organization.
- Complain about your problems or those who let you down.
- Think that the company will definitely call you.
- Walk out without thanking them and shaking hands.
- Do not send a thank you note or email.
- Wait to hear from them about a job offer.

# Career Fairs

A career fair is an excellent way for students and employers to meet and interact. Here are some tips to make your Career Fair experience a success:

## Before the Career Fair:

- Have a resume completed and reviewed by the LASSO Center. If you are attending the career fair as a freshman, it will only be to acclimate yourself and observe. However, have a resume in case you are asked for it.
- Research the organizations that are registered to attend. You can find that on [www.nwosu.edu](http://www.nwosu.edu) under Career Services > Career Fair. Target the organizations that are seeking candidates with your qualifications.
- Be prepared to ask questions. Have a list of questions prepared and practice asking them. Potential questions could be: “What advice do you have for a student in XYZ industry?” “What are you looking for in a potential candidate?”

## During the Career Fair:

There is more to going to a career fair than putting on your suit. You will be surrounded by company representatives or organizations where you may be interviewing and perhaps working someday. You can be certain of one thing at a career fair - you are being observed. This includes your body language, your verbal expressions and the way you interact with others. Non-verbal communication is just as important as verbal communication.

- Make a positive first impression. Knowing how to initiate contact with an employer is a valuable skill.
- Dress professionally. Wearing a suit or dress shows you have pride in your appearance and take the potential job seriously.
- Make eye contact immediately as you introduce yourself.
- Give a firm handshake to get off to a good start.
- Try to remember the representative's name. Casually refer to their nametag to help.
- Smile and be polite - enthusiasm is an important quality.
- Be careful of your body language. Your actions tell the employer how nervous you may be, how much you care, and how confident you are.
  - Do not fidget or play with your hair.
  - Do not rock from side to side.
  - Do not cross your arms.
  - Do not look around when conversing.
  - Do not chew gum.

Good communication skills are essential to having a successful career fair experience. You have a limited amount of time to speak with employers and it is likely that other students will

be waiting to speak with the same recruiter. You must express yourself concisely and completely within this timeframe. A few tips:

- Listen carefully to what the representative has to say. If you don't understand a statement, ask for clarification.
- Avoid filler words such as "um," "like," and "you know." To help avoid using these words, pause when you feel yourself getting ready to say it.
- Show confidence in your voice and posture. The exhibit hall may be noisy and if the recruiters can't hear you, they won't remember you.
- Pick up company literature. This shows interest in the employer, as well as provides you valuable resources to review later.

### **After the Career Fair**

- Mailing a thank-you letter is not only appropriate, it can also bring attention to your name.
- Make sure all of your communications are professional. If you need help communicating with potential employers, set up an appointment with the LASSO Center Career Coach.

### **FIVE things to avoid**

- 1.) Approaching a campus recruiter when the person is talking with another student, or monopolizing a recruiter.
- 2.) Letting the conversation continue for too long. Recognize that the recruiters' time is valuable and end the conversation with something like: "Thank you for taking time to speak with me."
- 3.) Starting a conversation without introducing yourself with a smile and handshake.
- 4.) Rambling rather than asking specific questions during your few minutes with the recruiter.
- 5.) Leaving the meeting knowing no more than when you approached the person.

# Networking

Networking is the process of making intentional, career-related contacts through personal acquaintances and their referrals. Their purpose is to gather information and advice that will ultimately lead to interviews and employment offers. Since most job vacancies are not advertised and most people find their jobs through personal contacts, networking is a process that is key to career success.

- Most job vacancies are not advertised by means of newspapers, the internet, job bulletins, etc. This is true for approximately 70-80% of entry-level positions and 90% of non-entry level vacancies.
- Studies note that employers and employees prefer informal and personal methods of job searches. Both groups believe personal contacts produce more in depth, accurate and current info.
- Individuals who use personal contacts to find jobs are reported to be more satisfied with their jobs and tend to have higher incomes.

## **Prior to the networking situation or opportunity:**

- Identify your potential network - family, friends, coworkers, local events/organizations.
- Decide what you need to learn.
- Assess what you have to offer your next employer.
- Prepare a terrific resume and have it reviewed by LASSO Center Career Coach.
- Prepare questions for formal networking. Topics might include:
  - Career paths
  - Realities of the Working World
  - Education and Experience
  - Money and Advancement
  - Job Responsibilities
  - State of the Industry
  - Career Preparation

## **During the networking situation or opportunity:**

- Discuss your qualifications, but focus on the information you're receiving.
- Be courteous and concise.
- Ask clear questions.
- Distribute your personal business cards to your contacts, but be selective.
- Have a copy of your resume available in the event it is requested.

## **After the networking situation or opportunity:**

- Always follow up promptly with a thank you note.
- Keep in touch with your contacts with a periodic phone call or email.
- Maintain records about all of your contacts with people in your networking indicating who, what, why, when, where, and how.
- Make notes on the back of business cards that you receive for later reference.

# Social Media Etiquette

Social media can be a great way to stay connected, but in our world of instant posts, tweets, and messaging, it's important to consider the effects when it's not used properly. Here are a few things to keep in mind when it comes to being active online.

- **Determine how you want to be perceived.** Like it or not, your communication becomes a strong part of your overall image. How do you want to be perceived on all of your social media channels?
- **Know that your employers DO check your social media accounts.** Not only future employers, but organizations that offer scholarships will look at your social media too. Some may tell you that they don't have time to look, but smart employers know it's worth the effort before saying 'yes' to a new hire.
- **Google Yourself.** Observe what comes up, including images. Eliminate any questionable posts or pictures. Show respect for yourself and your credibility by keeping your posts (and your daily interactions) clean.
- **You are what you post.** People make judgments based on what they see and every post matters. Read through your stream and ensure it reflects your character.
- **Don't rely on privacy settings.** Anything can be shared on the web, but this doesn't mean DON'T utilize the privacy setting.
- **Dedicate posts emphasizing your achievements and accomplishments.** But be considerate of *how* you share those accomplishments. Don't be vulgar in your sharing, you never know who is reading your posts.
- **Take your online presence seriously.** Social media is a phenomenal way to connect, build a community of like-minded friends, and stay current on what's going on in the world.
- **Never make public posts, pictures or videos that can be viewed in a negative light or that show anything less than professionalism.** There's no need to post party pictures, or pictures where you're dressed inappropriately.
- **Never bad-mouth previous or current employers or co-workers online, regardless of how bad they are.** Remember that you have friends that may be friends with your co-workers and it can get back to them. The same goes for teachers - what you say gets back to them.
- **Keep other complaints to an absolute minimum. Never post anything derogatory or inflammatory—such as jokes told in bad taste or discriminatory remarks.**
- **Keep your political beliefs private.** If you share your political beliefs, make sure it's done tastefully.

# Before Posting, Ask:

One implication of social media is that it has become a minefield of sharing opinions and beliefs, often at the expense of other people. It's important to remember that there are consequences to abusing social media, and things aren't always deleted like you might think. Before posting, here are a few questions to ask yourself:

**“Where did I get this information I want to share, and is it accurate?”**

**“Why do I want to share this?”** Assess why what you're posting matters, and if the root seems unimportant or in bad taste, you might want to hold off.

**“How can I phrase what I want to share in a respectful manner?”** Being considerate of what you're posting on social media doesn't mean you can't post at all, it means that you will need to evaluate the risks of what you're posting if it's filled with vulgar language, offensive or confidential material, or shared with the intent to harm. HOW you speak up is important.

**“Am I prepared to receive backlash from my post and defend it myself, if necessary?”** The other side of social media is people sharing *their* opinions. If you share anything controversial, or any complaint, it can get out of hand and you can easily receive backlash. If you cannot handle it, or defend your stance in a respectful manner don't post it.

**“Is this something I'd be comfortable having a future employer see?”** They are looking at your interactions online, so calculate the risks before posting. There's no need to be vulgar in your posts - what does it actually accomplish?

**“Is anything I'm sharing confidential or sensitive information?”** Sharing information that's not yours to share can get you in hot water. Be careful that you're not sharing images of people, especially if you're an educator or work in healthcare.

**“Can those who read this figure out who or what I'm talking about?”** You can disguise it all you want, but people can still figure out who or what you're talking about if they know where you work. This is especially true in a small town. If you're complaining or sharing a funny story, make sure you have approval to share, or don't post.

**“Is this a conversation I need to have online?”** Not everything needs to be shared online. Have a group message with your close friends and share that way.



# Setting Up Your LinkedIn

This professional networking site has grown to over 500 million registered members and provides you the opportunity to establish a professional online identity, participate in conversations on relevant topics, and make connections with professionals in your industry or career path. Here are a few tips for setting up your LinkedIn.

## Getting Started:

Once you have completed your basic profile, it is time to work on the three most influential elements:

- Headshot
- Headline
- Summary

Throughout the process, keep in mind that LinkedIn is about building relationships and connections in a purposeful, organized way, not just adding people for the sake of maybe getting a job.

### Headshot

Your picture is the first thing other users will see on your profile so consider what message your headshot is portraying.

- Be attentive to:
  - Quality & proportion of photo - make sure it's not blurry or too small.
  - Eye Contact & Smiling
  - Cropping - don't crop half of your head.

Ask yourself if your photo is professional, good quality, and timely.

### Headline

Go beyond your "job title." This can be the hardest thing to write, but don't let the system default determine your introduction.

- Questions to consider for your headline:
  - Whose attention do I want to attract?
  - What is my next professional focus?
- Examples:
  - Merchandising Senior | Strong analytical skills balanced with creative insights.
  - Tireless, caring Registered Nurse who helps pediatric cancer patients and their families feel at ease throughout treatment and recovery.

### Summary

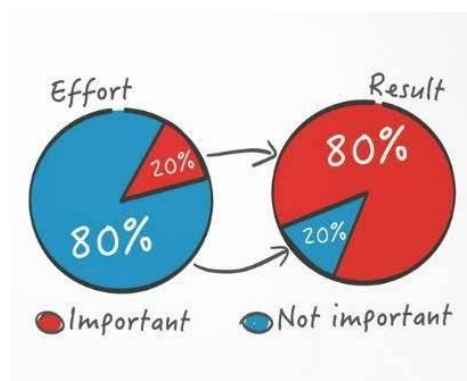
The summary is a first-person perspective that includes a discussion of your career goals. You should integrate information about the status of your professional development as well. A good way to begin is to answer questions such as: *who do you want to reach with your summary? What do you want them to know about you? How do you want them to feel after reading your summary?* Use keywords that are standard in your industry. The order of your content should follow similarly to how you would compose your resume.

# Time Management Techniques

One of the biggest adjustments for college students to make is in the area of time management. Between school, work, and social life, it can be difficult to figure out a way to make sure it's all done. It's possible to find a balance between the three, but it will require discipline in putting time management techniques into practice. Here are 8 Time Management Techniques for you to try.

## 1.) Pareto Analysis (A.K.A. The 80/20 Rule) *Great for problem solvers and analytical thinkers.*

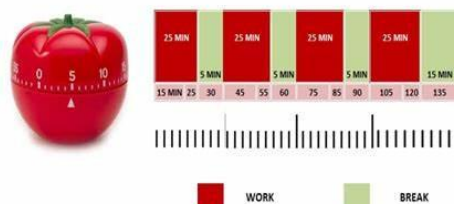
- List some of the problems you're facing. (Grades are slipping)
- Identify the root cause. (They're slipping because you spend too much time on social media)
- Assign a score to each problem. (Bigger problems get higher scores)
- Group problems together by cause. (Group all of the problems together that are caused by spending too much time on social media)
- Add up the score and then work on the group with the highest.



## 2.) POMODORO Technique. *Great for creative thinkers and those who feel burned out by work/school.* Most, if not all of us, have 25 minutes to get a task started and/or finished. The key is to remove distractions for 25 minutes. This technique can be used once, or for the complete 2 hour block.

- Choose a task you need to complete.
- Set a timer for 25 minutes.
- Focus on the chosen task only.
- When the timer goes off, put a checkmark on a piece of paper to keep track and then take a 5 minute break.
- Repeat steps 2-5 four times and then break for 20-30 minutes

### POMODORO CYCLE FOR 2 HR'S OF DEEP WORK



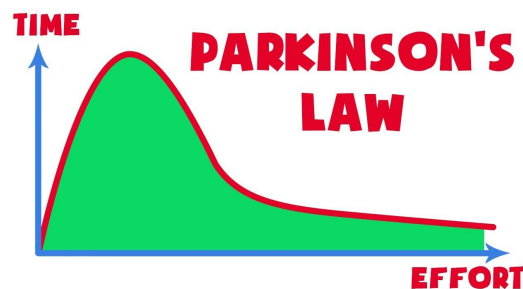
### 3.) Eisenhower Matrix. Great for those in leadership positions and critical thinkers.

- Organize your task into four separate quadrants, sorting them by important vs unimportant and urgent vs not urgent.
- Urgent tasks are those you feel need to get done immediately. Important tasks are those that contribute to your long term goals or values.
- Ideally you should only work on tasks in the top two quadrants - the other tasks you should delegate or delete.



### 4.) Parkinson's Law. Great for procrastinators and people who work well under pressure. This isn't a time management technique, but a law that can be applied as one of the most beneficial time management methods when you put in the work. This law is the more time you give to a task, the less effort required for that task through the day. Try the following:

- Try working without a computer charger.
- Get it done early. Shoot for noon instead of midnight.
- Set a deadline. Give yourself time to do the project and cut the time in half.
- Limit time for tasks. Only give yourself 20 minutes for social media in the AM.



5.) **Time-blocking Method.** *Great for working students or parents and analytical thinkers.* From the time you wake up, assign each time block in your day to a task. These tasks can be anything from eating breakfast to studying for a test.

- Divide a piece of paper into two columns. On the left, write down each hour of the day and create blocks of time such as half-hour or hour chunks.
- Estimate the time it's going to take to complete each of your tasks and fit them into your time blocks.
- Add buffer time between each time block to allow adjustments for the day.

	MON 17	TUE 18	WED 19
9 AM	Meeting with the marketing team 9 - 10am	Meeting with Elton 9 - 10am	
10 AM	Administrative work 10 - 11:45am	Critical bugs 10 - 11:30am	Business brunch 9:30 - 11am
11 AM			Meeting with Anna 11am - 12pm
12 PM	Business lunch with Mitchell 11:45am - 1:30pm	Lunch Break 11:30am - 12:30pm	Critical bugs 12 - 2pm
1 PM		Meeting with Lisa, 12:30pm	
2 PM	Writing the project proposal for Stefan 1:30 - 3:45pm	Interface icons 1 - 3:30pm	Inbox Management 2 - 3pm
3 PM			Critical bugs 3 - 4:30pm
4 PM	Inbox management 3:45 - 5:30pm	Inbox management, 3:30pm	
5 PM		Basic Features 4 - 5pm	Administrative work 4:30 - 5:30pm

6.) **Rapid Planning Method (RPM).** *Great for working students or parents and people who have long term goals.*

- Write down the tasks you need to accomplish this week.
- “Chunk” your tasks together by commonalities. Which items are personal? School-related? Career-focused?
- Create your own RPM blocks. 3 columns on a sheet of paper: the task, the result you want, and your purpose for completing it. Next, list the actions you can take to get there.
- Create the empowering role for yourself. Anything that will get you jazzed about completing your role.

## RAPID PLANNING METHOD



**Results-Oriented:**

What Do I Really Want?



**Purpose-Driven:**

Why Does It Matter To Me?



**Massive Action Plan:**

How Will I Achieve It?

@THEPROCESSHACKER

## 7.) Pickle Jar Theory. Great for visual people and concrete thinkers

- Imagine a pickle jar full of sand, pebbles, and rocks. The sand is at the bottom and the rocks sit at the top.
- The sand represents disrupting elements of your day, such as phone calls, texts, emails, social media, etc.
- The pebbles represent tasks that need to be completed, but can be done on another day by someone else.
- The rocks are the most important tasks that need to get done.
- Think about how your tasks for the day would fit into the above categories. Then make a task list starting with the rocks and ending with the sand (if time permits). Include an honest time estimate next to each task. Try not to plan more than six hours of an eight hour working day. This will leave buffer time for the pebbles and sand.



## 8.) Eat the Frog. Great for abstract thinkers and people with long term goals. Start your day by doing the hard tasks first and getting them out of the way.

- Get clear on a goal - what do you want to achieve most?
- Write it down.
- Set a deadline.
- Compile a list of things you need to do to achieve your goal.
- Organize this list in order of priority. The most important items are probably the most difficult. These are your “frogs.”
- Take action. Eat the nastiest “frog” first.
- Repeat this cycle everyday so that you’re always doing something that will push you toward your goal.

### HOW TO EAT THE FROG

A method coined by Brian Tracy to increase productivity by identifying your most important large task of the day and doing it first.

