

COOG CAREERS

Career Workbook



SECTIONS INCLUDE: University Career Services Overview, Career Exploration, Job / Internship Search, Graduate/Professional School, Interview Preparation and Salary Negotiation.

Designed by University Career Services to support the career development of all UH students

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON | CAREER SERVICES

www.uh.edu/ucs - 713-743-5100 - ucs@uh.edu

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UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES

University Career Services is a full-service career center offering current students and UH alumni resources and assistance in the formulation and implementation of their career plans.

The University of Houston's students and graduates represent a large and diverse pool of talented job candidates. University Career Services provides opportunities for potential employers to find the best and brightest across all disciplines for their respective organizations.

MEET OUR CAREER COUNSELORS

ADALIA ESPINOSA: Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) and Pre-Law

AYO OGUNYE: Communications, Graduate and Professional Programs and Alumni Career Services

CYNTHIA OLMEDO: Technology and Alumni Career Services

DONAH JUSTICE: Education, Social Work and Pre-Health

JAMIE GONZALES: Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) and Pre-Law

LAUREN HERMANN: Architecture and Design, Hotel and Restaurant Management and Exploratory Studies

PRIYANKA RAUT: UH at Sugar Land and UH at Katy instructional sites

TANYA FARIRAYI: Engineering and Natural Science and Mathematics

TIFFANY BITTING: Graduate and Professional Programs

HOW TO MEET WITH A CAREER COUNSELOR

1. Schedule an appointment through Cougar Pathway
2. Virtually chat with a career counselor.
 - Visit <https://uh.edu/ucs/> for updated dates and times.

COMMON SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Resume and cover letter reviews
- Mock interviews and interview prep
- Career and major exploration
- Graduate and professional school preparation
- Career action plan development
- Career fairs and networking events
- On-campus student employment hub
- Weekly workshops and prep weeks
- Information sessions
- On-campus interviews

CAREER RESOURCES

COUGAR PATHWAY

- Search and apply for full-time, part-time, internship and on-campus employment
- RSVP for UCS Events
- Schedule an appointment with a Career Counselor

SMART RESUME POWERED BY VMOCK

- Upload your resume and get instant, 24/7 feedback regarding your resume format and content
- Resume will be compared to peers within your field of study

FOCUS 2

- Complete this 10-20 minute free assessment to start yourself on the path of major or career exploration
- Set up an appointment with a Career Counselor to further discuss your results

CONTACT INFORMATION

ADDRESS: STUDENT SERVICE CENTER 1, ROOM 106 (4365 COUGAR VILLAGE DR, HOUSTON, TX, 77004)

PHONE: 713-743-5100 / **EMAIL:** UCS@UH.EDU / **WEBSITE:** WWW.UH.EDU/UCS

SOCIAL MEDIA: @COOGCAREERS (FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, TWITTER AND LINKEDIN)

Based on credit hours, this step by step plan will help to guide you in exploring interests, majors, and career options

ACTION STEPS - EXPLORE // 0-29 Credits

- Log into Cougar Pathway, create your profile and explore job opportunities and career resources
- Connect your interests to UH majors and potential careers using Focus 2
- Meet with a Career Counselor to discuss your major, career goals and explore career options
- Get involved on campus by joining a student organization, attending a campus event or volunteering
- Attend at least 2 University Career Services events

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

What are my skills, interests or talents? Do I enjoy working with people or things?

What classes do I enjoy the most? The least?

What organizations or networking groups am I interested in joining?

Check out the **GET INVOLVED** site within your AccessUH account to browse over **600 student organizations!**

Based on credit hours, this step by step plan will help to guide you in exploring interests, majors, and career options

ACTION STEPS - ENGAGE // 30-59 credits

- Learn more about careers that interest you by using services like O-Net Online or “What can I do with this Major”
- Visit with a faculty member and ask them about their career path or if they have any advice
- Meet with a Career Counselor to draft or critique your resume, either during a drop in appointment or a scheduled appointment through Cougar Pathway
- Create a LinkedIn profile and have it reviewed by a Career Counselor
- Attend at least 3 University Career Services events

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

What career paths are best suited for my skills and abilities?

What occupations or professions do I admire? Why?

What relevant skills do I need to develop to succeed in my potential field(s) of choice?

Based on credit hours, this step by step plan will help to guide you in exploring interests, majors, and career options

ACTION STEPS - EMPOWER AND EMPLOY // 60-120 credits

- Search for internship opportunities, part-time, full-time employment and volunteer opportunities through Cougar Pathway
- Practice interviewing skills by scheduling a mock interview, using the mock interview module within Cougar Pathway or by participating in Professional Development Week Mock Interviews with employers
- Conduct an Informational Interview with an employer whose job you would enjoy
- Research potential industries and become aware of what companies meet your interests and qualifications
- Prepare a career action plan for your final year with a help of a Career Counselor
- Research and create a list of the top 5 companies that match your interests
- Finalize your resume and develop a cover letter
- Apply for positions; remember to tailor your resume and cover letter for each position you are applying for
- Follow up on applications you have submitted

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

What are three things I do very well and what can I contribute to an employer?

What are the top industries that fit well with my interests, transferable skills and abilities?

What skills do I need to further develop to better prepare myself for a job or internship search?

FINDING YOUR PASSIONS

Passion may seem like an odd word choice when paired with career, but rest assured that one of the most important elements of personal happiness is being passionate about your career and your job. Take a few moments to answer the questions below. For each question try to come up with 3-5 answers. Once you have answered the questions, look for themes in your answers. You can also visit www.uh.edu/ucs to complete the Focus 2 career and major exploration assessment.

What do you love to do in your free time? Don't count activities you have to do or are doing to make you look better to other people. Identify the activities that you truly enjoy.

What are the skills that come to you without thought and effort? (Math, Helping Others, Art, etc.)

What are your favorite classes and subjects?

What professions or industries are you interested in exploring more and why?

What types of things energize you? Think about people, places, and activities?

In what areas are you already perceived as an expert (others seek your input and opinion)?

What types of volunteering/community service projects have you done or wish to get involved with?

ACTION STEP: What is one thing you can do or one person you can speak with to learn more about your areas of interest?

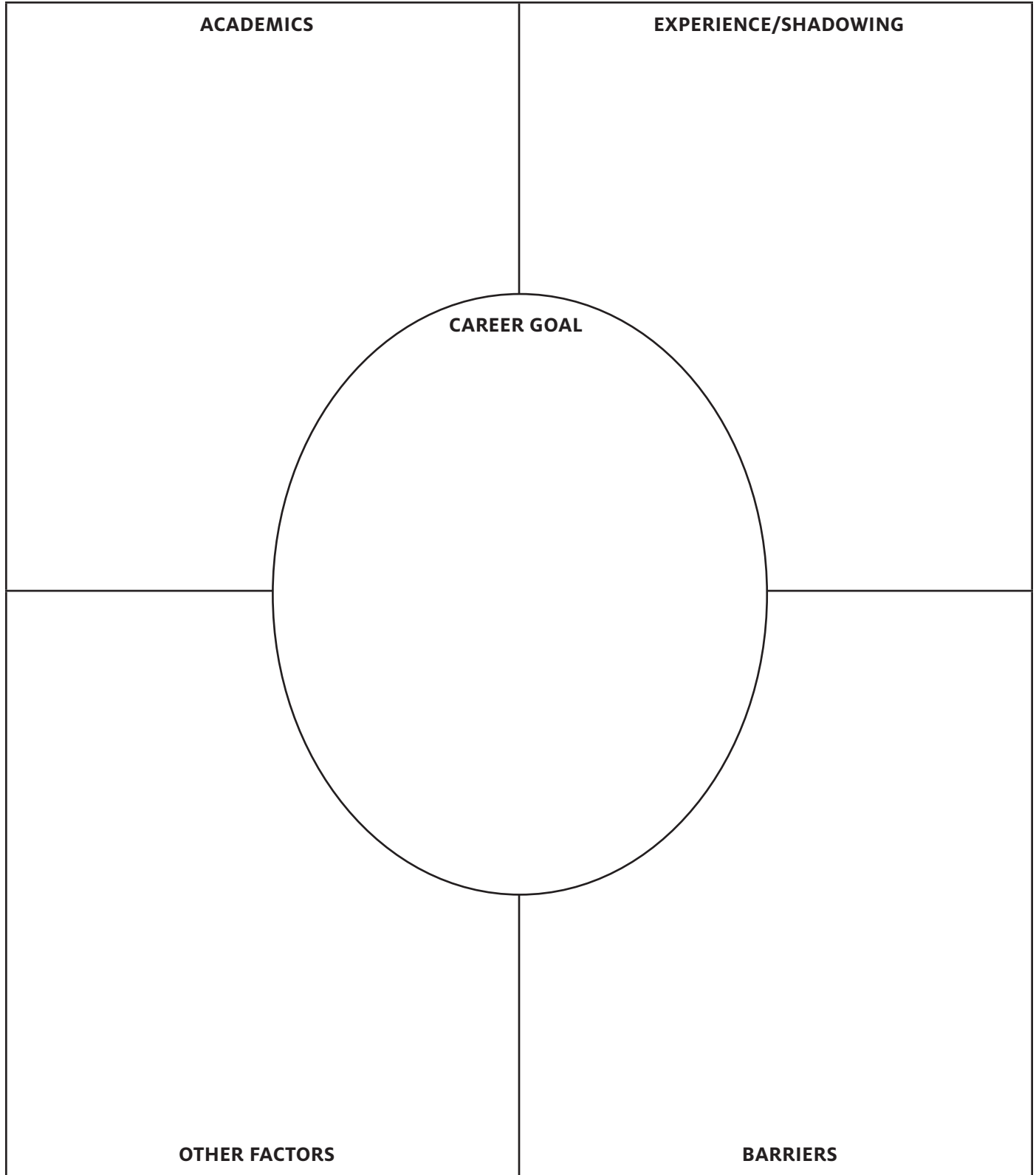
SETTING SMART GOALS

SMART Goals are measurable expressions of what you want to accomplish over a certain time period. SMART Goals can help keep you on track during your career planning process.

<p>S SPECIFIC</p>	<p>Be detailed about what you are seeking to achieve.</p>
<p>M MEASUREABLE</p>	<p>How will you track your goal and know when it has been achieved?</p>
<p>A ATTAINABLE</p>	<p>Is this a reasonable goal and time frame? What steps will help to achieve this goal?</p>
<p>R RELEVANT</p>	<p>Why is this goal important? Does it build towards a long-term goal?</p>
<p>T TIMELY</p>	<p>Set a deadline for your goal to be completed.</p>

CAREER GOAL DIAGRAM

Setting career goals requires planning. Write your goal in the center of the circle. Using the boxes surrounding the circle, identify academic requirements for your goal, and any work or shadowing experiences that would help prepare you for your goal. Then identify possible barriers or other factors that may affect reaching your goal.



AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW IS a conversation to learn about the real-life experience of someone working in a job, industry or company of interest by asking questions about their career path and current position. The interview could be done in person, by email or over the phone.

QUICK TIPS

- Don't be afraid to ask and be clear about your intention
- Dress business professional and bring your resume
- Proofread and edit your messages before sending
- Research the person and company prior to the interview

(1) BE INTENTIONAL & CREATE A LIST: Family, friends and UH alumni are great people to start with; find alumni contacts through LinkedIn. *Write down a list of people to interview; think about companies, jobs and industries that interest you.*

(2) CONTACT PEOPLE ON YOUR LIST: Introduce yourself, share how you found their information and that you are interested in learning about their career; attach your resume to the message. *Ask for a time to meet over the phone or in person within the next 2-3 weeks and share your availability. Write a message below to the contacts on your list.*

(3) PREPARE FOR THE INTERVIEW: Plan 6-8 open ended and thoughtful questions to ask. These should be things you genuinely want to know! *Write down questions to ask during the interview (see next page for sample questions).*

(4) CONDUCT THE INTERVIEW: Bring your list of questions and be prepared to lead the interview and take notes, if desired. Respect the person's time by arriving early and/or calling on time. Gain different perspectives and deepen your network by asking for names of other people to meet.

(5) FOLLOW UP & REFLECT: Send a thank-you note within 1-2 days and express your appreciation for the time and information given. *Write down what you learned, what you want to know more about and your next steps.*

TIP: FIND UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON ALUMNI THROUGH LINKEDIN! Log into LinkedIn and type University of Houston from the search bar and click "see alumni." You can filter results by where they live and work, what they do and what they studied.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Learn as much as you can *before the interview* about the person's work history, interests and education by searching the internet and their LinkedIn profile so that you can prepare questions in advance and adapt the questions based on their experience. Write 6-8 questions on a notepad, bring them to the interview and be prepared to lead the conversation.

Circle questions below that you will ask during the interview.

PREPARATION

- Can you tell me about your career path and how you got where you are?
- I saw on LinkedIn that you interned at ___ before graduating, did you find that internship helpful for finding jobs?
- What are the qualifications you or your organization looks for in a new hire?
- What types of employment or internships would you recommend?
- What's one thing you wish somebody would've told you before going into this field?
- If you could go back and do anything differently, would you change anything?

CURRENT JOB

- What are the major components of your job on a daily basis?
- What are the most rewarding and most challenging parts of your job?
- What are some big projects you're working on now or that you've finished up in the last few months?
- What skills or talents are most essential for effective job performance?
- How would you describe somebody who would excel in this career?

LIFESTYLE/ INDUSTRY GROWTH

- What obligations does your work place on your personal time?
- How much flexibility do you have in terms of dress, hours of work, vacation time or place of residence?
- How rapidly is your field growing?
- How do you see this job changing in the next 5-10 years?

JOB HUNTING STRATEGIES

- How do people find out about these jobs in your industry?
- I noticed you are a member of ___ (professional association)—have you found that helpful?
- Do you have any recommendations for other people I should speak with in the field to learn more? May I use your name when reaching out to him or her?

NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

- How would you define the culture of your organization?
- What is the average length of time employees stay with the organization?
- What type of formal or on-the-job training does the organization provide?

FOLLOW UP

- Would it be alright for us to stay in touch?
- Do you have any recommendations for other people I should speak with in the field to learn more? May I use your name when reaching out to him or her?
- Are there professional associations or experiences that you recommend for someone pursuing this field?

WHAT ELSE DO YOU WANT TO KNOW? WRITE YOUR QUESTIONS BELOW:

ASPIRATIONS

What do you see yourself doing after graduation? (0-5 years out)

What do you enjoy doing? What issues are you most passionate about?

What do you desire to learn and/or experience?

GOALS

What competencies/skills/knowledge are most desired in your industry?

What are your goals for this job/internship search?

What skills/abilities would you like to improve?

What are you hoping to gain from the experience?

PREFERENCES

In what type of organization/environment/culture do you want to work?

Where do you want to work? Are you willing to relocate? Do you have transportation or housing?

IDENTIFYING YOUR SKILLS

As you begin your job search, it is important that you are aware of the skills you have developed over time.

WITHIN THE BOXES BELOW:

- Place a “3” in the box if you are highly skilled in the area
- Place a “2” if you are moderately skilled in the area
- Place a “1” if it is an area that needs improvement

Check out the Top 10 skills employers are seeking at NACEweb.org.

COMMUNICATION	
	Public speaking
	Listening attentively
	Facilitating discussion
	Providing appropriate feedback
	Delivering presentations
	Fluency in another language
	Negotiate thoughts and ideas
	Tactfulness
	Editing / proofreading
	Writing reports and emails
	Expressing ideas concisely
	Assess impact of non-verbals
TOTAL	

LEADERSHIP	
	Maintain positive relationships
	Resolving problems/situations
	Adapting to changes
	Setting priorities
	Managing or supervising
	Delegating responsibility
	Managing a heavy workload
	Identifying improvement areas
	Determining policy
	Setting clear expectations
	Motivate others
	Manage emotions
TOTAL	

PROFESSIONALISM	
	Ethical behavior and integrity
	Setting and meeting deadlines
	Work productively with others
	Being punctual
	Managing time and work load
	Accepting responsibility
	Attention to detail
	Asking for help or support
	Making decisions
	Learning from mistakes
	Understand impact actions
	Identify growth opportunities
TOTAL	

TEAMWORK / COLLABORATION	
	Negotiate and manage conflict
	Finding resolutions
	Build collaborative relationships
	Willingness to listen
	Motivating others and self
	Providing support and care
	Respecting others
	Holding teammates accountable
	Perceiving feelings/situations
	Explain ideas clearly
	Meeting team expectations
	Being engaged and contributing
TOTAL	

TECHNOLOGY / ANALYTICAL	
	Use technology efficiently
	Adaptability to new technology
	Cyber safety and security
	Common IT problem solving
	Digital media knowledge
	Critical thinking and action
	Interpret and draw conclusions
	Quick and efficient learner
	Identify connections
	Ask good questions
	Conduct analysis and interpret
	Determine alternatives
TOTAL	

TOTAL up each section and write your scores below:

TOTAL	
	Communication
	Leadership
	Professionalism
	Teamwork / Collaboration
	Technology / Analytical

What are your top 3 highest scoring categories?

What occupations require your skill sets?

COVER LETTER WORKSHEET

- **BE CONCISE AND PROFESSIONAL IN TONE:** Cover letters should be only one page in length and will serve as an example of your writing abilities. Use a professional and confident tone, and make sure you **PROOFREAD!**
- **CONVINCE THE READER TO LOOK AT YOUR RESUME:** The cover letter may be seen first—this is your movie trailer. It must grab the reader’s attention (in a positive way) and should be targeted to that particular employer.
- **HIGHLIGHT YOUR EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:** Using examples, identify specific skills and past experiences that are relevant to the position you are seeking. Try to connect to the needs of the employer.
- **REFLECT YOUR ATTITUDE:** Try to convey your personality, motivation, enthusiasm, teamwork, and communication skills.

“T DIAGRAM”

Step 1: On the left side, list 3 skills or qualifications from the job posting

Step 2: On the right side, list 3 skills or experiences you’ve had that give “PROOF” to the skills listed on the left. The goal here is to show you have the skills or qualifications they are looking for!

Step 3: Take the #1 (A) job posting skill and your #1 (B) experience/skills and craft the ideas into a paragraph.

Step 4: Repeat for #2 and #3 and tie into a paragraph. (See PARA 2 under the sample cover letter for example)

JOB POSTING SKILLS	YOUR EXPERIENCES / SKILLS
#1 (A)	#1 (B)
#2 (A)	#2 (B)
#3 (A)	#3 (B)

Craft #1 (A) and #1 (B) into a sentence: (repeat for #2 and #3)

[Month Day, Year] - Fill in

[Dear Mr. / Ms. / Mrs. / Dr. Last Name / Hiring Manager] - Fill in

[PARA 1] Introduce yourself, make sure you list the position you are seeking and explain how you found the position. This is also the space to mention any mutual contacts or connections you may have with the company.

[Example] My name is Jane Doe and I am a senior student at the University of Houston in Houston, Texas majoring in Biology. I am writing you today because I am interested in the Mathematics Tutor position at ABC Corporation. I found out about this position through Cougar Pathway and felt like it matched my skills and abilities. Below I have outlined the ways my experiences directly connect to this position:

[PARA 2] Pick a skill from the T-Diagram on pg 12: Describe that skill and give an example of how you have demonstrated that skill. Repeat 2 more times. There should be 3 skills total listed in the whole paragraph. (only 1 listed below)

[Example] Communication: One of my top strengths is communication and in your job posting you mentioned you were looking for someone with strong oral and written communication skills. Over the past 3 years I have developed this skill while working a tutor for XYZ organization. Within my role I met one-on-one with students and provided them support regarding Calculus 1 homework and exam questions. I had to learn how to communicate with students and provide them examples that worked for different learning styles. I believe this experience truly set me up to be successful in this role.

[PARA 3] Tell why you are interested in the employer or that particular field/industry type. Demonstrate your knowledge of the organization to relate your educational and professional background to the employer or position. Mention specific qualifications that make you a good fit for the employer's needs.

[Example] In the mission of ABC Corporation you mention diverse learning paths and how you tailor tutoring experiences. I truly believe in this approach and want the opportunity to contribute to this mission. I have seen customized tutoring experiences work wonders on previous student's I've tutored. They've been able to flourish and understand the content better. Additionally, I appreciate the learning opportunities you give employees. I want to work for the company who wants to better me and will allow me to continue my education.

[PARA 4] Thank the reader for their time and mention you are very interested. Add any additional information you feel would be helpful.

[Example] In conclusion, thank you for taking the time to read my letter and I hope you continue on to my resume for a further explanation of my skills and experiences. I feel confident that I can excel as a Mathematics Tutor for ABC Corporation and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name and/or Signature

This worksheet is intended to help you gather information about your education, work and other experiences to assist you in formulating your resume. Don't forget to add your contact information at the top!

OBJECTIVE: State the position you are seeking and 2-3 relevant skills. Avoid the use of "I" and "me". This is an optional section and can be used to connect your relevant skills to the position.

EDUCATION: List all colleges and universities from where you received or will receive a degree. Do not abbreviate and start with most recent. Include major and minor, GPA (optional if 3.0 and higher) and expected graduation date.

EXPERIENCE: List relevant experiences in reverse chronological order. Include: Position title, employer name, location, employment dates, responsibilities & accomplishments. Use ACTION VERB + TASK + RESULT to format the bullets.

SKILLS: List language(s) and fluency levels as well as computer programs, software, and languages relevant to the position.

HONORS, AWARDS & ACTIVITIES: For honors and awards, include name of honor/award, date received & name of organization. For activities, include the name of the organization, your title, and the dates of activity or membership.

Note: At least three professional references should be listed in a separate document.

RESUME ACTION VERBS

The bullet points under each of your work experiences should focus on accomplishments and results, not just job duties. Use the formula ACTION VERB + TASK + RESULT and don't forget to quantify your results.

Management	Communication	Research	Technical	Financial
Administered Appointed Assigned Authorized Converted Coordinated Delegated Developed Directed Eliminated Enforced Enhanced Established Generated Handled Hired Improved Increased Initiated Recommend	Addressed Advertised Arranged Clarified Composed Consulted Contacted Corresponded Defined Described Discussed Drafted Edited Explained Formulated Influenced Interacted Interpreted Interviewed Lectured	Analyzed Clarified Collected Critiqued Diagnosed Evaluated Examined Extracted Identified Inspected Interpreted Interviewed Investigated Organized Researched Reviewed Summarized Surveyed Systematized	Computed Conserved Constructed Converted Debugged Designed Determined Engineered Fabricated Fortified Installed Maintained Operated Overhauled Printed Rectified Regulated Remodeled Repaired Replaced	Adjusted Allocated Analyzed Appraised Assessed Audited Balanced Calculated Computed Conserved Corrected Determined Developed Estimated Forecasted Managed Measured Planned Programmed Projected
Teaching	Creative	Helping	Administrative	Other
Adapted Advised Clarified Coached Communicated Conducted Coordinated Critiqued Developed Enabled Encouraged Evaluated Explained Facilitated Focused Guided Individualized Informed Instilled Instructed Motivated Persuaded	Acted Adapted Combined Conceptualized Condensed Created Customized Designed Developed Directed Displayed Drew Entertained Fashioned Formulated Founded Illustrated Initiated Introduced Invented Modeled Modified	Advocated Aided Assessed Assisted Clarified Coached Collaborated Contributed Cooperated Counseled Demonstrated Diagnosed Educated Encouraged Ensured Expedited Facilitated Guided Helped Insured Intervened Motivated	Arranged Categorized Classified Coded Collected Compiled Distributed Executed Filed Generated Implemented Logged Maintained Monitored Obtained Operated Ordered Organized Prepared Processed Provided Purchased	Achieved Completed Expanded Exceeded Improved Pioneered Reduced Resolved Restored Spearheaded Succeeded Surpassed Transformed Won

[FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME]

Cell Phone Number - Professional Email Address - City, State, Zip - LinkedIn URL (if applicable)

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts (or Science) in _____ (major) Month and Year of Graduation (or expected date)
University of Houston- Houston, Texas
Minor
Overall GPA or GPA in Major (Optional- Only if 3.0 or higher)

RELEVANT COURSEWORK (Pick 4-6 relevant courses)

CLASS ONE	CLASS THREE	CLASS FIVE
CLASS TWO	CLASS FOUR	CLASS SIX

ACADEMIC PROJECTS

Project Name, University of Houston Month Year

- Projects could include: team or individual projects, laboratory reports/projects, research papers
- Independent projects (outside of the classroom projects could also be listed, as long as they are relevant)
- List your tasks and what you learned/skills you gained
- Use strong verbs to explain what you did and quantify, if possible

EXPERIENCE (“Work” - “Relevant” - “Research” - “Leadership” Experience)

Position Title Month Year - Month Year
Name of Business or Organization, City, State

- Use the formula ACTION VERB + TASK + RESULT to format the bullets
- Put your strongest selling point first
- Focus on accomplishments and results, not just job duties
- Provide as much detail about your responsibilities as possible

Position Title Month Year - Month Year
Name of Business or Organization, City, State

- If it happened in the past, make sure you use past tense verbs
- Avoid repetition: try not to use the same words and/or phrases over and over again
- Quantify any results whenever possible and use industry keywords/buzzwords

SKILLS

Computer skills, technical skills, certifications
Language skills (fluent, bilingual, conversational)
(No soft skills - “communication, teamwork, organization..etc”)

HONORS

- Dean’s List: List semesters or range of semesters
- Include any Scholarships, Year Awarded

ACTIVITIES (“Leadership” - “Involvement” - “Professional Development” - “Volunteer Experience”)

- Student Organization, Member, Year(s) of involvement (If leadership role, list and discuss responsibilities)
- Volunteer Organization, Volunteer, Year(s) of involvement

BENEFITS OF ATTENDING A CAREER FAIR:

- Learn about companies within your field
- Engage with currently employed professionals
- Practice your introduction
- Establish employment contacts
- Develop your communication skills
- Obtain internships or employment opportunities
- Network with employers, peers and future colleagues

CAREER FAIR ETIQUETTE

- Bring mints to maintain fresh breath (no gum)
- Do not wear strong cologne or perfume
- Do not bring a backpack or large purse
- Shake hands firmly, but not too firm
- Turn off or silence your cell phone
- Be enthusiastic and positive during the fair
- Be courteous of the recruiter's time

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A CAREER FAIR:

- RSVP for the Career Fair via Cougar Pathway.
- Review the employers attending on Cougar Pathway and research their mission, vision and open positions
- Decide which employers you would like to meet with and plan a strategy for speaking with them
- Prepare your resume with the help of a career counselor
- Practice answering the "tell me about yourself" question
- Pick out your professional attire. Refer to the Professional Dress Etiquette (page 26) for examples
- Arrive early to park, prepare and relax!

CREATING YOUR INTRODUCTION FOR A CAREER FAIR

These questions will get you started in creating your introduction and determining what you want to share with a recruiter:

- What is your full name, major and academic standing?

- What is the name of the company you are speaking with and what positions do they have open?

- Why do you want to work for that company?

- What interests you about the company or their open position(s)?

- What unique work experience, skills, and course projects are relevant to that company or their open position(s)?

- Why should someone hire you? (Brainstorm - may not be shared)

ELEVATOR PITCH WORKSHEET

This job hunting technique is known by several names: elevator speech, 30-second commercial, infomercial, and self-advertisement. It is a well-developed answer to the question "Tell me about yourself." Creating this 30-60 second message forces you to take stock of who you are, what you offer, and where you want to go. This spiel is an advertisement for you; it is an opportunity to get your point across in a timely manner. It is concise and clever. Practice it to make it a natural and powerful statement about you.

SCENARIO: You are in an elevator and recognize the person next to you as a person who works where you want to work or does what you would like to do. There is not much time to talk before you reach your floor: Introduce yourself, tell who you are, what you want to do, and what you have to offer, all in less than a minute.

My experience (internship, academic, research, work, leadership, study abroad, volunteerism etc.) includes:

My goals for an internship and/or job (field of work, type of job, company, location, etc.) are:

My skills (technical- e.g. computer programs, soft skills- e.g. communication) are:

EXAMPLE:

NAME: Hi, my name is _____.

BACKGROUND: I am pursuing (major/minors) _____ at the University of Houston. While attending UH, I interned at _____ and learned _____. I have also been involved in _____ and have assumed a leadership role through my work with _____. In this position, I accomplished _____.

EXPERTISE & GOALS: One area that I am very interested in is _____, so I am currently exploring opportunities in _____ at _____.

SKILLS: I believe I would be an ideal candidate for this position because I have been praised for being _____.

EMPLOYER RESEARCH WORKSHEET

NAME OF COMPANY	
INDUSTRY	
TYPE OF ORGANIZATION (PUBLIC, PRIVATE OR NON-PROFIT?)	
LOCATION	
SIZE OF COMPANY	
MISSION/VISION STATEMENT	
WHAT PRODUCT(S) OR SERVICE(S) DOES THE COMPANY MAKE, SELL OR PROVIDE?	
WHO ARE THE COMPANY'S CLIENTS? COMPETITORS?	
ANY RECENT COMPANY NEWS? PRESS RELEASES? NEW PRODUCT LAUNCHES?	
INTERESTING FACTS OR COMPANY HISTORY?	
OTHER NOTES?	

PERSONAL BRANDING STATEMENT

PERSONAL BRANDING is marketing yourself and your career to leave a positive impression on an individual or organization. To explore the type of image or brand you would like to demonstrate, answer the questions below:

STEP ONE:

What are your values? *(What types of things are important to you in a career?)*

What are your professional career goals? *(What do you want to accomplish within 3-5 years?)*

What differentiates you from your competition? *(What do you offer that no one else does? What is unique about you?)*

STEP TWO:

Pick six words from the questions above that you feel truly represent you.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

STEP THREE:

String the six words together within a sentence, using filler words if needed. *This is your Personal Branding Statement!*

One of the best ways to market yourself online is through *LinkedIn!* You can add your Personal Branding Statement to your LinkedIn profile summary!

WHY USE LINKEDIN?

- 85% of all jobs are filled via networking
- There are 433 million users on LinkedIn
- LinkedIn profiles with skills listed, get 13X more views
- 40% of LinkedIn users log on every day
- There have been 1 Billion endorsements on LinkedIn
- During the 1st quarter of 2016, LinkedIn had 45 billion page views

Below are the major sections within every LinkedIn profile. Go through each section and make notes of things you could add or change within your profile.

PROFESSIONAL PHOTO: Do you have a professional photo? (It should not be a selfie and you should be dressed professionally) *Where can you get a professional photo taken?*

PROFESSIONAL HEADING: Your professional heading is one of the first things a connection will see (besides your photo). You have 120 characters to describe yourself. You can use some of the words from your personal branding statement, you can list your title, or you can describe what types of positions you are seeking. *What do you want your Professional Heading to say?*

SUMMARY: If you did not use your personal branding statement within the heading, your summary section is an excellent spot for that. You can also use keywords from your industry or specialization. (Remember, this text is searchable by others!) *What do you want to share within your summary?*

EDUCATION: List all of the institutions of higher education that you have attended. Add activities and organizations you were involved with in school, as well as projects. (Projects can be listed in a different section) *What schools have you attended and what degrees have you obtained?*

EXPERIENCE: This is where a lot of your resume content will go! List ALL of your work experiences within this section. BUT, don't just list the title and employer, add descriptions about what you did in each position. Use strong action words and quantify if possible. *What job experiences will you list?*

SKILLS: List your top "hard skills" which can include technical skills, computer skills or language skills. After you add them, get your connections to ENDORSE the skills for a strong profile. *What "hard skills" will you list within your profile?*

OTHER SECTIONS TO INCLUDE:

- Volunteer Opportunities
- Organizations
- Courses and Projects
- Honors and Awards
- Publications and Presentations
- Certifications

FOR ADDITIONAL LINKEDIN TIPS FOR STUDENTS VISIT WWW.STUDENTS.LINKEDIN.COM

GRADUATE SCHOOL EXPLORATION WORKSHEET 24

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

What are my career/professional goals? Do I see myself working in academia or industry?

How will completing a graduate degree help me accomplish my goals?

What program(s) of study am I interested in? Why?

Are there any specific research areas or focused programs that I am interested in? Are there specific faculty I want to work with or specific schools I want to target and why?

What aspects of a graduate school program are important to me? (e.g. cohort model, assistantship)

GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL CHECKLIST 25

JANUARY-APRIL (SPRING OF JUNIOR YEAR)

- Determine what you want to study; Explore career options and potential earnings with that graduate degree.
- Research graduate programs and map out dates for admission requirements. (If possible, try to meet with current students, faculty, and advisor to ensure the program is a good fit. You could reach out via email or have virtual conversations if distance is an issue.)
- Research and schedule date(s) to take the required entrance exams. Start studying for the exam(s).

JUNE/JULY (SUMMER PRIOR TO SENIOR YEAR)

- Gain additional experience by volunteering, shadowing or interning.
- Continue studying for entrance exams!

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER (FALL OF SENIOR YEAR)

- Request application or research application process online (Be sure to note deadline for applying and addresses for where supplemental materials should be sent.)
- Take the GRE or required standardized test (Make sure you are sending scores to the appropriate schools).

OCTOBER-DECEMBER (FALL OF SENIOR YEAR)

- Explore scholarship / fellowship / assistantship information for each school; seek out ways to fund your graduate education. (Note within your personal statement or letter of intent if you are interested in conducting research with a specific faculty member or if you would be interested in being considered for an assistantship or fellowship.)
- Request copies of your transcript from the Registrars Office (It is usually best to have them sent directly to the addresses where supplemental materials should be sent.)
- Approach faculty members, employers, etc. to write recommendation letters. Remember to provide them with any required recommendation forms, your resume, a stamped/pre-addressed envelope (if required), and the deadline for submission.
- Compose personal statements and supplemental essays for each institution and have your statement/essay reviewed by University Career Services, faculty members, mentors or advisors.
- Meet with University Career Services for a resume/CV/personal statement critique.
- Submit applications and application fees for each school by its published deadline.

JANUARY (SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR)

- File your Federal Income Tax Return (Required before you can complete the FAFSA.)
- Complete the FAFSA Online and submit all completed scholarship application forms.
- Prepare for any admission/assistantship interviews by scheduling an appointment with University Career Services for a mock interview.
- Attend any preview days/assistantship interview sessions/faculty interview sessions for each institution if you haven't already.

MARCH-MAY (SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR)

- Follow-up on institutions that you have not heard from and make your final decision.
- Submit commitment forms and/or fees to the institution you have chosen.
- Ask about program orientation and enrollment procedures.
- Send thank-you notes to people who wrote your recommendation letters, informing them of your success.

YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT IS A(AN)...

- Picture of who you are as a person.
- Invitation to get to know you.
- Story of your self-reflection.
- Indication of your priorities and choices.

YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT IS NOT A(AN)...

- Academic paper about your life.
- Resume in narrative form.
- Journal entry.
- Justification or plea for admission.

QUICK TIPS

- Make your personal statement interesting to read
- Use details and concrete examples when relevant
- Get feedback from people you trust
- Revise, revise, revise!

BEFORE YOU BEGIN, ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:

1. What is your overall professional aspiration or goal? How will this program help you achieve this goal?

2. Why do you want to attend graduate school and this program in particular?

3. What makes you a qualified applicant or asset to the program? (Unique life experiences and background)

ORGANIZING YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

- Brainstorming questions: Think of any stories or interesting experiences that are relevant to your graduate school interests. How did you become interested in this field?

BODY

- Brainstorming questions: What are your major accomplishments? What have you learned from your research or experiences? What are your future academic and professional goals and how do they align?

CONCLUSION

- Brainstorming questions: What attracts you to the program? Any specific professors, research initiatives or program attributes?

RESEARCH

The Company

- Know at minimum 3 specific things about the company; do your research and know more than just the surface level facts
- Look up the person or people who will be interviewing you on LinkedIn; see if you have any professional connections or personal interests in common

Your Field/Industry

- How does your field contribute to society?
- Any recent advances or new technologies emerged?
- Where do you fit into your industry and its continued success?
- What are the areas of growth (weaknesses) of your industry?
- What are important qualities of professionals within your field?

PREPARE

Interview Question Types and Example

- Basic - *Tell me about yourself and your interest in this position.*
- Behavioral - *Describe a time you demonstrated leadership when working in a team. What was the result?*
- Technical - *You have been assigned to a project involving a new technology. How would you get started?*

Basic Interview Logistics (Face to Face Interview)

- Do you have directions to interview location? (Think about construction, weather or traffic concerns)
- Do you have reliable transportation?
- When do you plan to leave your home? How long will it take you? (Plan to arrive 20-30 min before. You can sit in your car if need be or grab a coffee near by if you arrive early.)

Basic Interview Logistics (Virtual Interview; e.g. Skype or Recorded)

- Do you have a quiet, professional space to conduct the interview?
- Do you speakers, microphone, etc, work? (Make sure to test them ahead of time)
- Don't forget to dress professionally, even though it's virtual.

Materials for the Interview

- Resume (multiple copies)
- Professional reference list
- Unofficial transcript
- Copies of work/projects



After reviewing this list, is there anything you need to do to prepare for your interview? Note them below:

REGARDING GENDER IDENTITY AND ATTIRE: Your research on a particular employer or field, in addition to your comfort level, will assist in your choice to wear clothes associated with your gender identity or to wear gender-neutral clothing.

BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL

- SUITS**
- Long-sleeve suit in black, grey or navy
 - Jacket must match bottoms
 - Skirt should be knee length
- SHIRTS AND TIES**
- White or light-colored shirt or blouse
 - Conservative tie; no distracting prints
 - Tie should reach belt
- PANTS**
- Not too tight or baggy
 - Pant leg should touch front of shoe
- SHOES**
- Neutral flats or pumps with a 1-2" heel
 - Polished, leather shoes with dark socks that match
- ACCESSORIES**
- Simple and conservative jewelry
 - Small purse or professional bag
 - Padfolio or portfolio for resumes

BUSINESS CASUAL

- JACKETS/TOPS**
- Sports coat, blazer or suite jacket
 - Sweater or cardigan
 - Polo shirt or button down shirt
- PANTS/BOTTOMS**
- Dress pants, khakis or dark jeans
 - Skirt or appropriate dress
- ACCESSORIES**
- Tie optional

- WE ASK THAT YOU REFRAIN FROM WEARING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**
- **HATS** - fedoras, baseball caps, beanies, berets or cowboy hats
 - **T-SHIRTS** - short sleeved shirts, tank tops, cut-off shirts; no exposed backs, arms or midriffs
 - **ATHLETIC GEAR** - sweatpants, workout shorts, yoga pants or hooded sweatshirts
 - **SHORTS** - cargo, denim or khaki
 - **JEANS** - ripped, cut-offs or light-wash denim; must fit appropriately, not too baggy or too tight
 - **SHOES** - flip-flops, casual sandals or sneakers/tennis shoes
 - **ACCESSORIES** - large or distracting jewelry around the neck, ears or hands, large hair accessories, or multiple pieces of jewelry around the neck, ears or hands

PROFESSIONAL DRESS RESOURCES:

- **CAREER GEAR, GREATER HOUSTON:** Career gear is a local Houston resource for men to gain professional dress assistance. For more information: <http://www.careergearhouston.org/index.html>
- **DRESS FOR SUCCESS HOUSTON:** Dress for Success is a local Houston resource for women to gain professional dress assistance. For more information: <http://dfshouston.org/>
- **UCS CAREER CLOSET:** The UCS Career Closet is an initiative supported by UH to offer UH students assistance through professional dress rental. Interested students should schedule a Career Closet appointment through Cougar Pathway.

WHAT IS THE STAR METHOD?

The STAR Method is a technique to answer interview questions. This method helps you outline the exact content an employer would like to learn from an interview answer.

SITUATION:

- Define the general context
- Who/What/When
- Mention the problem you had to overcome

TASK:

- Identify the key objective and issue that you were responsible for accomplishing

ACTION:

- Describe the action you took or initiated, emphasizing the skills you used to complete the task

RESULTS:

- Summarize the outcome in business terms, giving detail and quantifying when possible

Develop a **STAR** example for the question below. These statements can also add value to your elevator pitch, cover letter and interviews. Depending on your targeted position during your career search, you may want to revise these statements to make them more relevant.

Tell us about a time you work in a team to achieve a goal; what was your role and the outcome?

SITUATION:

TASK:

ACTION:

RESULTS:

Tell me about yourself.

What motivated you to apply to our company/organization?

Provide examples that illustrate your greatest strength and an area of growth as it relates to your field of interest.

What are your short-term and long-term professional goals?

Describe your ideal work environment.

Why do you believe you would be a good fit for this position?

Tell me about a time when you worked in a team to reach a goal? What was your role and the outcome?

Describe a time you demonstrated creativity or innovation?

Tell me about a time when you displayed leadership when working with others?

Give me an example of a problem you faced in your job or in school and how you solved it.

Describe a time you had to deal with a difficult person.

Tell me about a time when you faced an ethical dilemma and how you handled it.

How has your education prepared you for this position?

What questions do you have for us?

QUICK FACTS

- Failing to negotiate your first salary could cause you to miss out on more than \$500,000 by age 60
- 75 percent of people who ask for a raise receive one
- Women earn 25.6 percent less than men

STEP 1: RESEARCH

- Use resources such as O*Net (onetonline.org) and GlassDoor (glassdoor.com) to understand market rates for the position
- Take aspects other than salary into account, such as benefits, work hours & vacation
- Create a realistic budget to know your minimum income

What is the market rate for positions you are interested in?

What benefits, other than salary, are important to you?

STEP 2: STRATEGIZE

- Do not start negotiating until after you receive the job offer
- Try to avoid being the first to name a salary figure
- Brainstorm ways to meet your goals and the employer's needs simultaneously
- Focus on facts and research to back up your proposal
- Have a target salary and minimum salary in mind

What is your target salary or salary range?

What skills, experience, and qualifications do you have to offer the employer?

STEP 3: NEGOTIATE

- Be persuasive and clearly articulate your value
- Listen carefully to the employer's needs
- Don't forget to negotiate benefits
- Make a decision once you take the entire compensation package into account

How can you practice negotiation strategies and communicating your value?

EXAMPLE MONTHLY BUDGET

We recognize everyone's financial situation is different, but these activities are meant to get you thinking about your future financial needs and what salary amount will meet those needs.

MONTHLY INCOME			
	BUDGETED AMOUNT	ACTUAL AMOUNT	DIFFERENCE
NET INCOME			
Salary including Deductions			
Other Income			
TOTAL			
MONTHLY EXPENSES			
HOME			
Mortgage or Rent			
HOA Fees / Property Tax			
Home or Renters Insurance			
Home Repairs / Maintenance			
UTILITIES			
Electricity / Natural Gas			
Water / Sewer / Trash			
Internet / Cable			
FOOD			
Groceries			
Restaurants/Out to Eat			
HEALTHCARE			
Insurance Premiums			
Prescriptions			
Fitness (Class, Gym, Etc)			
TRANSPORTATION			
Car Payment			
Car Insurance			
Car Maintenance / Repairs			
Gasoline			
OTHER			
Entertainment (Movies/Hobbies)			
Pet Care (Food/Grooming)			
Personal Care Products			
Clothing			
DEBT			
Credit Card Payments			
Student Loans			
SAVINGS			
Emergency Fund			
Savings Account			
TOTAL			

We recognize everyone's financial situation is different, but these activities are meant to get you thinking about your future financial needs and what salary amount will meet those needs.

PART ONE: Complete the Example Monthly Budget and fill in the totals below:

MONTHLY BUDGET	
TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME	
TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES	
<i>Subtract Income from Expenses</i>	

PART TWO: Answer the questions below:

Did you encounter any surprises, challenges or interesting things while completing the Monthly Budget?

Are there any areas you want to reduce or increase?

In reviewing your monthly budget, what salary range do you need in order to cover your expenses?

How does the salary range listed above, compare to your perceived thoughts about salary within your field? Is it similar to what you were thinking? Is it way off?