Engineering Career Services
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
3270 Digital Computer Lab
1304 West Springfield Avenue
Urbana, Illinois

ecs.engineering.illinois.edu
IN SEARCH OF EXPLORERS

IN SEARCH OF REMARKABLE STUDENTS

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Dear Students,

Engineering Career Services (ECS) is committed to helping you with your career search success. Whether you are just beginning to explore different career interests or are looking for a full-time opportunity, the ECS team is here to assist. We offer workshops and individual advising as well as plan and coordinate corporate events to help you network with company representatives. We also manage the on-campus recruiting system, I-Link, where you’ll find access to companies for job shadows, internships and full time jobs.

We are pleased to present you with the 2015-16 Career Resource Guide. This guide was prepared with the help of the entire Career Services advising team and many of our corporate partners whose generous financial contributions enabled us to create and print this guide. While the guide covers a wide range of career related topics, we encourage you to meet with a career counselor as early as your first year to explore your interests and different career paths.

Use information in this career guide to get general career search guidance such as:

- Setting career goals
- Understanding the career search process
- Constructing résumés and cover letters
- Learning about I-Link, career fairs and interviews
- Evaluating offers of employment
- Securing internship and full time job opportunities
- Networking

Remember, employers recruit Illinois Engineering students because students consistently meet their high expectations for academic and professional preparation. Your academic classes will prepare you for the technical skills needed in the workplace. Having these skills is not enough, however, to be selected for interviews. To be hired, you need to actively pursue career-building opportunities, leverage your personal network, and interact with potential employers in multiple settings. Take advantage of the many opportunities offered by ECS to engage employers throughout your time at Illinois, beginning with your first semester on campus. We look forward to working with you to help you secure the career opportunity you desire.

Best wishes,

Amy Fruehling

Director, Engineering Career Services
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Welcome to Engineering Career Services

3270 Digital Computer Lab, MC-270
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Urbana, Illinois 61801
(217) 333-1960
engineering.illinois.edu/ecs

I-Link: engineering.illinois.edu/careers

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ECS Office Hours
Monday through Friday
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Walk-in Appointments
12 p.m. - 4 p.m.
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Exploring opportunities. Growing together.

Evonik. Power to create.
**ECS Services & Career Resources**

- **Career Advising**: Meet with an advisor to discuss your career search and obtain answers to your career-related questions

- **I-Link Career Search Management Tool**: Your one-stop-shop for all recruiting activities including job boards, interview scheduling, and advisor appointments scheduling

- **Job Offer Evaluation & Negotiation**: Learn to understand and analyze your entire offer and get tips for negotiating your offer

- **Mock Interviews**: Improve your interviewing skills for the behavioral-based interview by role-playing with an advisor

- **Networking Contacts & Resources**: Learn how to develop and utilize your professional network for your career search and identify career tools designed to help you navigate the search process

- **On-Campus Interviewing**: Thousands of interviews occur in 3300 DCL and are coordinated by ECS

- **Résumé & Cover Letter Reviews**: ECS advisors will provide feedback to improve your résumé, cover letter, or other application materials

- **Workshops & Presentations**: Learn about interviewing, networking, résumés, cover letters, and more
What Is I-Link?

I-Link is the career search management tool used for all Illinois students. Last year, 241 companies used I-Link to arrange 6,151 interviews (intern & full time) for engineering students. It’s the place to go for all corporate recruiting activities and events across the college and campus. It’s also where you’ll have access to career-related workshops, programs, career fairs, and career advisors. Best of all, I-Link is free! Simply claim your account by going to: ecs.engineering.illinois.edu/i-link to register, or engineering.Illinois.edu/ecs and use your NETID/password to login.

- Schedule advising appointments
- Search for and apply for jobs
- Schedule interviews
- View dates for company recruiting activities, workshops, information sessions, and other career related programs
- Explore companies attending the ECS Career Fair

I-Link User Agreement

Job Seekers Agree to:

- present my abilities, qualifications, interests, and credentials honestly and accurately.
- keep all interview appointments. I understand that missing an interview without notifying ECS, even in emergency situations, can subject me to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to disqualifying me from using I-Link and other services.
- notify employers of my acceptance or rejection of offers as soon as possible.
- honor an accepted offer and discontinue interviewing upon providing verbal or written acceptance. I understand that reneging is unprofessional and may disqualify me from using I-Link and other services provided by ECS.
- accept interviews only with employers that genuinely interest me.
- allow ECS to review or use any documents (e.g., résumés, cover letters) that I post to I-Link.
- allow ECS to disclose documents to employers.
- report all employment (co-op, internship, full-time) to ECS within 14 days of acceptance.

Please visit https://www.careercenter.illinois.edu/about/services/ilink for the complete participant agreement.
I-Link Basics

- **Homepage**—displays announcements, upcoming career fairs and special events
- **Schedule Advising Appointment**—look at menu on the right of homepage >> Shortcuts >> Request a Career Advising Appointment

Profile

- **Personal Information**—fill out completely
  - **Job Search Status**—use “Seeking Employment” to be included in searches by employers seeking candidates
  - **Job Location Preference, Job Function Preference, and Industry Preference**—fill out to customize positions that show up in job searches
- **Academic Information**
  - **Degree Level, Major/Concentrations, Graduation Date, and Work Authorization**—automatically populated, but please verify accuracy
  - **Work Authorization Countries**—list all countries in which you are legally authorized to work
- **Privacy**
  - **Include in Résumé Book**—choose “Yes” to be included—résumé is visible to all employers, allows employers to search for you and contact you about openings and other opportunities
  - **Receive Email Notifications**—choose “Yes” to receive emails from Engineering Career Services about upcoming events, open positions, and other career opportunities

Documents

- **Upload résumés, cover letter, unofficial transcripts, portfolio, or any other documents** that positions may require
- Identify one **default résumé** and cover letter that you can include in the **ECS Résumé Book**—this book is visible to all employers on I-Link, allowing them to search and identify candidates for their positions
- Come to ECS for a résumé and cover letter review before uploading them on I-Link

Virtual Mock Interviews and Video Uploads

- No time to come in for a face-to-face interview or need to practice for a video/Skype interview? Use this function to record a mock interview online and submit it to ECS for feedback.
- You can also upload videos where you practice a “Tell me about yourself” introduction that you would give to employers

Events

- **Career Fairs**—use this tab to register for on-campus or online career fairs organized by Illinois; this tab is also used for career development programs requiring student registration, such as the Consulting Forum and the Biomedical Engineering Networking Forum
- **Engage with Employers**—company information sessions, company site visits, case competitions, off-campus career fairs and other ways to connect and meet employers are listed here
- **Career Development Programs**—workshops, presentations, and panels organized by ECS and other career services offices to help you in your career development—many ECS events are often led by or include employers actively hiring Illinois students

Jobs (see sample jobs screen on page 10)

- Multiple job boards available; most often used ones: I-Link Jobs, National Jobs Network, Research Park Job Board and Going Global
- **I-Link Jobs**—positions posted by employers who are targeting Illinois students—this is Illinois’ own job board for companies and students
- **How to Search for Positions on I-Link Jobs**
  - **Basic search**—enter keywords in the search box at the top of the I-Link Jobs page
  - **Favorite**
    - Click on the Star to the left of positions that you would like to follow up with
    - These positions will now show up under My Favorites, making it easier for you to locate positions that you’re interested in
    - Note: these positions will disappear after the position deadline passes
  - **Advanced Search (see example on pg. 11)**
    - Click on Advanced Search at the top right of the I-Link Jobs page
    - **Show Me = All Jobs & Interviews** (recommended to have the broadest search results)
    - **Job Function and Industry**—select options that you are interested in (Tip: don’t select too many options at any one time)
    - **Position Type**—narrow your search down by focusing on internships/co-ops or full-time positions
      - **Career/Research Exploration and Support**—used by companies to list externships, job shadows, company visits, and case competitions
    - **More Filters**
      - Expand search criteria to include Majors/Concentrations, Degree Level(s), Job End Date/Résumé Deadline
• **Saved Searches**
  - To save a search you did and that you would like to come back to regularly, click on Saved Searches
  - Give your search a title
  - Select the **frequency** with which you would receive your search results via email (you can choose “Never”)
  - Select whether to receive new results only
  - You can always Edit or Delete these searches
  - To call up a saved search, simply click on the title of the saved search (Remember: If you search criteria includes a date range under Job End Date/Résumé Deadline that has past, your search will not display results)
  - You can save up to 15 searches

• **You do not qualify for this position**
  - Don’t be discouraged if you see this under a job posting

• Take a very close look at the job description, responsibilities and eligibility requirements
• If, after reading the position closely, you believe that you can perform the expected job:
  - Send an email to ecs@engineering.illinois.edu explaining why you believe that you would like to be considered for this position
  - Include your résumé and a cover letter addressed to the employer
• While ECS cannot make any guarantees, we will try to reach out to the employer on your behalf to see if they would consider you
• NOTE: Employers are typically not flexible with Work Authorization Requirements—if a position requires U.S. Citizenship or Permanent Residence, ECS is not able to do anything (see “Job Search for International Students” in this guide for further advice)
Click here to open Saved Searches window or to create a new Saved Search.

Use this field to create a new Saved Search.

Use these options to determine frequency of email modifications of Saved Searches.

From your Home page, click here to view and manage your on-campus interviews set up through I-Link.
**I-Link Users Guide**

**Interviews**

- **Requested Interviews**—If you applied to a position where the employer is conducting an on-campus interview, your application/request will show up here.
- Check this section regularly to find out if you have been invited to an interview.
- If you are invited to an interview, make sure you **schedule your interview as soon as possible** because time slots fill up.
- If you are invited to an interview as an **Alternate**, your access time to pick a time slot is typically 2-3 days after the Primary Selects pick their time slots, assuming that time slots are still available.
- **Scheduled Interview**—if you are scheduled for an interview, make sure you show up for your interview—take note of time and location since there are multiple locations on-campus where an employer can conduct interviews.

**Applying for interviews while studying abroad**—

- Update your default résumé on I-Link to indicate that you are studying abroad.
- Update your default cover letter on I-Link explaining that you are NOT on campus and are only available to interview by phone or video/Skype.
- If you are invited for an on-campus interview, proceed with scheduling your on-campus interview.
- Immediately contact the recruiter to remind the recruiter that you are out of the country on a study abroad program.
- Copy a staff member in Engineering Career Services, ecs@engineering.illinois.edu, on all correspondence with recruiters regarding on-campus interviews for which you are not on campus.

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To search G&W career opportunities you can visit us at: www.gwelec.com/careers.html
Your Four-Year Timeline for Career Success

**Freshmen – Examine and Explore**

Explore interests and abilities through academic courses, campus organizations, volunteer service, and opportunities for career exploration, such as job shadowing, company site tours, and experiential learning.

- Activate your I-Link Account to learn about and attend important events.
- Begin to build your network web of contacts.
- Get to know us! Familiarize yourself with the services and resources available at ECS.
- Make an appointment for a résumé review, assistance developing your elevator pitch, or mock interview.
- Make sure your social media presence is squeaky clean.
- Attend job fairs to learn about potential careers within your major and meet employers.
- Apply to jobs and internships.
- Participate in the 2016 Winter Break Job Shadow Program.
- Attend career fairs (ECS, EXPO, All Campus, Research Park, etc.)

**Sophomores – Research and Explore**

Build your skills, knowledge and abilities by securing an internship, conducting undergraduate research, or cooperative learning.

- Watch I-Link’s Events section for employer and alumni information sessions, ECS workshops, Lunch & Learns, and other career development events.
- Identify professional organizations and associations related to your major or engineering; add to your network web of contacts.
- Gain leadership experience by taking on more responsibilities in your extracurricular activities.
- Schedule an appointment with an ECS adviser to develop your career strategy.
- Explore at least three career options related to your major.
- Attend job fairs and apply for internship positions or cooperative education opportunities.
- Schedule a mock interview with an ECS adviser.
- Participate in the 2016 Winter Break Job Shadow Program.
- Attend career fairs (ECS, EXPO, All Campus, Research Park, etc.)

**Juniors – Map Your Journey**

Complete at least five informational interviews for careers in your areas of interest and decide on an internship for summer.

- Participate in seminars, workshops, or other events offered by ECS to learn about job search strategies such as networking and improving interviewing skills.
- Research career opportunities related to your major and narrow your areas of interest.
- Attend employer and alumni information sessions to continue to build your network and learn about potential job opportunities.
- Actively participate in professional organizations and associations related to your major or engineering, and take on more responsibilities to build your leadership and management portfolio.
- Talk with recent graduates from your major about the job market, potential employment opportunities, and seek their advice regarding possible employers.
- Meet with an ECS adviser to update your résumé.
- Explore at least three career options related to your major.
- Attend job fairs, apply for internships or cooperative learning positions, and secure interviews.
- Schedule a mock interview with an ECS adviser.
- Obtain an internship or cooperative learning opportunity.
- Attend career fairs (ECS, EXPO, All Campus, Research Park, etc.)

**Seniors – Job Search**

Research employers and jobs within your specific areas of interest; interview with polished professionalism, know the value of your skills and knowledge, and know your worth.

- Watch closely the ECS calendar of events and actively participate in On-Campus Recruiting.
- Attend workshops to build interviewing and negotiation skills.
- Create a list of prospective employers, including names and contact information from companies for which you are interested in working.
- Identify your career-related strengths and skills; identify those which make you a solid match for the positions to which you apply.
- Meet with an ECS career adviser to have your updated résumé reviewed and cover letters critiqued.
- Search I-Link and the Web for job listings and apply.
- Research salary information for previous graduates from your major.
- Interview with employers, evaluate job offers, schedule an appointment with an ECS adviser for pointers on effective negotiation, and accept one!
- Report offers and acceptances by going to First Destination Link.
- Attend career fairs (ECS, EXPO, All Campus, Research Park, etc.)

Modified by Lynnell Lacy, ECS Assistant Director, from an article in the 2014 ECS Guide. Original source material was adapted with permission from Career Services at Virginia Tech.
Everyone knows what a brand is. Nike, Disney, McDonalds. But you might be thinking, what does this have to do with me? If you are a college student, implementing a personal branding strategy can give you a tremendous edge in the competitive job marketplace.

When you interact with people, both online and offline, they’ll build up an image of who you are over time. Why leave your professional reputation to chance? You want to be in control of all of those impressions. We’ll break down the process for building your brand into a few easy steps.

**Be Authentic**

Self-reflection is the first step in identifying a personal brand that conveys your interests and personality. Think about what you want to do with your future. Where do you see yourself down the road? Think about your aspirations. How can you attain these? It is important that your brand is an accurate portrayal of who you are from a personality and professional standpoint.

Your brand should not be an idealistic image that you create but instead should be a representation of what employers can expect when you are hired. And as your skill sets, interests, experiences, and goals change, your brand will adapt to your new image. The best personal brand will be relevant and adaptable to current trends in your industry throughout your career.

**Questions to Consider:**
- What do I enjoy doing? What are my goals?
- How do people benefit by working with me?
- What words do others use to describe me?

**What Makes You Unique?**

Students need to distinguish themselves from thousands of other students also looking for a job. One of the first things to do when building your brand is to understand what makes you unique; why are you different from the other students in your major or from other people in general? Think about your internships, travel abroad experiences, the languages you speak and any special projects you’ve done. You can think about volunteer work or special skills you have and any awards you may have received as well. What makes you unique? When you figure out how you are unique and use it to your advantage, you will develop a useful personal brand that will help make you known in the world.

**Create Your Online Professional Image**

When building a personal brand, not all publicity is good publicity. Students should spend time considering how others view them, especially online. Students can establish a professional online presence by being especially diligent about what they share on social media websites, including Facebook and Twitter. Experts recommend that serious applicants maintain relevant and updated social media profiles, particularly on LinkedIn.

Many employers review a candidate’s social media profile during the screening process to learn about candidate’s education and work history, skills, endorsements, recommendations, professional affiliations and more. Your LinkedIn profile, personal blog or other social media activities can be powerful personal branding tools which convey the same information as a résumé, but can also showcase a much bigger picture of who you are as a professional. For instance, if you are a bioengineering major with a strong passion for the healthcare industry, you can blog about current trends/technologies, tweet about healthcare reform, and follow healthcare influencers and biomedical companies on LinkedIn.

The more you share, the more your passion becomes known—and the more you’ll be associated with your passion. This all helps when it comes time to finding a job that aligns with your passion because you can show recruiters how you’ve been advocating for your industry.

**Dress for Success**

Social Media doesn’t replace in-person networking—it just makes it easier to find the right people with whom to network. It is extremely important to present yourself well in person, you do not want your personal brand online communicating a different message than you do in-person. How do people perceive you? Try to look at the way you act, speak and dress through the eyes of those around you. Who are you hanging out with on the weekends? Did you dress like you wanted to go to class this morning? Part of building your personal brand lies in the way others will accept that brand.

Your goal is to create a specific image in an employer’s mind about your suitability for the position, the company, and the industry. In order to do this, you must create a targeted message for your specific audience based on the expectations of your industry. Each professional industry has its rules. To better understand your industry, search online for leaders in your career field. What are they wearing? How do they present themselves online and in social media? Aspire to be similar to others in your field.

Personal branding helps you make the best impression. When you use personal branding to formulate your résumé, portfolio, LinkedIn profile, blog and much more, you are putting your best foot forward. It’s not too early to think about personal branding. In fact, the sooner you start your personal branding strategy, the more robust it will be once you graduate and look for a job.

Written by Kristina Wright, ECS Assistant Director
Business, engineering, and computer & information sciences—these are the top three college majors and degrees employers hiring managers have reported are being given priority during this recruiting year. As an engineering student, you can take comfort in knowing that you’ve selected a degree that’s in demand, but education isn’t enough to seal the deal on that internship or full-time position—you must also have employment skills.

The National Association for Colleges and Employers (NACE), a non-profit organization connecting academic career offices and the employers who hire their students, conducted an employer survey in the fall of 2014 to find out which skills were of highest priority when recruiting 2015 graduates for full-time positions and undergraduates for internships; those skills are listed below in order of importance as stated by employers:

1. Ability to work in a team structure
2. Ability to make decisions and solve problems
3. Ability to communicate verbally with people inside and outside of the company/organization
4. Ability to prioritize, plan, and organize workload
5. Ability to obtain and process information
6. Ability to analyze quantitative data
7. Technical knowledge as it specifically relates to the job
8. Proficiency with computer software programs
9. Ability to create/edit written reports
10. Ability to sell and influence others

As you create or update your résumé, your recruitment success will greatly depend on your ability to briefly communicate your skills, knowledge, and abilities as they directly relate to each job to which you apply. Experience is key, so it is critically important that you are able to tell a story about the ways in which you have used these skills, whether on the job, while involved in volunteer work, or on a class project. Using your I-Link account, you’ll want to be sure to make an appointment with Engineering Career Services to have your résumé reviewed as soon as possible prior to the career fairs season.

Written by Lynnell Lacy, ECS Assistant Director
# Résumé Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Length:</strong></th>
<th>1 page, unless you have significant related work experience or are applying for academic positions for which you are listing publications, presentations, and other information.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Margins:</strong></td>
<td>1” recommended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Font:</strong></td>
<td>Select a font that is easy to read. Times New Roman and Arial are most common.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Font Size:</strong></td>
<td>Font sizes should be no smaller than 10 and no larger than 12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dates:</strong></td>
<td>All dates should be in reverse chronological order within any section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sections:</strong></td>
<td>OBJECTIVE should be the first subject; EDUCATION should follow since it is your most recent accomplishment. EXPERIENCE should be the next subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other:</strong></td>
<td>Proofread, Proofread, Proofread. Laser print on quality résumé paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use spell check and review any words in ALL CAPS, as most spell-check programs do not check these words for correct spelling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoid using abbreviations, except for standard abbreviations, such as St. (Street), IL (two-letter abbreviation for states), Jun (3-letter abbreviation for months), etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong></td>
<td>Objectives should target a specific industry or position, be concise, and focus on the employer’s perspective. Recommended for undergraduates.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Good examples:**
- Seeking full-time software programming position with leading computer software company
- Seeking 2016 summer internship in the research and development department of a major electronics manufacturing firm

**Poor example:**
- Seeking position that will utilize my computer, teamwork, and analytical skills

**Personal Profile:**
- Use a Personal Profile that is more descriptive as an alternative to an Objective. Recommended for graduate students or alumni.

**Good example:**
- Four years of professional experience in computer science
- Three years of troubleshooting, executed in various programs including C/C++, SQL, JSP, and JavaScript
- Excellent presentation skills, honed from two years of teaching undergraduate students
Résumé Action Verbs

The accomplishment statements on your résumé should always begin with an action verb. Utilize this list of action verbs when devising the content of your résumé. Most of these accomplishment statements are in bulleted format and should emulate the following formula:

Action verb + accomplishment + results

Example: Analyzed cash flow across three departments and identified $500,000 in savings

**Technical Skills**
- Applied
- Assembled
- Built
- Calculated
- Conserved
- Constructed
- Designed
- Determined
- Developed
- Installed
- Maintained
- Operated
- Programmed
- Resolved
- Specialized
- Upgraded

**Organizational Skills**
- Approved
- Arranged
- Catalogued
- Categorized
- Charted
- Classified
- Coded
- Collected
- Compiled
- Corresponded
- Distributed
-Filed
- Generated
- Implemented
- Inspected
- Maintained
- Monitored
- Operated
- Prepared
- Processed
- Provided
- Recorded
- Reviewed
- Scheduled
- Sorted
- Submitted
- Standardized
- Systematized
- Updated
- Validated
- Verified

**Leadership Skills**
- Administered
- Assigned
- Attained
- Chaired
- Consolidated
- Contracted
- Coordinated
- Delegated
- Developed
- Directed

**Research Skills**
- Analyzed
- Clarified
- Collected
- Compared
- Conducted
- Determined
- Evaluated
- Examined
- Extracted
- Formulated
- Gathered
- Identified
- Interpreted
- Interviewed
- Invented
- Investigated
- Located
- Measured
- Organized
- Researched
- Reviewed
- Solved
- Summarized
- Surveyed
- Systematized
- Tested

**Communication Skills**
- Addressed
- Advertised
- Arranged
- Collaborated
- Communicated
- Composed
- Condensed
- Contacted
- Convinced
- Corresponded
- Defined
- Directed
- Drafted
- Elicited
- Edited
- Explained

**Financial Skills**
- Appraised
- Audited
- Balanced
- Calculated
- Condensed
- Contacted
- Convincing
- Corresponded
- Defined
- Directed
- Drafted
- Elicited
- Explained
- Formulated
- Influenced
- Interpreted
- Interviewed
- Judged
- Lectured
- Marketed
- Mediated
- Moderated
- Negotiated
- Observed
- Participated
- Persuaded
- Presented
- Promoted
- Publicized
- Reconciled
- Recruited
- Refered
- Reported
- Responded
- Spoke
- Suggested
- Synthesized
- Translated
- Wrote
Résumé Template

NAME

Street Address • City, State 12345 • (999) 999-9999 • illinois@email.edu • LinkedIn URL (optional)

EDUCATION

University of Illinois
Urbana-Champaign, IL
Bachelor of Science in ____, (Anticipated) Graduation Date
Cumulative GPR: __/__4.00
Minor in ___
List Certificates or Specializations

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Company or Organization Name
City, State
Position Title
Month Year – Present
• Action Verb Statement of most relevant or important duties, quantify when possible
• Use additional bullets as needed to best describe your experience

Company or Organization Name
City, State
Position Title
Month Year – Month Year
• Action Verb Statement of most relevant or important duties, quantify when possible
• Use additional bullets as needed to best describe your experience

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Company or Organization Name
City, State
Position Title
Month Year – Month Year
• Action Verb Statement of most relevant or important duties, quantify when possible
• Use additional bullets as needed to best describe your experience

SKILLS

Computer Skills: list computer skills
Language Skills: list fluency of languages (optional)
Technical Skills: list other technical skills (optional)

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS & ACTIVITIES

Organization Name, Position Title
Month Year – Month Year
• Use bullets as needed to best describe your participation and accomplishments

Organization Name, Position Title
Month Year – Month Year
• Use bullets as needed to best describe your participation and accomplishments

LEADERSHIP AND HONORS

Honor or Award
Semester Year
• Use bullets as needed to best describe your participation and accomplishments
**Stephen A. Smith**  
205 E. Illinois St., Champaign, IL 61820 • 312-555-9375 • stephensmith@illinois.edu

**EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Illinois</th>
<th>Urbana-Champaign, IL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Bachelor of Science, Computer Science</em></td>
<td>May 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Minor, Business</em></td>
<td><strong>GPA:</strong> 3.15/4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buffalo Grove High School</th>
<th>Buffalo Grove, IL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>College Prep Program</em></td>
<td>May 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Class Rank:</em> 8/297</td>
<td><strong>GPA:</strong> 4.88/5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXPERIENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Web Monkeys</th>
<th>Champaign, IL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Team Member</em></td>
<td>August 2015 – Current</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attend meetings to improve HTML, CSS, and JavaScript skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assist in creating a prototype code for a social commerce website project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contribute to student-run projects involving coding elements, innovation, and robotics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Midwest Veterinary Dermatology Center</th>
<th>Buffalo Grove, IL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Client Service Representative</em></td>
<td>June 2013-July 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provided quality customer service while communicating with clients</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maintained confidentiality while filing electronic and paper medical charts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lorenn's Hallmark</th>
<th>Buffalo Grove, IL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Sales Associate</em></td>
<td>August 2012-January 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aided in training 4 new associates in register operation and store procedures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Illinois Marching Illini</th>
<th>August 2015-Present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Trombone Squad Leader</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lead squad of 4 marching trombones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aided the director and section leaders in attaining perfection in marching and music technique</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illinois Robotics In Space (IRIS)</th>
<th>August 2015-Present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Autonomous group member</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implemented an A* path-finding algorithm to dynamically navigate a lunar terrain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interpreted data from Kinect cameras to provide image information to on-board computer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborated with 10 team members of varying skillset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buffalo Grove High School Student Outreach Program</th>
<th>August 2011-June 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Executive Board Officer</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relay For Life</th>
<th>June 2011-June 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Team Captain</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HONORS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presidential Scholar Nominee</th>
<th>May 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• One of 200 students in Illinois nominated for perfect score on SAT Critical Reading and Math</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Go-Green Team</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Organized 5 annual recycling events, 3 clothing drives, and 2 seasonal volunteering events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SIZHAO (HENRY) YANG
205 Oregon Street, Champaign, Illinois 61820 • 217-555-7488 • Email: henryyang@uiuc.edu • www.linkedin.com/in/henryyang

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

• Systematic and dynamic problem-solver with the ability to assess various constituent group needs
• Demonstrated ability to execute advanced communication skills in both technical and business domains
• Adept in managing a large number of colleagues and projects in high-profile organizations
• Experienced in object-oriented programming; developing, testing and debugging code

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
Bachelor of Science, Computer Engineering, May 2016
Minor: Business

Related Coursework:
- Computer Architecture I, II
- Programming Languages & Compilers
- Communication Networks
- Database Systems
- Financial Accounting
- Managerial Statistics

WORK EXPERIENCE

eBay Inc.
Intern, Data Center Mission Critical Engineering, Summer 2014
San Jose, CA

- Developed intuitive dashboard to accurately monitor power supply distribution to Data Center to optimize power consumption and reduce carbon footprint
- Spearheaded cross-functional team for alarm testing team of engineers and vendors to build efficient security and notification system
- Increased efficiency 50% by developing, instituting and supporting new test procedures and practices

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

DEF Company Project
Fall 2015
- Part of 5 member team on next-generation rollout of robot control software for DEF Company, a technology research company specializing in robotics
- Analyzed functional requirements, developed code and tested software applications for successful and cost-effective product roll-out

P2P CVS Project
Spring 2014
- Effectively worked with a team of 4 to design and create an open source P2P control and collaboration system to improve current product functionality

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Operating Systems: Unix, Linux, MS Windows
- Languages: Java, C, C++, Verilog, HTML, SQL PL/SQL, MIPS
- Applications: Dreamweaver MX, Macromedia, MS Office, Corel Draw 11, MATLAB

LEADERSHIP and HONORS

2nd Place, Virtual Stock Competition, Society for Business & Management in Engineering, Spring 2015
Association for Computer Machinery (ACM), SIG Soft, Fall 2014 – Present
Asian-Pacific Students Association, Fall 2014-present
Vice President, Fall 2015-present
- Implemented online advising resource with intuitive navigation to increase website utilization by students
**EDUCATION**

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS**

Candidate for Master of Science in XXXXX, Month 2016

GPA: X.X/4.0

**PREVIOUS GRADUATE INSTITUTION**

City, STATE (or Country if non-US)

Name Academic Honors, if any

**UNDERGRADUATE INSTITUTION**

City, STATE (or Country if non-US)

Name Academic Honors, if any

**EXPERIENCE**

**MOST RECENT EMPLOYER NAME**

City, STATE (or Country if non-US)

Title, Department

Dates (month spelled out and year)

• accomplishments in following formula:
  • action verb + accomplishment + results (example below)
  • Developed a widely used program capable of efficiently updating company inventory records within Excel
  • (maximum of 5 bullet points)

**PRIOR EMPLOYER**

City, STATE (or Country if non-US)

Title, Department

Dates (month spelled out and year)

• accomplishments in following formula:
  • action verb + accomplishment + results (example below)
  • Analyzed labor productivity by comparing company standards and handing out incentives to high performing laborers, which resulted in increased productivity and faster completion of assigned tasks
  • (maximum of 5 bullet points)

**SKILLS**

Language: Native speaker of xxxxx, fluent in xxxxx, proficient in xxxxxxx (You may delete if you have nothing to include)

Technical: C, C++, LabVIEW, MATLAB, Pro/E, Solidworks, ANSYS, Java, Linux (You may delete if you have none to include)

**ACTIVITIES/LEADERSHIP**

involvement + organization name + sponsoring institution + dates (example below)

President, Graduate Student Association, University of Illinois, June 20XX–Present

**ADDITIONAL**

include professional licenses, certifications, memberships – do NOT include hobbies, interests, religious or political affiliations. You may delete this section if you have no information to include
Cover Letter Guidelines

Cover letters are typically used when you cannot present your experience and qualifications in person, and they are effective tools when you apply to positions by mail or email. They are not generally required to apply for on-campus interviews through ECS.

Is There a Cover Letter Formula?

There are many styles of cover letters, ranging from the standard conservative business letter to a riskier grab-the-attention creative approach. The best advice is to know your audience and adjust your style to match theirs.

Opening Paragraph
- Capture attention—build a match and express interest in the company
- State your purpose
- Name the position or department of interest
- Mention source of lead—name of referring person, where you saw job posting, etc.
- State your top credentials

Body Paragraphs
- Highlight skills and accomplishments relative to those listed in the actual job posting. Assist the reader to identify your skills and qualifications
- Identify how skills were obtained
- Demonstrate knowledge of company/industry/functional area
- Use industry keywords to show knowledge
- Use bullets for emphasis
- Use examples

Closing Paragraph
- Thank the reader for his/her consideration and time
- Refer to your enclosed résumé
- Make it easy for the employer to reply

Helpful Hints
- Always include a cover letter when sending your résumé by mail or email
- Use the same font and high-quality paper for your cover letter as for your résumé
- Make the letter one page
- Include the recipient’s inside address with your cover letter
- Use a large envelope to avoid folding the résumé
- Type the recipient and return address on the envelope
- Be brief, concise, and specific
- Keep paragraphs short
- Vary sentence structure and length
- Proofread your letter—have someone else proofread it, too
- Use a natural, conversational tone
- Highlight significant accomplishments relative to the position to which you are applying
- Target each cover letter to the position you seek
- Market yourself
- Address the letter to a specific person by name and job title

Tips for Applying by Email
Include only ONE attachment containing both your cover letter and résumé. Use the same page header for your cover letter as your résumé. For the text of your email, keep it short and to the point to lead the reader to open your attachment.
February 25, 2016

Mr. Eric Jones
ABC Engineering Company
1010 W. Jefferson St.
Bloomington, IL 61710

Dear Mr. Jones:

I am writing to express my sincere interest in the ______ position your company has posted in the February 20th issue of Engineering Weekly. I am a senior at the University of Illinois studying _______ engineering and will graduate in May 2016. I am especially interested in starting my career with your company because ____________.

In addition, I am uniquely qualified for the ____________ position and offer the following skills and experience:

• Two years computer-aided design and drafting experience
• Contract negotiation experience through previous internship with City of Chicago
• Project planning and construction management experience gained through working on $1.2 million highway expansion project
• Proven teamwork and communication skills earned through classroom projects and summer work experience programs

Enclosed is my résumé that further highlights my experience and skills. Once you have had the opportunity to review it, I would like to meet with you to discuss my qualifications and how I can add value to your company. I can be reached at (217) 390-7000.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Emma Carter
CHANG SONG
25 N. Prospect  •  Champaign, IL  61821  •  217-555-1000  •  changsong@illinois.edu

September 15, 2015

Plant Superintendent
General Motors Corporation
11 Grease Street
Detroit, Michigan 42051

Subject: Production Supervisor Position

I am currently a senior in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and will graduate in December 2015. After reading your St. Louis Post Dispatch advertisement for the Production Supervisor position, I am pleased to submit my qualifications in the attached resume. I am especially interested in joining your company because of my previous experience in the automotive industry and your company’s reputation as the industry’s top manufacturer.

My experience as an Engineering Intern with Toyota Motor Company enabled me to develop the effective supervisory and motivational skills you seek in a successful candidate for this position. I established a functional rapport with organized on-site labor, from superintendents to trade apprentices. This job demanded accurate problem solving and crystal clear instructive communication.

In addition, my experience at Chrysler Corporation in Seoul not only provided me with insight into large-scale production procedures and problems, but also allowed me an overview of production from the corporate management point of view. As a result, I am aware of the capabilities and the limitations of a large scale automotive production operation.

The experience I’ve outlined above could prove most beneficial in the effective management and smooth operation of your work force. I look forward to the opportunity to speak with you further about my experience and interest in the Production Supervisor position and to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Chang Song

Chang Song
Recruiting season is approaching and you’re taking stock of your work experience. You may be thinking you don’t have much to offer an employer, but you may be pleasantly surprised! Students often overlook transferable skills—that set of skills that can be used from one job to the next, and the next, and so on. Take a moment and consider the responsibilities you have held in previous jobs, volunteer service, or extracurricular activities in which you’ve been involved. Were you involved in sports or the arts in high school? Were you an editor for your school’s yearbook? Have you created a website or authored a blog for a student organization in which you were a member? Did you deliver newspapers? Babysit? Serve as a lifeguard or camp counselor one summer? Maybe you sold hot dogs at a community fundraiser? Activities such as these armed you with transferable skills.

Transferable skills complement the technical skills you will learn as you work through your academic journey. Employers sometimes remark that they can teach engineering students the technical skills needed for job success, but they are all seeking candidates with certain necessary transferable skills. Transferable skills typically apply to one's work with people, things, and information.

Consult an ECS Career Adviser for assistance in identifying and communicating the transferable skills in your toolkit.

**Examples of Transferable Skills**

**People**
- Communicating
- Advising
- Coaching
- Teaching
- Training
- Entertaining
- Motivating
- Mediating
- Delegating
- Organizing
- Soliciting
- Selling

**Things**
- Assembling Parts
- Designing
- Building
- Testing
- Drafting
- Keyboarding
- Maintaining
- Equipment
- Sketching
- Constructing
- Troubleshooting
- Surveying
- Working with CAD

**Information**
- Accounting
- Analyzing
- Blogging
- Budgeting
- Calculating
- Computing
- Database Work
- Editing
- Filing
- Gathering Data
- Researching
- Sorting
- Writing
- Working with Spreadsheets

*Written by Lynnell Lacy, ECS Assistant Director*
Elevator Pitch Essentials

You’ve just bumped into a successful alumni while attending an on-campus open house. As you approach him, you open your mouth, and then pause. Where on earth do you start? Then, as you try to organize your thoughts, his group arrives, and he’s on his way. If you’d been better prepared, you would have ensured that he’d have stayed long enough to meet you.

It’s been said that 80% of success in life is just showing up. But showing up simply isn’t enough when you’re trying to land a job in a fiercely competitive market. Rather, you need to go the extra mile in conveying your desire for the position. You must be in the business of selling your skills and expertise to people connected to your target job. An elevator pitch is just one of the many methods you’ll use to communicate your personal brand to a potential employer or recruiter.

LENGTH
You typically have about 30 seconds to explain your value. The idea is to whet the person’s appetite so they want to continue talking with you.

CONTENT
The elevator pitch is all about demonstrating what you bring to the table. In short, you want to explain: 1) who you are, 2) what you are passionate about, and 3) how your strengths will be of value to a potential employer. Don’t try to say too much, stick to the three most important traits.

WHO ARE YOU?
Write down your name, major and related work/project/internship experience.

FOCUS ON YOUR MOTIVATIONS: WHAT ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT?
Why are you interested in this type of work? Consider the different projects and assignments you’ve completed – what results have you produced? What key skills or experiences make you good at what you like to do?

HOW DO YOUR KEY STRENGTHS BRING VALUE TO A POTENTIAL EMPLOYER?
Now that you’ve written down what you’re great at doing, it’s time to elaborate on the results you’ve produced. What accomplishments are you proud of? Did you increase revenue, cut costs, or make things run more efficiently? Try to think in terms of faster, better or cheaper.

DELIVERY
Write out your pitch to eliminate unnecessary words and any sense of awkwardness in presentation. Memorize it by heart, but make it sound conversational and effortless, rather than mechanical. Smile and deliver your speech with warmth, confidence and enthusiasm. The more you practice, the more natural it will feel.

FINE TUNING
Once you’ve got the basics down, consider how you would personalize your pitch for unique occasions. You might want to say things slightly differently to an interviewer than to a former professor.

It’s also important to remember that the people listening to your speech will want to know “what’s in this for me?” So be sure to focus your message on their needs. For example, this introduction: “I am a software developer with 2 years of experience working for consumer products companies.” would be more powerful if you said, “I am a software developer who has had experience working for consumer products companies.”

When to Use Your Elevator Pitch
- With employer reps at career fair or networking events
- Interacting with alumni (on LinkedIn or in-person)
- With presenters at campus functions
- When talking with faculty
- When interacting with other contacts (friends, social clubs, teams, etc.)
- At an interview

WEAK EXAMPLE
Hi, my name is Ann Kemper. I’m a junior Mechanical Engineering major. I have had two engineering internships. What jobs are you hiring for?

BETTER EXAMPLES
Nice to meet you, I’m Anderson Young. I’m currently a senior and am studying Computer Science. I hope to become a computer programmer when I graduate. I’ve had an internship where I worked on improving several program applications with a project team and I enjoyed developing computer applications for simple business solutions. The position you have listed in I-Link seems like it would be a perfect fit for someone with my skills. I’d like to hear more about the type of project teams in your organization.

Hi, my name is Emily Woo, and I am a senior Agricultural and Biological Engineering major. I’m looking for a position that will allow me to use my research and analysis skills. Over the past few years, I’ve worked with a local watershed council on conservation strategies to support water quality and habitats. Eventually, I’d like to develop management strategies for water conservation. I read that your organization is involved in water quality projects. Can you tell me how someone with my experience may fit into your organization?

Written by Kristina Wright, ECS Assistant Director
You know there are Career Fairs that happen on campus, but do you really need to go? The answer is a simple YES. Attending the career fair gives you an opportunity to network with recruiters from multiple companies and allows you to become more than just a name on a page. Whether you are a freshman attending your first career fair, or a senior who has been to many, here are some tips for success.

Do Your Homework
Research the companies attending the career fair via I-Link or EXPO website. Identify the companies you are most interested in versus trying to “wing it.” Consider selecting your top 10 employers through I-Link who are attending the fair. This will notify them of your interest prior to the event.

Be Prepared
Have your résumé critiqued by an ECS advisor prior to the career fair. Print multiple copies and be sure to use résumé paper. Download each career fair’s app and have the information at your fingertips! Consider coming in to ECS for a mock interview. Some companies offer day-after interviews.

Display a Professional Appearance
Dress professionally (business suit). You only get one chance to make a first impression. If it is not possible to do so, business casual is acceptable. Be sure to look your best: clean and neatly pressed clothes, well-groomed hair and nails, remove piercings, etc. Also be sure to smell your best: fresh breath (but no gum), avoid smoking before entering the fair, and not too much perfume/cologne.

Attitude and Presentation
Be enthusiastic, cheerful, and confident when you introduce yourself. Make eye contact. Smile. Use your elevator pitch and provide a firm handshake. Be prepared to begin the conversation with questions. Don’t start with the top of your employer target list. Practice your elevator pitch with two or three companies who may not be in your top 10 first.

Determine Next Steps in the Hiring Process
Thank the recruiter for his or her time and ask for a business card or contact info. Ask if they will be hosting an information session, conducting on-campus interviews, and the procedures for applying, etc. This is important even if you are uninterested or you feel they are uninterested. You never know when your or their situation may change.

Follow Up in a Timely and Appropriate Manner
It is important to send a thank-you note after meeting a recruiter, even if it is just a career fair. Remember, they are potentially going to meet hundreds of students. Every chance you get to remind them of you will work to your advantage. Start building your network of contacts and consider reaching out to your top employers via LinkedIn reminding them where you recently connected.

Written by Lauren Stites, ECS Senior Assistant Director.
How to Prepare for a Behavioral Interview

One of the first, and most important, steps in securing your dream career is an interview. This is often the first time a company has an opportunity to see candidates for more than what is on a résumé.

There are numerous types of interviews, but preparation is key to all of them. Currently, one of the most popular interview styles is the behavioral interview.

The behavioral interview is designed to predict your future behavior on the job, based on your past behaviors. Interviewers will ask questions about how you acted or reacted in past job or academic-related situations. The theory behind behavioral interviews is that future behaviors can be predicted by past actions.

As an applicant, the behavioral interview provides the opportunity for you to elaborate on experiences, qualifications and skills. It also provides a fair and robust process for evaluating all applicants against the same criteria. Interviewers are looking for responses that include specific evidence about what you did or your role in past experiences.

Prepare in Advance

Thorough preparation for a behavioral interview is critical to your success. Make a list of all the experience, skills and background you have to offer. Jot down your strengths, development areas, as well as special talents or interests. Include any applicable information, such as volunteer activities, clubs, and athletic organizations. Think about your experiences and achievements (academic and non-academic) breaking them down into the qualities you demonstrated. Consider how you managed through difficult situations and challenges—what did you learn about yourself, what would you do differently in the future?

Next, research the organization. Find out what the company does: its history, business structure, major technological advances, customers, culture and reputation. Ideally, you are already familiar with the company from campus recruiting events, or from friends or family. Utilize your contacts to learn as much as possible about the company before your interview.

Knowing what is involved in the position you are applying for will help you be more comfortable in the interview. Be sure you understand the qualifications needed for the role. Make note of any questions, and save these for the interview. Asking questions is advisable, and shows your desire to clearly understand the position.

Be a STARR Player

Behavioral interviews are based around the STARR model. Interviewers will ask questions that will help to gather information about a particular situation, based on the five elements of STARR.

1. **Situation:** Set up and describe the situation
2. **Task:** What was the goal or purpose of the assignment?
3. **Action:** What was your role and your contribution?
4. **Relationships:** Who was involved?
5. **Result:** What was the outcome? How did you make an impact?

Using the STARR model, and the information gathered during your preparation, practice answering typical interview questions. Sample questions are below.

- Please give me an instance of a time when you accomplished something that was a goal for you.
- Please provide an example of when you led or worked in a team, specifically share information about team conflict and how that was managed.
- Please tell me about a time when you were under great pressure. How did you cope? What was the outcome?

As you finalize your preparation, you may want to develop three or four examples which could be used in response to typical behavioral interview questions. Plan and rehearse your answers. Memorize your training, skills and experience. Now, you are ready!

Ready, Set, Interview!

During the interview, the interviewer will set the tone and pace of the interview. You should think carefully about the interview questions and gather your thoughts before you answer. Frame each answer using the STARR model. Ensure that your answer is relevant to the question and provides adequate evidence. Be enthusiastic about your achievements, and remember to focus on what YOU have done, not other people. Ask for clarification if you do not understand a question. Do not be afraid to ask for time to think. Show confidence, make eye contact and be comfortable. Most importantly—be yourself.

You will have time to ask questions at the end of the interview. Leave the interview having covered all areas you are unsure about—training, job locations, when you should expect to hear the outcome of the interview. Be sure to thank the interviewer or panel for their time.

After the interview, it’s a good idea to review the interview in your mind. Consider what you feel went well and what didn’t. What would you say or do differently the next time? Applying for jobs and being interviewed are skills that improve with practice, so there is an opportunity to learn from each interview experience.

Keep a positive outlook, continue to network, and an exciting opportunity will come your way!

Written by Shell Oil Company

http://engineering.illinois.edu/ecs 29
Many students tend to prepare for behavioral-based interview questions by doing research on potential questions or coming up with answers to specific questions. These strategies are not wrong, but they do lack in telling you how to answer behavioral based questions. Think of preparing as how you should answer questions, rather than what questions you are going to be asked.

After finding questions, students may choose to write out and memorize answers. As a disclaimer, there isn’t too much harm that can come from “memorizing” an interview answer, however the caution would be to not memorize answers to the point where your answers are inflexible and you cannot quickly adapt your answers to questions that you do not have a memorized answer for. Instead of memorizing, it is much easier to be confident in knowing the main idea that you want to get across with each experience. This is easier because if, for instance, you forget a sentence or two, you can more easily adapt your answer to focus on the main takeaways of the experience and not be focused on robotically saying scripted answers. Here are some ways ECS recommends preparing for behavioral-based interviews.

1) Learn the STAR(R) method. The purpose of STAR(R) is to learn how to “tell a/your story” that is detailed, engaging and that successfully highlights your skills and abilities.
   - Situation, Task, Action, (Relationships), Result (see article on page 29).

2) Write out experiences utilizing STAR(R). Each experience should describe COMPETENCIES. Behavioral Based questions will ask about one or several core competencies, such as: Leadership, Problem Solving, Taking Initiative, Communication Skills, Teamwork, Analytical Skills, etc. Use STAR(R) write out experiences that highlight when you have demonstrated these competencies.

Choosing which experiences to talk about depends on what the question is asking. Understand which competency the question is asking about and then discuss a relevant experience, using STAR(R), for your answer.

3) Schedule a mock interview at ECS! Our Mock interviews ask behavioral-based questions and will help you to be more comfortable with using STAR, identifying strong experiences to highlight, and what types of questions to ask at the end of the interview.

Answering behavioral interview questions is solely about how well you articulate that your experiences will provide you with the necessary competencies. You know your experiences and what you took away from them better than anyone. The more confident you are in knowing the STAR(R) of your experiences, the better you will become at Behavioral Based interviewing. Good luck!!

* There may be some variation to the STAR method. For example, STARR in article on page 29 adds “Relationships” to the method.

Written by Jasmine Williams, ECS Graduate Advisor
Hi, **Illinois**. We’re Hudson River Trading. You know, **automated trading**, the kind that uses **machine learning** and **smart algorithms** to improve market efficiency. HRT is a **tech company** and our people are **physicists and statisticians, engineers and mathematicians**. We’re **UIUC**, Harvard, CMU, MIT, Stanford, and more. At HRT, responsibility is **distributed** according to individual impact, so becoming a **systems** engineer means you’ll work on challenging **computer science** problems. Become an **algo developer** and you might find yourself looking at **massive** amounts of **market data** and using a variety of tools to come up with **complex** strategies. If you are a **hacker** who wants to work in a **powerful computing environment**, we want programmers who can reduce latency and increase throughput, in a place where every second counts. And don’t be fooled – **we’re not a typical finance company**; our coders are the most important investment we have – and they know it. It’s no secret that your **compensation will be high** and rewards are **merit-based**. We are proud to be a math and technology company with a culture that mirrors any you’d find in Silicon Valley: we are code-writing, **ping-pong**-playing, challenge-seeking problem solvers. Join the fun and become a **coder at HRT**. <3

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SAMPLE BEHAVIORAL-BASED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

COMMUNICATION
• Tell me about a time when you were able to communicate a technical concept to a non-technical person. What was the concept, what challenges did you face, how did you relay the information, and what was the outcome?
• Describe your most recent public speaking experience. What was the topic of your presentation? Tell me about the audience? How did you prepare for the presentation, and what was the outcome?

INITIATIVE
• Give me an example of a project or activity you have initiated on your own. What happened, and what were the results of your efforts?
• Describe a situation in which you found your results were not what they should have been. What did you do to rectify the matter, or if you weren’t able to address it then, what would you do differently if you could change things? What was the final outcome?

LEADERSHIP
• Tell me about a new idea, policy, or procedure that you implemented that was considerably different from an existing one. What approach did you take to gain buy-in from your peers? What was the end result?
• Tell me about your leadership style and describe the most recent situation during which you successfully lead a team to meet or surpass the team’s stated goal. What steps did you take to achieve success? What challenges did you meet, and how did you overcome them?
• In detail, describe a time when you were directly responsible for a project that failed.

APPLIED INTELLIGENCE
• Describe the most difficult task you have had to learn; how did you overcome the challenge?
• What was the hardest course you have taken at Illinois? What steps did you take to succeed, and what was the outcome?
• Please share an example of something you’ve learned in a course that you were able to directly apply in a real life situation.

PROBLEM SOLVING
• Tell me about the most complex decision you have made and how you executed it. What was the result?
• Describe a situation when you were responsible for diagnosing and solving a problem, but you were unable to solve it. What happened, why weren’t you able to resolve it, and what, if anything, could you have done differently to have achieved a successful outcome?
• Describe a situation when you made a decision and it backfired.

ETHICS/INTEGRITY
• Tell me about a time when you had to bend the rules in order to be successful or accomplish a goal.
• Describe a time when you were asked to compromise your integrity. What happened?
• In college, it seems that radical things seem to occur at the last minute. Can you recall a time when you had to copy someone else’s work to get a grade? What was the result?
• Give me an example of a time when you made a commitment and had very little intention to follow up.

TEAMWORK
• Tell me about the most difficult or frustrating person with whom you have worked. How did you handle interactions with this person? What was the outcome?
• Describe a time when you were on a team and one of the members wasn’t pulling his/her weight.
• What was the last team project on which you worked that you emerged as the team’s leader?
• Describe your role on the team, the overall goal of the team’s efforts, and the outcome.

Written by Lynnell Lacy, ECS Assistant Director
Preparing for Your Telephone Interview

Telephone interviews may seem easy, but you should be just as prepared as if you were going into a face-to-face interview. As always, **prepare with STAR, write out your experiences using STAR while outlining key competencies, and schedule a mock interview with us.** Even try scheduling a phone mock interview!

**Key Things to Remember**

1. Make sure to be in a quiet environment where you have good reception. Avoid distractions (i.e. doors slamming, roommates, pets, etc.). Give yourself enough time to sit down and wait for the phone call (they will typically call you, so make sure to have your ringer on loud).

2. Have your résumé out and visible to you so you can glance at it to remember your experiences. Do not wrestle with tons of paper (i.e. notes, research about the company, résumé, etc.) because any audible noises can be heard over the phone. It is okay to have this information accessible but making sure you are prepared as if none of those papers were out is the best option! Slow responses to interview questions may lead interviewers to think you are unprepared or searching through papers, which wouldn’t be a good impression. At the end of the phone interview have well-thought out questions for the interviewer, just as if you are in person interviewing.

3. Allow your personality to shine! Make sure your energy and enthusiasm is captured in your tone of voice. Without the face-to-face interaction, interviewers can only hear your passion and confidence—they cannot see it, like in a face-to-face interview. Non-verbal mannerisms aren’t available to be observed during phone interviews, so keep in mind to demonstrate with your voice.

*Remember:* Be confident, speak with passion, give well-articulated answers, and ask great questions! Good luck!

*Written by Jasmine Williams, ECS Graduate Advisor*

Questions to Ask After the Interview

The last section of an interview provides candidates an opportunity to ask interviewers questions. This is also an opportunity to showcase your understanding of the company and the position you are applying to, establish a connection and leave a good impression on the employers. Asking good, prepared questions will contribute to the success of an interview. The following is a list of sample questions that are appropriate to ask at the end of a job interview.

**About the Organization**

- What makes this company unique and different from its competitors?
- How would you interpret the culture of this company?
- How would you describe the company’s personality and management style?

**Direction of Organization**

- What are the company’s long and short-term goals?
- How does company keep up with the industry trends?
- What key factors do you think contribute to the company’s growth?

**About the Position**

- Where does this position fit in the organization?
- What is the basis on which the company will evaluate success in this position?
- What kinds of candidates are you looking for?
- What training would I receive if hired?
- What could I expect would be a challenge for this position?
- How would you describe the person that is more likely to succeed in this position?
- Finally, don’t forget to ask the recruiter what the next steps in the interview process are along with their contact information for follow up!

*Written by Nian Liu, ECS Graduate Advisor*
Email Etiquette

Email etiquette reflects your image as a job seeker. When reaching out to recruiters and employers, set the tone of your messages in a formal and professional manner. Below are some tips on how to do so.

**Subject**
Keep the subject of the email short and simple. If you’re submitting an application via email, include the title of the position in the subject. Avoid using all capital letters because someone could get the impression you are yelling. This will get your email noticed for the wrong reasons.

**Salutation**
When addressing somebody in an email, always present to them the highest level of courtesy. An example is “Dear Mr. Jones” or “Good Morning Ms. Adams”. It is best to address people formally until they indicate you to do differently.

**Body**
Make sure the text within the body is black and in a professional looking font. Avoid using excessive exclamation marks !!!, excessive question marks ??, or emoticons 😃. Maintain proper capitalization, sentence structure, spelling, grammar, and formatting throughout your email.

**Signature**
Start with a closing sign off. Some examples include “Regards”, “Sincerely”, or “Best”. Following this should be your email signature, which should be no longer than five lines. Some items you can include are your name, university, major, job, student organization, contact information, or website.

**Less Is More**
Keep your overall message concise and to the point. If you find your message is getting quite lengthy, you are probably better off calling to seek clarification and to get your questions answered.

**Think Before Clicking Send**
Did you proofread your message? Are you sending it to the right recipient? Did you accidentally click “Reply All” when you weren’t supposed to? Did you include all content you wanted to cover? These are all good questions to keep in mind before sending your email.

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**Thank-you Letter**

Send a simple thank-you letter to your interviewer within 24 hours of the interview. Thank the interviewer for their time and reiterate your interest in the position/company. To keep your email from sounding generic, highlight specific topics that were discussed during the interview. This can also be an opportunity to highlight any qualifications you didn’t think you accurately displayed. Here is a sample thank-you note:

**Dear Ms. Richards**

Thank you for taking time to meet with me regarding the Software Developer internship at XYZ Company. I am very enthusiastic about this position as it will provide me the opportunity to enhance my development skills in Java, while also introduce me to development on the mobile platform. I also enjoyed learning about your company’s monthly volunteering events. Over the years, I have volunteered my time to multiple nonprofit organizations, and I am excited for the possibility to do the same this summer for XYZ Company.

If there is any additional information I can provide you, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you again and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Regards,
Kevin Dunbar
First, congratulations on receiving the job offer! Make sure to read the offer thoroughly so that you understand all aspects of your offer. Be sure to ask any questions you have and, if applicable, negotiate any terms of the contract you feel are necessary. If you accept your offer verbally, write a brief follow up email formally accepting the position. Here is an example email:

Dear Mr. Jackson,

Thank you for selecting me as a candidate for the Structural Engineer position at XYZ Company. I am pleased to inform you that I am accepting this position and excited for my start date. Thank you again for the opportunity, I am eager to make a positive contribution to the organization. Please let me know if there is any additional information or paperwork you need.

Best,
Jenny Park

You might find that you have multiple offers you are deciding between... great! Make sure you evaluate all offers carefully before making a final decision. Maintain professionalism so you do not hinder any chances of working with the employer(s) you are declining in the future. Here is a sample email:

Dear Mr. Franklin

I appreciate you and your team taking the time to meet with me to discuss the opportunity for employment within the Research and Development Team. After careful thought and consideration, I decided to accept another position in a different field. I truly enjoyed meeting with everyone at XYZ Company and learning about your experiences. Best wishes and continued success.

Sincerely,
Mike Reynolds

Written by Nadya Sims, ECS Graduate Advisor
Good manners and dining etiquette are essential indicators of how truly professional you are. More importantly, how you conduct yourself at the dining table gives potential employers a sense of how you will handle their business and your relationship.

**First Impressions**

You only have a few seconds to make a first impression in most situations. Since there’s no rewind button to undo a false start, don’t blow this opportunity to cement the image you want to leave in the minds of each person you meet. How you greet people reveals a great deal about you—your confidence, your attitude, your polish.

- Always stand to greet someone, especially if you have not met them before.
- Maintain an open posture when shaking hands, smile, make eye contact, and say your first and last name and something basic about yourself that relates to the context of the meeting.
- Handshakes should be firm, and last for about two to five seconds.
- Address someone by his or her title and last name, unless you have permission to use his or her first name.

**Table Settings and General Tips**

- Utensils are arranged in the order a person will use them, thus you will work your way from the outside in when dining.
- To keep track of which bread plate or water glass is yours, remember the acronym: **BMW**: Bread (left) Meal (center) and Water (right).
- When you first sit down for the meal, wait for the host/hostess to place his or her napkin on their lap before you do the same. The napkin should be folded discreetly and placed on your lap with the fold towards you. The napkin will remain in your lap for the rest of the meal.
- Once you pick up a piece of silverware, it should never touch the table again. During the meal utensils should be resting on the plate.
- Use a knife and fork to cut only one piece of food at a time.
- Soup should be consumed by dipping your soup spoon away from yourself and then filling the spoon with soup. Avoid slurping your soup.

**Eating:** You may begin eating when the host/hostess picks up their utensils or when the host/hostess announces to everyone to begin dining. You may have sips of your water before the meal is served, but refrain from reaching for the bread bowl until your host/hostess does so.

- When passing shared foods, remember to serve others before serving yourself. Take the service plate and offer the food to the person on your left, then take some for yourself and pass the food to the person on your right.
- It is often considered rude and disrespectful to season your food before tasting it.
- The salt and pepper should be passed together, even if only asked for one.
- Always put butter on your bread plate rather than directly on your roll. Break, don’t cut the bread, and then butter one bite-sized piece at a time. Never butter a whole slice of bread at once, or slice a roll in half and butter it.
- Consume small bites of food and never speak with your mouth full. If a question is asked of you mid-bite, take a moment to chew and swallow your food while thinking about your answer.

**Mishaps During Dining**

- If your napkin happens to slip off your lap, discreetly grab it without making a big fuss. If you drop your utensil on the floor, subtly get the server’s attention and ask for another utensil.
- If you do need to leave during a meal, make sure to do so properly. Simply say “Excuse me” and leave the table. An explanation is needed. Place your napkin in your chair with it loosely folded, not wadded up.

**Ending the Meal:** The placement of your utensils is the one and only step you need to do to let others know you are finished eating. Simply place your fork and knife diagonally across your plate at the ten and four o’clock positions with the handles at the four o’clock position. Face the blade side of the knife towards you as well. Place your napkin to the left of your plate.

**Who Pays?** At most interviews or business meetings, you will be a guest and should not offer to pay since the company or host/hostess will do so. To be on the safe, do make sure to bring money along in case you are in a situation where need to pay the bill or leave a tip. Remember to thank your host/hostess at the end of the meal.

Written by Kristina Wright, ECS Assistant Director
Congratulations! You have made it to a very crucial step in the interviewing process. Every opportunity for an interview, whether it is a screening interview, a face-to-face interview, or a site visit interview, is important. Regardless of the type of interview, you should always be prepared. Particularly if you receive an on-site interview, this indicates you are a very strong candidate. Sometimes employers will try to arrange visits for several candidates to take place at the same time, so your availability should be flexible. There are several tips to consider before stepping foot on employer territory. See below.

- Ask the employer about the proper attire and wear comfortable business shoes. If it’s an onsite visit and you have already accepted the offer, generally business casual is appropriate. But, if this site visit is an interview, then complete business attire is the most fitting for the situation. Do not assume that an on-site interview is a guarantee for a job offer. It must be said that even if you are not being formally interviewed with questions during a site visit, informally you are still being observed and interviewed for fit, for instance with the culture of the organization (do you fit in with everyone else in the office, do you share similar values, work ethic, etc.).

- Take extra updated copies of your résumé for the interview. If your agenda calls for you to meet various people in the department, take résumés and be prepared to give a context of your background. Sometimes the employees you meet with do not have your information on file, especially if the interaction is just a “meet and greet”.

- Observe how employees behave and communicate. Take note of the physical environment. Generate questions to ask from your observations.

- Make sure to get contact information from those individuals you meet. Within 24 hours of leaving the site visit, send thank-you emails to those whom you met—interrogators, recruiters and company representatives, etc.

- Do not be late. Get a good night’s sleep. Make sure to set alarms in order to make it meetings/interviews on time. Be aware of time zones when setting alarms also.

An onsite interview is just as much an interview for the company to see what you are all about as well for you to identify whether the company is a good fit for you. Take advantage of the opportunity to ask questions. Lastly, be confident about your experiences and abilities, and give employers a realistic preview of your worth to the company by showing how professional, intelligent, and passionate you are!

Written by Jasmine Williams, ECS Graduate Advisor
Negotiating the Job Offer

To keep from missing out on potential base salary bumps, evaluate job offers and work out a package that benefits everyone. About 45% of employers are willing to negotiate on salary, according to a 2013 survey by CareerBuilder. But nearly half of all U.S. workers accept the first salary offer they’re offered. Do your research on salaries and know your worth for your level of experience.

**Negotiation Facts**

According to a CareerBuilder survey:
- Over 49% of workers do not negotiate their initial offer because of fear or lack of skill.
- Men (54 percent) are more likely than women (49 percent) to negotiate first offers.
- Not every hiring manager will be able to raise the offer, but it’s never a bad idea to negotiate—especially if you have experience and possess in-demand, technical skills.
- Never negotiate unless you are willing to commit to the position. Don’t mislead companies.

**Why Don’t People Negotiate?**

**Myths and Fears**

- **Fear of losing the job**—Most employers expect to negotiate, so asking to negotiate is unlikely to cost you the offer.
- **Fear of conflict and emotion**—Conflict is an inherent part of human interaction, overcoming this fear will benefit you throughout your career.
- **Fear of employer’s superior power**—Contrary to popular belief, once the employer has made you the initial offer the balance of power has shifted in your favor.
- **Fear of negotiating poorly**—Practice! Schedule an appointment with ECS to discuss your negotiation strategy.

Remember that reneging is unprofessional and impacts the relationship between Illinois and the employer. Choosing to go back on your accepted offer will disqualify you from using I-Link and other ECS services.

**How should I negotiate?**

**Best Practices in Negotiating:**

- **Do your research**, know your value.
- **Ask questions**—Understanding what the company wants and values will help you negotiate more effectively.
- **Negotiate in person or over the phone**, avoid email negotiations.
- **Negotiate more than just salary**—the more variables negotiated, the higher likelihood that you and the employer will reach an agreement both are satisfied with.

**Know Your Rights**

- If you receive an offer this fall, the university’s offer deadline is Dec. 1st or three weeks after the date on your offer, whichever is later. This deadline applies to first offers only.
- If you receive a full-time offer from a company that you interned at, the university deadline is Oct. 1st or three weeks after the date on your offer, whichever is later.
- If you receive an offer in the spring the deadline is April 1st or three weeks after the offer date, whichever is later.

**How do I initiate negotiations?**

- Find out if negotiation is even an option.
- Ask the crucial question: “**What, if any, parts of this offer are negotiable?**”
- Be prepared for the question: “**What did you have in mind?**”

**Why is negotiation so important?**

It’s important to understand that your starting compensation package has many long-term consequences. All future raises and promotions are likely to be affected by the initial package, as well as potentially new job opportunities with other companies. Making sure that you and your new employer come to an arrangement that both are satisfied with is extremely important!
What Does Your Social Media Profile Say About You?

If you’re a current college student or a recent college graduate, it’s pretty safe to assume you’ve had a social media presence since you entered high school, if not earlier. Chances are you’ve built up a long online history that’s publicly visible and not necessarily appropriate for the professional world. A recent Jobvite social recruiting survey found that “86 percent of HR professionals and recruiters admitted to reviewing candidates’ social network profiles” and “70 percent turned down a candidate based on something they found out about them online.” If you’re not carefully controlling your online brand, you could be unknowingly hurting your chances of landing that dream job. Here are tips for cleaning up your online presence and building the right professional brand.

Don’t Showcase Your Social Activities

Recruiters understand that people have social lives, but it’s not ok to portray excessive drinking, drug use or any other illegal activities on your public profiles. Everything you put online stays out there somewhere, and anyone can see it. You’ll want to take care to setup your privacy settings on your social media accounts so that only your friends can see your profile and status updates. Don’t forget to check out photos that you have been tagged in. Delete tags if photos are unfavorable. Adjust your settings so that anyone who tags you in a picture has to ask for permission first.

Be Wary of What You Say (and others too)

Potentially offensive comments, snarky responses, discriminatory remarks or criticisms against current or former employers may come back to haunt you. Be extra careful, and don’t post anything that you don’t want a prospective employer (or your mom!) to read. Some employers may view extreme religious or political expressions and tactless humor as red flags. What you may think is funny may sound obnoxious to others. Be wary of retweeting or sharing posts you haven’t actually read. Sharing a poorly written or error-ridden article—or simply one that misrepresents your actual views—puts you in an unflattering light.

Painting an Inaccurate Self-Portrait

Read your story as shared on your timelines. When the tweets and sentences are strung together, who have you revealed yourself to be? Your life on the Internet has a theme. Make sure that your public information is balanced. If your story is punctuated by frequent parties, personal woes or is too self-focused, that will be how casual observers (and potential employers) will know you.

Poor Grammar and Spelling

Many unfortunate communication errors can be blamed on autocorrect, but we do have veto power over our phone’s word choices. The bottom line is grammatical and spelling mistakes make you look bad. So do your best to avoid them.

Do Build Your Brand

Don’t forget that your social media profile can also help you build yourself up. Maintain an updated profile on LinkedIn. It’s the first place many employers go to check you out, and if you don’t have a LinkedIn profile it likely sends the message that you’re not current. Use a professional-looking photo for any social media account associated with your professional brand and job search. Make sure your status updates depict your enthusiasm and involvement in your career pursuits. Share your accomplishments, articles you’ve written, and presentations.

Follow Companies That You Want to Work For

Following companies that you want to work with is a very good way to stay in tune with the job market and stay visible to that employer. Use social media to show your knowledge in your field and expand your network. Demonstrate that you have your finger on the pulse and you’re passionate about the industry.

Search Yourself

It’s smart to search links to your name from time to time. You can (and should) Google, Bing and Yahoo yourself. Knowing what employers will find when they search for you will help you explain it during the interview.

Not Getting in the Game

Some people are so afraid of damaging social media mistakes that they avoid the whole scene altogether. But that can be costly too, as social networks have become prime recruiting territory. Therefore, skirting potential issues via non-involvement removes you from too many opportunities to make that a smart option for most.

Written by Kristina Wright, ECS Assistant Director
Social media is a key factor in the job search process today and many job experts say that having a LinkedIn profile is crucial for college students. Not only will a polished LinkedIn profile help you stand out among the crowds of applicants, but it will allow you to showcase your talents and interests. The more robust your profile, the more you will get noticed!

12 Tips for Creating Your LinkedIn Profile

1. **A good LinkedIn profile should have a good headline:** Your headline should be strategic, so take time to write a title that reflects what you want to do. Think about what employers and recruiters will be searching for and use those words in your headline. You might have a headline such as “University of Illinois Computer Science Intern”.

2. **Be Wordy:** Don’t be lazy—fill out your profile completely. LinkedIn says your profile will appear 40 times more in search results if it is “complete.” This means that you will be available for 40 times more opportunities if you do this. If you are not sure what a strong profile looks like, find professionals in your field and look at how they share their information.

3. **Choose a Great Photo:** LinkedIn studies have recently shown that a profile with a photo has 11 times more probability of being viewed than one without a photo. You will want to select a high-quality photo that projects a friendly and professional image, not one that portrays a robust social life. Avoid using group shots. If you are not sure what to wear, take a look at what people in your target industry are wearing.

4. **Use Summary Space Wisely:** Make a good first impression with a strong, but personalized summary. Your summary should be three to five paragraphs long and it should walk the reader through your key skills, unique qualifications, and work/internship experiences. You should also include a bulleted section that describes the benefits that you can provide to a prospective employer.

5. **Beyond Words:** Numbers are powerful. When possible include numbers to demonstrate your competencies within your summary. For example, “After implementing a new recruiting process, I increased membership in XYZ by 43%.”

6. **Be Tech-Savvy:** LinkedIn offers a feature that allows you to add certain types of multimedia content to your profile such as videos, websites, blog articles or an online portfolio. Instead of just talking about your experiences, show examples.

7. **Add Extracurricular Experiences, Volunteer Work, Projects and Courses:** Have a certification? Volunteer at Habitat for Humanity? Adding these additional profile features is a great way to showcase your personality and unique experiences. Employers often see volunteer experience as just as valuable as paid work.

8. **Showcase your Achievements:** In the Skills & Experience section you can build a list of all the skills, strengths and competencies that you possess. You’ll want to include at least 10-15 entries in this section since this is a key role in the LinkedIn search algorithm. An entry-level intern, for example, could cite skills in time management, teamwork, project management, statistical analysis, and communication.

9. **Update Your Status:** You can update your status as often as you like. Your network will see your updates, so use this opportunity to bring your name to the forefront. Use your status line to announce projects you are doing related to your field. Share interesting articles or news. Connect with leaders in your industry.

10. **Personalize Your URL:** LinkedIn allows you to personalize your URL, so snap up your name if you are able to! You can include this URL in your email signature and on your résumé.

11. **Join In:** Groups are a way to build relationships and network with people who have similar interests. Join as many relevant groups as you can and contribute to the conversation. You can start by joining alumni groups and professional organizations for your industry.

12. **Gain credibility with references:** If you know people who would recommend your work, so ask them to do so on LinkedIn. The best approach is to ask in person or to write a personal email sincerely expressing what their recommendation would mean to you.

Written by Kristina Wright, ECS Assistant Director
Once you have a complete, professional looking LinkedIn profile, you can use it as a tool to assist in your career and internship planning. Below are some ideas how.

**LinkedIn.com/Jobs**

A good place to start your search is to visit LinkedIn.com/Jobs. By clicking the advanced search option at the top, it will allow you to search for opportunities by keywords, company, title, location, industry, experience level, etc. Find a search you like? Save the search and you can receive email updates when a new position in your search becomes available. There are also some positions you can apply to simply by submitting your LinkedIn profile.

**Network With Alumni**

By viewing the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign group (or any other university), it makes it really simple to network with alumni. You can see where they live, where they work, what they do, what they studied, what they’re skilled at, and how you are connected. This is helpful for students who are not only looking for a job or internship opportunities, but those who are trying to pick their major or decide on a graduate program. Alumni are generally willing to take some time to give current students further information and answer questions. Log into LinkedIn.com and search for University of Illinois alumni.

**Send Messages**

Send messages to first or second connections in your network who are in professions or work at companies you are interested in. Let them know you are searching for a new position and request an informational interview. This allows you to see if their profession or company would be a good fit for you. You can also utilize messages after applying to positions. Typically the recruiter’s name is listed on the job posting, so you can send them a message to ask for feedback on your application.

**Interviews**

In addition to researching the company to prepare for an interview, it is a good idea to check out the LinkedIn profile of the people you’re meeting. This can be applied in both informational and formal interviews. Take initiative to gather more information on the interviewer’s background and interests. This will show you’ve completed further research and are interested in not only the organization, but the people working in it.

Written by Nadya Sims, ECS Graduate Advisor
**Top 5 Job Search Tips for International Students**

Whether you are searching for a position in the U.S., in your home country, or elsewhere, it is important to be familiar with recruiting practices of the country.

Here at Illinois, the busiest recruiting takes place in the fall semester. Although some employers recruit for summer interns in the spring semester, others begin looking for candidates in the fall. Additionally, if you plan to seek full-time employment after graduation, having an internship in your sophomore or junior year is almost a prerequisite. In other words, obtaining a full-time position in the U.S. requires early engagement with employers. Here are five suggestions to get you started:

**Tip #1: Grades Matter, But Get Out of the Classroom**

Employers repeatedly tell us that they look at more than a student’s GPA when screening applicants. While most positions ask for a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA (some positions require a higher minimum), employers also look for non-technical skills. According to the Job Outlook 2015 report by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), employers look for the following attributes on a student’s résumé:

- Leadership (77.8% of respondents)
- Ability to work in a team (77.8%)
- Communication skills (73.4%)
- Problem-solving skills (70.9%)
- Strong work ethic (70.4%)

To build these skills, it is necessary to get out of the classroom and participate (not just attend meetings) in extracurricular activities. You can join a professional student organization that is affiliated with your major, be active in a social or cultural group, or volunteer for a local community organization. You should also take the brave step of meeting people from different cultural backgrounds, not just from your own home country.

Each department hosts at least one student chapter of a professional national organization associated with your major. For instance, the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering hosts around 28 student organizations. If your primary area is construction management, you should strongly consider becoming involved in the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA). Through this organization, you have access to various professional resources from the national chapter, including their national conferences, which is a great way to network with potential employers.

Explore the different student organizations affiliated with your department and get involved in their projects!

**Tip #2: Understand What Your Target Employers Want**

In the Job Outlook 2015 report by NACE, employers were asked to rate the importance of a candidate’s skills and qualities. The top five results are as follows:

- Ability to work in a team (4.61 out of 5.00)
- Ability to make decisions and solve problems (4.61)
- Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization (4.60)
- Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work (4.59)
- Ability to obtain and process information (4.57)

Once again, employers want to see that you have demonstrated these skills and qualities beyond academic work.

Aside from the skills mentioned above, it is also important to develop an understanding of your target employers’ business needs. Some questions to consider when familiarizing yourself with an employer:

- What products and/or services does your target employer manufacture/sell/provide?
- In what direction is the company heading? Is it planning to sell off particular divisions to specialize in certain areas or are they looking to expand and acquire new subsidiaries?
- Where does the company generate the majority of its revenue and profits—is it in the U.S. or another region outside the U.S.? Is the source of revenue and profits changing? If so, where is the new source of revenue and profits?
- What is the organizational culture of your target company? What kind of people do best in the company’s environment? What kind of talent does the company seek—in terms of both technical and non-technical skills?

While you can gather some of this information from websites, a better way is to get in front of recruiters during information sessions and tech talks that are taking place on campus. If a student organization, your department or Engineering Career Services is offering a company visit or job shadow, sign up for those opportunities and learn about the company for yourself firsthand. Use these events as opportunities to make a face-to-face connection with employers.

**Tip #3: Know and Speak Your Brand**

Do you remember the question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” This question is still relevant in your job search. When speaking to employers, be able to share the reasons for choosing the major that you’re in, be willing to talk about your professional goals and the industries that you are interested in. How does a particular position align with your long-term career path?

Most importantly, you’ll need to begin identifying how your skills meet the needs of your target employers. Once you develop that list of skills, highlight them in your résumé. Demonstrate your skills through out-of-class projects and extracurricular activities. Use LinkedIn, Weebly or GitHub to visually showcase the work that you have done. Finally, write up an elevator pitch and practice delivering your pitch in a casual, conversational tone.

http://engineering.illinois.edu/ecs 43
Tip #4: Talk to People

Submitting applications to online job boards or company websites is convenient, but is not an effective way to secure positions. Making in-person connections and developing an understanding of a company’s needs is much more effective. In a 2014 study by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and MIT, candidates who are referred to a position and who interview were found to be 40% more likely to get hired than candidates who merely submit applications online.

To make actual connections with individuals within your target companies, make use of events, such as company information sessions, company-led career development workshops, tech talks, department seminars, talks by visiting alumni, company visits, job shadow programs, externships, case competitions, and other professional networking events.

Another tool that is often underutilized is informational interviews. Informational interviews are conversations you have with individuals where you seek to learn more about a particular industry or company. The purpose of an informational interview is not to ask for a job, but is meant to help you build the resources for your own career path. (To learn more about information interviews, please see page 45.)

Tip #5: Don’t Limit Yourself to the U.S. Job Market

Each year, the U.S. federal government allocates 65,000 H1B visas for the hire of temporary foreign talent, plus an additional 20,000 for Master’s and Doctoral degrees. Over the last few years, this quota has been met within the first week of applications being accepted. With over 800,000 international students in the U.S. each year, some employers face a challenge to secure H1B visas for foreign talent. Consequently, many employers are not willing to risk hiring international students for fear of not getting a return on their investment, where they have trained a new hire only to have them not be approved for the H1B visa.

Besides visa quotas, some companies are limited to hiring only U.S. citizens because these companies receive funding from the federal government and/or are involved in security-related projects. That said, the percentage of employer indicating that they are willing to hire international students has grown from 18.8% in 2010 to 34.2% in 2015 (NACE Job Outlook 2015).

Another trend we have been observing is an increasing number of U.S. companies who are growing their operations in Asia. As a result of this business need, these companies are looking for talent who can serve as a bridge between the U.S. and Asia. In addition to technical skills, these employers are looking for candidates with proficiency in both English as well as an Asian language (most commonly Mandarin). These companies also want students who have familiarity with U.S. and Asian cultures. As a result, these companies are looking to recruit international students studying in the U.S. for home country placements. Some of these companies seek to groom such new talent into future managerial roles within companies. If you take a long-term view of your career, this is an excellent option to accelerate your career path.

Whether you choose to remain in the U.S. or work overseas or in your home country, it is important to be proactive and utilize the resources available to you here on campus and in the College.

A Word about Work Authorization in the U.S.

If you are on an F1 Student Visa, you have two options for work authorization in the U.S.:

- If you are still a student, you can apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT). Find out more information here: http://isss.illinois.edu/students/employment/f1cpt.html. CPT requires an offer of employment before application.
- If you are planning to work after graduation, you will need to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT). Find out more information here: http://isss.illinois.edu/students/employment/f1opt.html. As an Engineering student, you could be eligible for the STEM extension, which permits you to stay in the U.S. for an additional 17 months: http://isss.illinois.edu/students/employment/f1_optext.html.

NOTE: Having work authorization does not automatically qualify you to be employed by a company in the U.S. Companies may still not be able to hire students who are not U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents.

Written by Jerome Ng, Former ECS Assistant Director
Mastering the Hidden Job Market Through Networking

The simple fact is that most people looking for a job go about it in completely the wrong way. Many students fill their day blasting résumé in response to online job postings. Sure, you might be qualified for the positions for which you are applying—but posting your resume online is like trying to find a needle in a haystack—a really, really big haystack. This classic mistake prevents you from finding prime job opportunities. Frustrating as it may be, as many as 80% of positions are not advertised instead they’re typically part of the hidden job market—those millions of openings that never get formally posted. For those job openings that are advertised online, hiring managers may get hundreds of applicants. It’s very time consuming to sort through hundreds of resumes to find one or two candidates who might be suitable for an opening. Given the choice, most employers prefer to fill positions without advertising. It saves money and time.

Networking is simply about building and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with the people around us.

Then think of ways in which you can naturally build or increase your network of contacts:
- Volunteering
- Job shadowing
- Joining a club, organization, or professional association
- Informational interviewing

Networking Opportunities

Once you’ve identified and started to build your network, it’s time to cultivate those relationships. One of the best ways to do this is to conduct informational interviews with professionals in your field of interest.

Informational Interviews: To arrange an informational interview, you’ll begin by reaching out to contacts by email. In your email, you will provide a brief introduction to your background and interests, attach your resume, and request a time to meet with them to discuss your questions. Make it clear that you are looking for information and advice, not a job. You will be surprised by how many people are willing to help a student!

In preparing for each informational interview, develop a list of questions that you could not have answered on your own. A few good examples may be: What are the largest challenges currently facing organizations like yours? What do you find to be the most and least enjoyable aspects of your work? Can you describe a typical workday?

Don’t be afraid to ask for names of other professionals whom you might want to interview to help you in your job search.

Additionally, remember that these meetings are also an opportunity for others to get to know you. Make sure that you can confidentially discuss your resume and experiences. Don’t be afraid to ask for names of other professionals whom you might want to interview to help you in your job search. Afterwards, send a thank-you note to express your appreciation for the help. Make sure to check back with your contact from time to time to advise them of your status.
On-Campus Events: Another easily accessible way to expand your contact list is to attend on-campus networking events, alumni panels and job fairs. Careers events provide the dual opportunity of uncovering information about specific industries and employers while allowing you to be in contact with those who may have the power to give you a job. Before attending a career event, remember to do the following:

- Create a solid elevator pitch.
- Prepare a list of thoughtful open-ended questions.
- Prepare copies of your resume.

Recruiters and company representatives attend careers events to meet students, so don’t be shy about approaching them. But do it politely. It’s almost always better to establish a personal rapport before asking for concrete career assistance at these programs. Be patient as you cultivate a personal connection with recruiters, company representatives and alumni. Look for a common basis like a shared interest, college sport, club or faculty contact. Asking them about the most rewarding aspects of their college experience can help move things along. If you really hit it off with someone, you might ask if you could meet with them for coffee or shadow them at work.

Follow up after the event with contacts that you make. Send an email, thank them for any specific advice and include a reminder of who you are by sharing your LinkedIn page. Your follow up communication is another opportunity to take things a step further by inquiring if you might do an informational interview or job shadow.

Final Thoughts on Networking

- Be specific about what you need.
- Be organized and keep good records.
- Don’t pass up a time to network—it can happen anywhere!
- Follow up with others in a timely fashion.
- Thank those who have helped you along the way.
- Continue to network after you have found a job.
- Return the favor and be helpful to others.

Written by Kristina Wright, ECS Assistant Director

Working at Narrative Science offers you the opportunity to build revolutionary technology, deliver exceptional customer experiences, and ultimately, shape the future of the company.

We are scientists, engineers, designers and marketers. We are band members, cyclists, comedians, runners and food-truck enthusiasts. We are passionate about how data and technology can impact and improve knowledge. And, as part of an innovative startup that is changing the way the world understands data, that impact is huge.

Join our team. Apply today!

www.narrativescience.com/careers
Why Research Experience Matters for Graduate Study and Your Career

Research tests more than your academic acumen. It tests your ability to contribute as a member of a team and how you respond to unexpected challenges. It demands your utmost integrity and asks you to think outside the box. And in many cases, it asks you to derive results that you can explain to colleagues in your field and to laypersons who care about the societal implications of your research.

Here’s why you should seek out research experiences at UIUC and other top institutions—graduate schools and employers want students and employees with those skills!

A Must for Graduate Students

Research experience is required in most fields to apply directly from a Bachelor’s program to a PhD program. Faculty members want to know that you understand basic lab and research protocol and that you can immediately become a contributing member of their team. Research experience is also linked with funding in the form of graduate and research assistantships. Students who are not able to gain undergraduate research experience may wish to pursue a one- or two-year Master’s program to gain experience as a researcher.

Summer undergraduate research is a popular and highly effective way to explore research in your sophomore, junior, and senior years of college (sometimes even in your freshman year). Summer research generally lasts between six and ten weeks and, in many cases, summer researchers receive payment in the form of stipends and sometimes receive compensation for travel and living expenses. Moreover, students who are productive and engaged participants in a summer research program often leave their summer appointments with a strong letter of recommendation for graduate school. Other benefits of summer research include: exploring a school you may wish to attend for graduate study, attending professional development workshops, meeting students and faculty from across the U.S., and exploring another area of the country.

But Good for Career-Seekers, Too

Ok, so graduate schools clearly care about research experience… but why should you do research if you are interested in getting a job after college? Students are always encouraged to do an internship/co-op and a research experience during college their sophomore and junior years to help discern which path makes sense for them individually. Internships and research put academic learning into action and this is exactly what employers want to see. And, when you do garner that coveted interview at your Spring Career Fair, you will have an experience to talk about that which sets you apart from your fellow students with purely academic experience.

Deadlines for most summer research opportunities have closed for 2015. Do your research and get a jump start for next year!

Helpful Resources:
- National Science Foundation (NSF) - https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu
- National Institutes of Health (NIH) - https://www.training.nih.gov/programs/sip
- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences - nihe.nih.gov/careers/research/summers
- National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) - neh.gov/grants/research/summer-stipends
- Pathways to Science - pathwaystoscience.org/undergrads.aspx
- UIUC Summer Research - grad.illinois.edu/eep/srop

Key Terminology:
- REU - Research Experience for Undergraduates
- SURP - Summer Undergraduate Research Experience

Written by Cris Murray, Director of Graduate Admissions at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Interns are often the first people companies consider hiring for their full-time, entry-level positions. Below are some general guidelines to follow to make sure you can be considered for these opportunities during your internship or once it is completed.

**Obey the Rules**
This might seem obvious, but it is important to reiterate the basics. Maintain professional and appropriate clothing, be early rather than on time, and be respectful of every single person in the organization. Make the most out of your downtime. It’s best not to use free time to text message or visit your favorite website; use it to find other projects or shadow somebody.

**Set Goals**
Meet with your manager to share your goals of what you want to accomplish and what skills you want to gain by the end of your internship. Make sure you set both short- and long-term goals and try your best to meet these deadlines. Share these goals with other people in the organization so they can help hold you accountable.

**Ask Questions**
If something isn’t clear about an assignment, just ask questions. Seek clarification if you don’t understand what your responsibility is. Questions will show you are engaged in the conversation. This is a much superior approach than to complete the assignment incorrectly and have to start all over.

**Attend Company Events**
If the firm has any, consider joining one of their sports team. For example, joining the summer volleyball team would be a great opportunity to get to know people outside of the office setting. Not into playing sports? Ask if people from the office go to watch the games and join them if they do. If not, then participate in other company-wide events. This is a good way to meet people outside of your department, which can be beneficial if your department isn’t hiring full-time employees but other departments are.

**Seek Feedback**
If you are receiving feedback for the first time during your mid-summer performance review, then that is too late. Even if your direct manager doesn’t give you feedback, ask for it from them as well as other managers, interns, or leaders frequently. They will be impressed that you’re taking initiative to seek ways to improve your performance and productivity.

**Develop Relationships**
Get to know not only the other interns you’re working with, but also the full-time employees. Remember to build relationships with managers and senior leadership as well. You’ll learn more about the company this way and it is likely these people can provide you a valuable recommendation for any internal or external opportunities in the future.

Written by Nadya Sims, ECS Graduate Advisor
Opportunities to Get Involved at Illinois

Engineering Council

Engineering Council (EC) is the students’ voice in the College of Engineering and is designed to serve the needs of the engineering community. EC consists of an executive board that oversees 13 committees and over 50 student organizations. URL: http://www.ec.illinois.edu

Engineering Open House

Engineering Open House (EOH) showcases accomplishments in engineering to the public. Thousands of visitors, mostly from the Midwest, attend the two-day, student-run event. EOH is a great forum for teaching a broad variety of audiences how engineering affects their lives. URL: http://eoh.ec.illinois.edu

OTCR Consulting

OTCR Consulting is an entirely student-run consulting firm comprised of top students primarily from the College of Engineering and College of Business. OTCR has service offerings in Business Strategy, Technology Strategy, and Technology Implementation, and serves clients as large as Fortune 500 corporations to startups. Students interested in developing business leadership skills in an accelerated environment can find more information at www.otcr.illinois.edu

Illinois Business Consulting

IBC conducts 40-50 business consulting projects each year for established organizations of varying sizes—small businesses to Fortune 500; for-profit and not-for-profit. This experience offers students the opportunity to build problem-solving, project management and client management skills that can be leveraged in their career of choice. URL: http://www.ibc.illinois.edu

Illinois Leadership Certificate

This is a structured program designed to provide students with experience and growth in leadership. The program is grounded in the Illinois Philosophy of Leadership which states, “All students can exercise leadership.” As a university student, you are a leader. The certificate program will make you a more effective leader. URL: http://www.illinoisleadership.illinois.edu

International Programs in Engineering

Various opportunities are available, such as: Study Abroad, Work Abroad, Service Abroad, Graduate Research Fellowship and the Warren Yee Program. URL: https://wiki.engr.illinois.edu/display/ipeng/Home

Job Shadow Program

Freshmen, sophomores and juniors gain insight into their career interests by participating in a job shadow experience. Students are matched with business professionals, preferably alumni, for a one-day, relevant work experience. URL: http://engineering.illinois.edu/corporations/job-shadow-program

CUVolunteer

This site is dedicated to helping volunteer organizations and residents of the Champaign-Urbana area connect. URL: http://cuvolunteer.org
Starting Your Career? Thinking Small is Okay.

To be explicit, by “thinking small” we’re referring to career opportunities at start-ups and small businesses. In our respective capacities as technology development executive for a start-up commercializing technology developed at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and career services director for the College of Engineering, also at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, we have had many discussions with science and engineering students and young professionals weighing career options at start-ups and small businesses. The overwhelming sentiment expressed in these discussions is that of concern that starting one’s career at a start-up company or a small business was a detour from a more established and better understood climb up the traditional corporate ladder.

In an attempt to provide these students and young professionals with a broader set of perspectives we hope would help them make better decisions about their careers, we interviewed 11 entrepreneurs and start-up employees with technical backgrounds in the Champaign-Urbana area, many of whom boasted experiences at more established firms as well. We have summarized what we learned from these discussions into seven actionable steps that can be taken upon starting a career at a start-up or small business to ensure thoughtful career development while preserving options even as career interests are expected to change.

Understand Your Goals

The first insight from our interviews is the importance of understanding your goals and motivations for considering a career at start-up or small business. Careers are marathons not sprints. While your interests and goals will change over time, when considering a career opportunity at a start-up or small business, take the time to understand exactly what role you hope the opportunity will play in the bigger picture of your career plans.

For some, it’s the excitement of the opportunity of getting in on the ground floor and building something, or the financial rewards that could come as a result of an exit event. For others, it might be that opportunities at larger, more established companies weren’t readily available and the start-up provides an opportunity to gain experience that could be leveraged into a role at a bigger company later.

Whatever your motivations, be honest with yourself so you can ensure that these goals are attended to during your tenure at the start-up or small business. The start-up employees we interviewed generally agreed that there is more flexibility at a start-up to shape the role you perform at the organization. Take advantage of it.

Design Your Ideal Apprenticeship

With a good understanding of your goals and motivations, start-ups and small businesses present an opportunity to take advantage of the flexibility discussed above in designing the ideal apprenticeship. Many of the start-up and small business employees we interviewed felt that they could define roles for themselves at their current companies that are the equivalent or perfect stepping stones to desired roles at more established companies.

Start-up employees typically have much broader and more significant responsibilities at their companies than their counterparts at larger companies. As a result, their accomplishments (and yes, their failures) tend to be more visible. If by designing the ideal apprenticeship, they can demonstrate capabilities required in a similar role at a more established company, they become much more attractive candidates for those roles. As an example of this point, we know of two former employees of start-ups in the Champaign-Urbana area who were able to use their senior technical roles with these start-ups as springboards to opportunities at Facebook and Foursquare.

Leverage Exposure and Access to Personnel and Functions

It takes a broad range of functions to turn an idea into a growing start-up. Examples of these functions include the founder or inventor with the original idea or technology, angel investors and venture capitalists who invest in the start-up and the founding operating team such as the CEO, and Vice Presidents of Technology, Marketing or Business Development. Because of the size of early stage start-ups and small businesses, employees at what would be referred to as entry level at more established organizations have access to the people in these various functions and interact with them more closely and regularly than is typical at more established firms.

Understanding how these functions intersect in the organization and your role in the organizational structure (both explicit and tacit) is essential in being effective and is a great way to become aware of other career interests in a way that is difficult in a larger organization where such access to such a range of functions may be limited for a scientist or engineer in the earlier stages of their career.

Learn to Lead and Manage

Most people find very early in their careers that leadership and management skills are essential to accomplishing just about anything as part of a team. Since by necessity most start-up and small business employees are given more responsibilities earlier in their careers, than their counterparts working at larger organizations, they are in a position to learn to lead and manage effectively.

The start-up and small business employees we interviewed thought that the flat and less bureaucratic organizational structures of most start-ups or small businesses can provide useful opportunities for employees to observe the strengths and weaknesses of the leaders of the organization from a closer range, while developing their own leadership styles and identities. In other words, these employees have more opportunities to learn by doing.
STARTING YOUR CAREER? THINKING SMALL IS OKAY.

CONTINUED

A good example of the potential impact of starting a career at a start-up or small business is Marissa Mayer. Mayer joined Google in 1999 at the company’s 20th employee and 13 years later left to become the CEO of Yahoo at age 37. While Mayer is obviously very talented, such a rapid rise would have been less likely if she were joining Google today. Google today is much larger and by necessity, more bureaucratic. As such, the company likely offers fewer opportunities for a 24-year-old joining the company today to grow as rapidly as a manager and leader.

BECOME AN INNOVATOR

Few career opportunities position you better to learn how to become an innovator than start-up and small businesses. Because these types of companies typically lack the resources of more established firms, they have to move quicker and be more creative to compete. They have to be more innovative survive. Start-ups and small businesses provide students and young professionals in engineering and science disciplines the opportunity to develop leadership, management, communication and other functional competencies such as in finance and marketing in a fast pace environment in which innovation is essential.

The development of these additional competencies combined with their technical backgrounds and their experience working on solving cutting edge problems at a start-up or small business helps these employees develop and hone their individual innovation philosophies and processes. Armed with these highly developed instincts for innovation these employees are uniquely equipped to facilitate innovation processes at other organizations both large and small.

FILL IN KNOWLEDGE GAPS

Many of the start-up and small business employees we interviewed cited lack of domain expertise as one of the costs of career opportunities at start-ups and small businesses. As a newly hired Principal Scientist at an advanced materials start-up, you probably have really deep domain expertise in a particular area of materials science, perhaps related to the core technology of your new company.

Before taking on this role, as a graduate student, you probably provided material to your university’s patent counsel for a provisional patent application. So you know a bit about drafting a patent application, but perhaps not much about the valuation of intellectual property, deciding on a patent or trade secret as the vehicle of protection of new technology or developing a strategy for international filings based on your company’s target markets.

You will learn what you need to learn to do your job and in the process, you’ll become a good generalist. Good generalists are valuable to any business. However, taking the time to dig one level deeper, fill in the gaps and connect the dots into your own personal best practice guidelines for each function your role touches is a good idea. It will either give you a more solid foundation in a specific area should you find yourself in a more specialized role later in your career or make you a more effective generalist by giving you more expertise to draw on when needed.

BOLSTER EXPERIENCE WITH CREDENTIALS

Depending on what your long term career goals are, you might need to take the idea of filling in knowledge gaps one step further to acquire credentials that are considered important for your field and targeted career path. If you prefer to maintain a purely technical role for the rest of your career, then in many cases you can contribute significantly to a diverse group of organizations without worrying about additional credentials as long as you’ve attained the level of education that is standard for your desired position and industry.

However, if your goal is to at the very least give yourself the option of taking career paths that lead to technical management, product management or even general management as your career progresses, considering what credentials are most relevant such a path is important. As a start-up or small business employee you’ll have more opportunities to interface with others in a variety of roles supporting your company’s value chain. Talk to these people about the roles they play, their educational backgrounds and additional training they’ve received.

If you would like to transition from bench scientist to technical management or project management, then perhaps pursuing a project management certification might be valuable. If you’d like options to move into general management at some point, then an M.B.A. might be useful.

Regardless of what path you find most appealing, the important point is that by working at a start-up you have more access to help you decide what combination of experiences and credentials would most efficiently put you on the path towards achieving your career goals.

Written by Gerald O. Wilson, Professor, and Sarah M. Zehr, Director, Office of Corporate Relations
College of Engineering Salary Information 2014-2015

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**Preliminary Annual Salary Information By Engineering Major (Full-time Employment Only)

**Excludes salary outliers less than or greater than 2 standard deviations from the mean. Fewer than 20 responses cannot be shared publically in the interest of respondent confidentiality.

Median Guaranteed Signing Bonus — $5,000
Bonus Information for College of Engineering Graduates (Full-time Employment only)

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College of Engineering Top Employers

- Epic Systems
- Microsoft
- Capital One
- Boeing
- Caterpillar
- Google
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- PriceWaterhouseCoopers
- Accenture
- Ford Motor Company
- IBM
- Rockwell Collins
- Sargent & Lundy
- Amazon
- Deloitte Consulting
- Northrop Grumman
- AirWatch
- Civiltech Engineering
- Cognizant Technology Solutions
- ExxonMobil
- Goldman Sachs
- Texas Instruments
- Wolfram Research

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Dunn Solutions Group
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Farmlogs
Farnsworth Group Inc.
Fast Enterprises
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Fidessa
Flint Hills Resources
FMC Technologies (Energy Systems)

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Hanson Professional Services Inc.
Harley-Davidson Motorcycle Company
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Hazen and Sawyer
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Hearsay Social
Hedvig Inc.
Here, a Nokia Business
Hewlett-Packard Co.
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Honeywell FM&T
Honeywell UOP
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HR Green, Inc.
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Hyla Soft USA

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IDEAL Industries
iLink Resources

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Jet Aviation
John Burns Construction Co.
John Deere
Johnson & Johnson
Johnson Controls
JPMorgan Chase
Jump Trading
Jump Trading Simulation and Education Center

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Jut, Inc.

**KCG (See Ad on Page 58)**
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The Kenrich Group LLC
Kersner & Co.
Kiewit
Kiewit and Hoffman
Kiewit Infrastructure Co.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
Kimberly-Clark
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**Larson Engineering, Inc. (See Ad on Page 32)**  
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LCN Closers  
The Lee Company  
**Leidos Engineering LLC (See on Inside Back Cover)**  
Lend Lease  
Levi, Ray & Shoup, Inc.  
Lextech Global Services  
LGS Innovations  
Liaison Technologies  
Liferay, Inc.  
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LinkedIn  
Littelfuse, Inc.  
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Los Angeles County Sanitation District  
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Magnusson Klemencic Associates  
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MapR Technologies  
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MasterBrand Cabinets, Inc.  
**MathWorks (See Ad on Page 60)**  
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MBX Systems  
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Milhouse Engineering & Construction Inc.  
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National Instruments  
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Navistar  
Neustar  
Nexteer Automotive  
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Nucor Building Systems  
Nucor Corporation  
Nutanix  

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Oculus VR  
OMEGA & Associates, Inc.  
OpenTable  
**Optiver US, LLC (See Ad on Page 42)**  
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Palantir Technologies, Inc.  
Parker Hannifin Corporation  
Parsons Corporation  
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Patrick Engineering Inc.  
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(See Ad on Page 1)  
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Wolverine Trading LLC
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WorldQuant, LLC (See Ad on Page 38)
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