START YOUR CAREER SEARCH

All the tools you need to connect with employers

Handshake makes it easy for every UW-Madison student to explore career events, connect to jobs and internships, and even schedule on-campus interviews.

With Handshake you can:

- Browse and register for career events on campus
- Explore thousands of jobs and internships from over 200,000 employers nationwide
- Get personalized job recommendations based on your major, interests, and more
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ecs.wisc.edu/handshake
PLANNING YOUR JOB SEARCH ......................................................... 2
Timing Your Job Search
Job Search: Seven Steps

ASSESS YOUR CAREER READINESS .............................................. 3

DEVELOP YOUR RÉSUMÉ & REFERENCES .................................... 4
Ten Résumé Basics
Your Contact Information
Objective Statements
Functional Areas
Education Section
Experience Section
Action Verbs
Other Résumé Section Headers
Sample Résumés
Consider and Ask References

EXPLORE POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS ........................................... 21
Where to Find Organizations

RESEARCH EMPLOYERS ............................................................. 22
Be Prepared for Online Applications

BUILD YOUR PROFESSIONAL CONNECTIONS ............................ 22
LinkedIn: An Essential Tool

CONTACT EMPLOYERS ............................................................... 24
Form Letters
Traditional Cover Letter Format
Tone and Timing
Email Reminders for Job Seekers
Business Email Etiquette
Sample Letters and Emails

PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS ......................................................... 30
The Recruiter’s Approach to Your Interview
Do Your Interview Homework
What to Wear
What to Bring
Practice Out Loud
Attitude
Discussions of Salary
Typical Interview Questions
Questions for You to Ask the Recruiter
Different Types of Interviews
Interview Follow-up
On-Site, Second Interview Preparation

EVALUATE & MAKE DECISIONS ................................................... 41
The Offer
Should You Negotiate?
Accept and Decline All Offers in Writing
Report Job Offers to ECS

Contact Information:
Engineering Career Services
1150 Engineering Hall
1415 Engineering Drive
Madison, WI 53706
Phone: (608) 262-3471
Email: ecs@engr.wisc.edu
ecs.wisc.edu
PLAN YOUR JOB SEARCH

Job searching is like a class: Some of it is fun and some of it is work. For success, you will need to:

1. **Develop solid job search skills.**
2. **Promote yourself to campus recruiters.**
3. **Identify, research and pursue employers who do not recruit on campus.**

The skills you develop today are essential for a lifetime of job search and career change skills. Most experts predict you will change jobs every three years—therefore, it is critical to develop and continually renew your job search skills and build connections so you are ready for the next adventure.

Attitude and effort directly correlate with job search success. Take personal responsibility. Use every resource available to you in ECS, your department, and your personal connections. Get organized and stay focused. ECS is a valuable tool offering workshops and individual counseling, but ultimately, the job search is your responsibility.

» Check out Engineering Career Services at ecs.wisc.edu and create a Handshake account today!

TIMING YOUR JOB SEARCH

Most job searches take 3 to 6 months from start to finish. ECS suggests that you start your search 1 to 2 semesters before your planned first day of work. For a co-op or internship, you should always plan at least one semester ahead of your intended work terms. Begin preparing for your job search the summer before your planned graduation date, whether you are a December, May or August grad.

**NOTE:** Fall semester is the busiest semester for campus recruiting and many employers only visit campus once a year. Your search may continue into the spring semester, which is excellent for attracting employers who are filling immediate openings upon your graduation.

Preparation is essential to conduct a successful job search. Before you contact a potential employer, be sure you have done your homework. This work will greatly enhance your confidence in communicating with employers at career fairs, by email and in interviews. Plan ahead with a focus on your goals.

JOB SEARCH: SEVEN STEPS

1. **Assess your skills and accomplishments**
   Clearly identify, understand and describe your skills and accomplishments. The effectiveness of your résumé, emails and interview skills starts here.

2. **Develop your résumé**
   Build an effective résumé based on your skill and strength assessment plus market knowledge and your list of targeted positions and industries. Include keywords, technical skills, leadership, school and work experiences.

3. **Review and clean your digital presence**
   Test your internet presence by conducting a search of your own, and then use available means to block undesirable information. If you have an online profile on any social networks, carefully review it for content that would deter an employer. Change information on your personal websites that you wouldn’t want your current or future boss to see. If another site contains objectionable information about you, contact the webmaster about changing or removing it. If that’s not possible, you should be ready to explain it, if asked.

4. **Target employers and set a goal**
   Know your market. Determine viable employers interested in hiring people with your skills. Read about companies and agencies. Who are you really interested in? Focus on finding specific employers versus flooding the market with résumés. Set a minimum goal of 10 quality applications per week.

5. **Contact employers, activate your connections, and develop tracking mechanism**
   Develop polished email communications requesting interviews or information regarding opportunities. Introduce yourself at career fairs. Adapt your résumé and cover letter to specific employer needs. Use your personal connections to find contacts. Follow up regularly until your interview is scheduled. Develop a spreadsheet to track your efforts: names, correspondence and interview dates, follow-up, results, etc. Follow-up is critical.

6. **Practice interviewing, interview, and follow-up**
   Review descriptions of your skills and strengths. Verbally practice responses to questions using specific examples. Discuss the match between your skills and employer needs. Evaluate interview performance and improve skills. There may be multiple interview stages—screening and on-site. Send thank you emails. Follow-up with employers after interviews.

7. **Make job offer decisions**
   Potential job offers require you to evaluate financials as well as fit. Accept or decline each job.
ASSESS YOUR CAREER READINESS

Spend time assessing your personal/professional skills and strengths—the basis of any job search.

The strengths you identify in your skills-assessment form the foundation of your job search. This foundation leads to effective résumé development, letter writing, and examples you will use in the interview.

To conduct an effective self-assessment, use many methods, tools and resources to develop a list of experiences, successful projects and activities that have helped shape your interests and development. Look beyond the simple listing of your degree(s), coursework and experiences. Identify your unique skills and patterns of success. List those things you are good at and are passionate about—not those skills you feel you should have. Consider specific work on projects and coursework that provide you with satisfaction, challenge and that inspire your enthusiasm. Consider your strengths in problem solving, and in assessing and summarizing complex issues. Consider situations in which others compliment you on your abilities and strengths. This assessment forms the beginning stages of identification and articulation of skill and strength development.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers has developed career-readiness competencies for new college graduates. Review each competency and assess your preparedness for the workforce. Consider how you may incorporate these competencies into your resume, cover letters, and interview responses.

**Critical thinking/problem solving:**
Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions and overcome problems. You should be able to obtain, interpret and use knowledge, facts and data in this process, and can demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

**Oral/written communications:**
Articulate your thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to people inside and outside of the organization. You should have public speaking skills, can express ideas to others, and can write and edit memos, letters and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

**Teamwork/collaboration:**
Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles and viewpoints. You should be able to work within a team structure and negotiate and manage conflict.

**Digital technology:**
Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks and accomplish goals. You should demonstrate effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

**Leadership:**
Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. You should be able to assess and manage your emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize and delegate work.

**Professionalism/work ethic:**
Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits—for example, punctuality, working productively with others, managing your time and workload, and understanding the impact of nonverbal communication on professional work image. You should demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior, act responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and learn from your mistakes.

**Career management:**
Identify and articulate your skills, strengths, knowledge and experiences relevant to the position you desire and your career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. You should be able to navigate and explore job options, understand and take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understand how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

**Global/intercultural fluency:**
Value, respect and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations and religions. You should demonstrate openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals’ differences.

We recommend you also add technical skills to the competencies you are prepared to discuss.
DEVELOP YOUR RÉSUMÉ & REFERENCES

Add job goals to your skills assessment. Include work-related and academic experiences and extra activities.

The process of developing a résumé is an extension of your self-assessment. Unless you have thoroughly and honestly determined what your skills are and identified specific situations in which you have either developed or successfully used your skills, your résumé will not be distinctive or effective. Keep in mind that résumé writing is not rocket science, but neither is it simple. It requires careful thought, attention to detail, and understanding of purpose. Prior to working on résumé specifics, please keep in mind the following important ground rules:

TEN RÉSUMÉ BASICS

1. Be concise
The length of your résumé depends on your skills and experience. You may need more than one page to effectively state your strengths, but do not use space carelessly. Most undergraduates develop a one-page résumé; MS students and alumni may require two, while PhD candidates’ resume may be three pages or more when including publications, presentations and references. Key information such as degrees and titles should be easy to find. Arrange the information by importance.

2. Know your objective
Your purpose in writing an effective résumé is to obtain an interview and to guide your interview discussion. Customize your résumé for the opportunity.

3. You cannot write a résumé in an hour or two
Writing an effective résumé is time-consuming, and requires planning, feedback, edits and adjustments. In fact, a résumé is never “complete.” Adjustments continually improve content and format.

4. Presentation matters
Your format or layout should be professional, consistent and logical. Avoid using a template.

5. Use keywords
Employers search résumés for keywords. List every primary software tool, instrumentation, research method, and computer language. Read current job postings and employer websites to determine key skills currently sought after. Include buzzwords in your area of interest that match your search and skill set.

6. Spell check (with U.S. English version)
Don’t simply rely on MS Word’s spell-check function. For example, “software” and “soft wear” are both correct in the “eyes” of the computer.

7. Ask for feedback
You may be a good engineer and researcher, but you probably are not an expert in résumé writing. Consult the ECS staff and others with experience in current employment practices. Listen carefully and make wise decisions regarding the development of your résumé.

8. Think of résumés as advertisements
For each advertisement, there is a target audience and the advertiser emphasizes the most important and relevant information. Relate this approach to résumé writing. Sparingly use bullets, boldface or italics to emphasize details. Generally, one form of highlighting for a specific entry is sufficient.

9. Fifteen minutes of fame
Any topic on your résumé welcomes a question. Can you talk about your academic project, ASME membership, computer skills or leadership role for 15 minutes? Your résumé lists and describes events; the interview validates them. When writing your résumé, think about the next step—the interview!

10. Do not pay anyone to develop your résumé
They don’t know you and it’s really expensive.

QUICK TIPS

Do not simply list your degrees and jobs. Use what you learned in your skills assessment to fully develop each section of the résumé.

YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Beyond the basics of providing your name, email address, phone number, and mailing address, consider how employers will use this information: They will contact you for a phone interview to determine your interest in their organization, to notify you about an interview, or to solicit more detailed information regarding your qualifications.

Routinely check your email and voicemail during your job search. Update your voicemail message with a professional
OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS

Some people say you don’t need an objective. However, your objective statement is the single-most important part of your résumé. It provides focus for your résumé. The rest of your résumé must support the objective by providing educational, academic and/or real-world experiences related to the objective.

A strong objective statement will:

- Be employer-oriented (what you can do for employer), rather than self-oriented (what you want to gain)
- Include specific functional areas of interest (based on your education and experiences)
- State the type of opportunity you are seeking: co-op, intern, entry-level, etc.
- Not be too specific or too broad in scope
- Be tailored to the position as much as possible: Include the employer name, job title, location, etc.

QUICK TIPS

- The objective statement serves as the “thesis sentence” of your résumé. The rest of your résumé supports your objective with academic projects, co-ops or internships, research areas and leadership experiences.
- Be employer-oriented, rather than self-oriented.

See page 10 for action verbs.
HOW TO WRITE IT

• Geological engineering co-op opportunity with Employer ABC in water resources management or remediation for 2 work terms.

• Intern position in a structural engineering design firm. Seek broad responsibilities in wood, steel, reinforced concrete and/or pre-stressed concrete design of buildings and/or bridges.

HOW NOT TO WRITE IT

• Electrical engineering position, preferably in automation/control systems or digital/analogue circuit design where I can apply and enhance my technical skills.

• To utilize problem-solving skills in the visualization and application of concepts in the design of diesel engines at Employer BD to reduce emissions and decrease fuel consumption. Seek entry-level position.

• To obtain a team-oriented position performing dynamic analysis of large structures or failure analysis at Company AC in a dynamic environment within a high-tech, cutting-edge organization.

FUNCTIONAL AREAS

Within the objective statement it is important to include 2 to 3 specific functional areas of interest (based on your education and experiences). Only if you are willing to significantly limit your employment opportunities should you list only one specific interest or engineering functional area. PhD candidates can sometimes justify this focused job search. Most BS and MS students and alumni, however, will have a broader area of interest to maximize job opportunities. Use the examples above to add special interest areas to your objective statement.

Consult past and present postings for similar jobs, and your departmental website, both of which list specific focus areas of study, to help you properly phrase technical interest areas. (See action verbs on page 10.)

EDUCATION SECTION

In this section, include post-secondary degrees earned or in progress in reverse chronological order. Include all degrees. Format the section to be consistent with your next section, “Experience.”

Freshmen and sophomores may include relevant high school information such as class rank. Provide your overall GPA; you should include your major GPA if it is significantly higher than your overall GPA.

Include academic projects (with brief descriptions), significant coursework, academic honors and senior projects in this section if you do not have related work experience or if they are directly linked to your objective.
HOW TO WRITE IT

Education
University of Wisconsin-Madison
B.S. Mechanical Engineering, expected May 20XX
  • Major GPA 3.2/4.0 Overall GPA 2.9/4.0

Academic Design Projects
  • Turf Smurf: Designed and fabricated a device that simulated golf cart wear on various grasses for a turf grass company as a member of an interdisciplinary team.
  • Rowing Exercise Machine Modification: Worked with corporate customer to design, fabricate and implement a universal rowing machine usable by people with multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, and paraplegics. Developed prototype and presented project to group.

Selected Coursework
  • Advanced Graphic Analysis, Materials Selection, Manufacturing Processes, Energy Systems Laboratory, Electronic Circuits and Power Conversion, Construction Project Management

EXPERIENCE SECTION

The content of your experience section is critical and more flexible than you may think. You may include experiences that are related or unrelated (to engineering), as well as paid or unpaid.

Your goal is to develop an “Engineering Experience” section. First, list related engineering work, including co-op or intern experiences. Use phrases describing the skills you have developed or used, projects on which you worked, and results or goals you met or exceeded.

You might include significant academic projects in the Experience section (rather than Education) to call more

QUICK TIPS

• Identify the degree and level (i.e., BS Chemical Engineering), expected degree date, institution and GPA.
• Use the official name of the school: University of Wisconsin-Madison.
• List study abroad experiences.
• Possibly include brief descriptions of class academic projects, “selected” course listings, scholarships and other honors.
• Be sure your degree is correct. Department names and degrees differ—for example, “Industrial Engineering” (degree) vs. “Industrial & Systems Engineering” (department name).

PhDs: Limit Education section to degree, date expected, advisor and thesis topic.
List research and teaching assistantships in Experience section.
If little or no work experience: List and describe academic projects. Possibly include projects outside your major to illustrate your qualifications and/or interest areas. Use unique coursework listings for this purpose, also.

• Include academic projects here (if not included in Education). Describe them as if they were work experience. Research projects are experience.
• Include non-engineering work—emphasize skills rather than duties.
attention and allow more space to describe them, especially if you do not have co-op or internship experience. You may include teaching and research positions, volunteer, and leadership experiences.

Include keywords in describing your work. Be quantitative whenever possible—for example, “reduced processing time by 10 percent” or “managed $1M design project.” Include skills you have developed, awards you have won, and results you have achieved. In most cases, you’ll list your experiences in reverse chronological order.

It is optional to deviate from this guideline to emphasize unique experiences. If, for instance, you last worked as a summer landscaping assistant while the previous semester you were an engineering intern, break the Experience section into two: Engineering Experience and Additional Experience, so you can list the internship first.

HOW TO WRITE IT

ENGINEERING EXPERIENCE

Kohler Co., Kohler, WI
Co-op Engineer, May 20XX–January 20XX
• Developed and fabricated acoustic scanning robot. Monitored exhaust emissions.
• Worked with team of multidisciplinary engineers in sound power analysis.
• Co-presented final project to management.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Bob-O-Link Golf Course & Country Club, Highland Park, IL
Caddie, Summers 20XX–20XX
• Developed strong interpersonal skills in working with customers and management.
• Enhanced strong work ethic by working 12-hour days for three months each summer. Saved $9,000 over four summers. Promoted to caddy master in 20XX.
• Trained and supervised new hires.

ENGINEERING EXPERIENCE

Engine Research Center (ERC), University of Wisconsin-Madison
Research Associate, September 20XX–present
• Developed a finite element-based program, HCC, for prediction of I.C. engine component temperatures.
• Incorporated a Discrete Ordinates Method radiation model into the CFD code, KIVA.
• Served as technical contact between ERC and Diesel Combustion Collaboratory.

Atmospheric & Oceanographic Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Engineering Consultant, December 20XX–present
• Rewrote the atmospheric weather prediction program, NHS, to run on a massively parallel scale.

Academic Design Project, Turf Smurf, Introduction to Engineering Course
• Designed and fabricated a device that simulated golf cart wear on various grasses for a turf grass company as a member of an interdisciplinary team.
ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES

• Updated drawings in ProEngineer. Entered and verified data for SAP upgrade. Entered and obtained data for online catalog. Served as German translator.

• Developed code to extrapolate 3-D data from 2-D paraboloid model for wall-shear rate measurements in the carotid artery.

• Analyzed corporate quality system to conform to new norm—ISO 9000 (Vision 2000).

• Completed critical analysis of operational and management processes at three MTS production locations in Italy.

• Managed operations on $2M family grain farm.

• Acquired invaluable mechanical aptitude as a result of continuously scheduled and unscheduled maintenance of large farm equipment.

• Measured the modulus of elasticity, shear modulus, mechanical damping in bending and torsion, specific gravity and moisture content of toothpick-sized specimens.

• Led weekly meetings (of 8) to facilitate continued discussion, problem solving and completion of research.

• Enhanced experience with various instrumentation tools, including digital oscilloscope, microscope, lock-in amplifier, split diode laser and light detector.

• Designed a strategic drain mechanism in Pro-E.

• Designed an Excel Macro using Visual Basic to convert raw leak test data into usable charts and tables.

• Performed daily testing and implemented adjustments to ensure optimal equipment operation. Helped determine sources of contamination during operation.

• Developed vehicle concepts for an entry-level drag and circle track race team.

• Overhauled and modified race engines, design with mechanical principles learned in college.

• Developed a powertrain for a 12-second per-mile drag car. Required physical application of theoretical concepts.

• Maintained, troubleshoot and repaired various machines such as heart-lung, ventilators, gamma knife, X-ray, pacemaker, defibrillators, blood cell counters, laboratory machines, viewing wand and others.
**ACTION VERBS**

Use consistent verb tense (generally past tense). Start phrases with descriptive action verbs. Supply quantitative data whenever possible. Adapt terminology to include key words. Incorporate action verbs with keywords and current “hot” topics, programs, tools, testing terms, and instrumentation to develop concise, yet highly descriptive phrases. Remember that résumés are scanned for such words, so do everything possible to incorporate important phraseology and current keywords into your résumé.

*From What Color is Your Parachute, Richard Bolles, 2005*

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**OTHER RÉSUMÉ SECTION HEADERS**

While the previously mentioned résumé sections—Contact Information, Objective Statement, Education and Experience—are expected on your résumé, you should include other relevant information—for example, Honors & Awards, Scholarships, Memberships, Patents, Research Interests, Teaching Interests, Publications, Presentations, Interests, Volunteer Activities, International Experience.

**HOW TO WRITE IT**

**Leadership**
- S.U.B.E. (Society Uniting Business and Engineering)
  - Vice President

**Computer Skills**

**Skills**
- Global Languages: Fluent in Cantonese: Basic understanding of Mandarin
- Computer Languages: C++, Java, Python, SQL, Ruby
- Computer Programs: PRO-II, CapCost, Windows, WorkflowMax
**Publications**


**Activities**

- Society of Women Engineers, Past-President
- Badger Robotics Team
- Campus Political Organization
- Skiing, Hiking, and Running

**Presentations**

R.M. Jones (speaker), J.J. de Pablo, and M.D. Graham, “Macromolecules in Microdevices: Multiscale Simulation of DNA Dynamics in Model Microfluidic Geometries,” to be presented at the Fifth International Conference on Modeling and Simulation of Microsystems (20XX), San Juan Puerto Rico, USA

---

**WORK AUTHORIZATION**

If you are studying in the United States on a student visa or other temporary visa, it is important that you understand your employment privileges and restrictions. Contact the International Student Services Office regarding employment regulations, Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT).

Visit [www.iss.wisc.edu](http://www.iss.wisc.edu) or call (608) 262–2044.

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**SAMPLE RÉSUMÉS**

On the following pages are four sample résumés and one reference page sample that illustrate different layouts for various types of résumés. As an overall guideline, aim for simplicity of design and layout.

- B.S. résumé sample 1
- B.S. résumé sample 2
- M.S. résumé sample (2 pages)
- PhD résumé sample (3 pages)
- References page sample
Erin J. Tachmeier

123 E. Gorham St., Apt. 123  student@wisc.edu  
Madison, WI 53706  1234 Lake Cheyenne
608.123.4567  Port Mark, IL 60600

Objective
Geological engineering co-op opportunity in water resources management or remediation for 2 to 3 work terms

Education
B.S. Geological Engineering and Geology, expected December 20XX
University of Wisconsin-Madison
GPA: 3.4/4.0

Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Budapest, Hungary
January–June 20XX

Engineering Experience
Introduction to Engineering, Fall 20XX
• Designed a game to improve the client’s attention while undergoing treatment on a VibeTech machine.
• Developed leadership skills working in a team of 6 students.

Habitat for Humanity of Port Mark, Port Mark, IL
Lead Volunteer, Summers 20XX–XX
• Enhanced understanding of construction principles while working on single-family home remodels.
• Supervised a staff of seven volunteers.
• Required strong organizational skills.

Experience
Strooza’s Sentry Foods, Port Mark, IL
Night Manager, Part-time during HS and Summers, 20XX–20XX
• Deposited nightly receipts and secured building.
• Provided friendly and efficient service for customers.
• Created weekly schedules for assistants.

Computer Skills
C++, Apple OSX, Java, Geo-Slope, Maptek Vulcan

Languages
Spanish, fluent
German, 3 HS semesters

Leadership
Future Problem Solvers, Regional Champions
Soccer, Captain, All-state, 3 letters
All-Academic, State of Illinois

Activities
Geological Engineering Club
Intramural basketball and soccer

State co-op or intern, number of work terms and area(s) of interest.
Clearly state your expected degree level, major and expected graduation date.

Quick Tips
• Times New Roman, with 12 pt. font size, is commonly used.
• As you add additional experiences and academic projects, reduce font size to 10–11 pt. and review other résumé samples for format and content suggestions.
• High school information is appropriate for freshman and sophomores only.
• Margins should be between 0.5” and 1.0”.
Jan S. Bailey
1234 Monroe St., Madison, WI 53705
608.123.4567, student@wisc.edu

Objective
Professional position in manufacturing or maintenance engineering.
Special interests in mechanical structural analysis and design.

Education
University of Wisconsin-Madison
B.S. Engineering Mechanics, expected May 20XX
  • Major GPA 3.17/4.0
  • Cumulative GPA 2.78/4.0
  • Paid 80% of all college expenses through 20 hr/wk jobs.

Academic Design Projects:
Mars Wind Machine: Completed stress and displacement analysis of Giromill airfoils. Determined most effective internal airfoil construction and material.
High Voltage Power Line Hybrid Crossarm: Developed an efficient design process. Completed stress/strain analysis for worst-case scenario; appropriate materials selection/dimension analysis.

Specialized Coursework:
Advanced Strength of Materials, Finite Elements, Mechanical Vibration

Engineering Experience
Kohler Co., Kohler, WI
Co-op Engineer, May–December 20XX
  • Developed and fabricated acoustic scanning robot. Monitored exhaust emissions.
  • Worked with team of multi-disciplinary engineers in sound power analysis.
  • Co-presented final project to management. Earned Employee of the Month Award.

Elson Management Co., Madison, WI
Maintenance Worker/Repair Personnel, August 20XX–current
  • Troubleshoot HVAC, plumbing, and electrical problems in large residential units for management firm.
  • Promoted to weekend supervisor and client support manager after 2 years.
  • Trained nearly 20 part-time staff in problem-solving and customer relations.
  • Worked FT during summers and breaks; part-time 10-20 hrs/wk during school.

Other Experience
Engineering Student Services, UW-Madison
Staff Assistant, August 20XX–May 20XX
  • Developed strong interpersonal and organizational skills. Worked 10 hours/week during recruiting. Assisted staff, students, and recruiters in assuring efficient campus visits.

Skills
Operating Systems Windows 10, Windows Server 2016, Apple OSX, Linux
Software ProEngineer, LabVIEW, ANSYS Workbench, MATLAB, AutoCAD, Access
Languages Spanish, French

QUICK TIPS
• Arial font in 11 point (10-12 pt. acceptable).
• Name should be in bold face and between 14-18 pt. sizes.
• Allow enough white space for easy visual scanning.
Yijun (Yvonne) Wong
U.S. Permanent Resident
1234 Engineering Hall, Madison, WI
53706 608.123.4567, student@wisc.edu

Objective
Advanced computer architecture, particularly in logic and architectural design. VLSI design, board-level design, and accompanying layout and interfacing.

Education
University of Wisconsin-Madison
M.S. Electrical Engineering, expected May 20XX
• GPA: 3.83/4.0
• Thesis: ..............................................

University of Wisconsin-Madison
B.S. Electrical Engineering, August 20XX
• GPA 3.51/4.0

Experience
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Dept. of Electrical & Computer Engineering
Teaching Assistant, September 20XX—present
• Taught introductory electronic circuits to 60 first-year engineering students.
• Lectured, developed exams, and distributed grades.

Astronautics Corp. of America, Madison, WI
Project Engineer, January 20XX—August 20XX
• With team of seven, designed, built, and debugged the CPU of the Astronautics ZS-1 supercomputer.
• Designed the 300 MHz ECL Master Clock Oscillator boards and clock distribution tree.
• Developed specifications of an I/O device for 100MB/s transfers; high-speed TTL and ECL signal behavior on transmission lines.

Certain Solutions (self-employed), Madison, WI
Engineering Consultant, March 20XX - present
• Solved noise-related printed circuit board problems for area firms
• Developed improved board layout design rules.

Research Interests & Projects
Design, fabrication and testing of real-time VLSI cache simulator. C3000 transistor hardware monitor that computes would-be cache hit rates for a variety of cache types in parallel. Chip is currently being fabricated by MOSIS.

Designed voice synthesis project in a computer projects course.
Received the Davis Award for Projects in Control Systems, October 20XX.

(Continued on the next page)
Yijun (Yvonne) Wong
2 of 2

Technical Skills

Programming Skills
C, C++, Verilog, Matlab, VHDL, CUDA, Thrust, Open MP, MPI, Python,
Assembly coding, Shell programming

Programming Tools
ModelSim, Design Vision, LabVIEW, Altera Quartus, PSoC Designer,
Allegro PCB Designer, AVR Studio.

Computer Platforms
Windows 8, Linux, OS X

Hardware
8051, 8086, System on chip, PSoC, Mixed signal architecture, Xilinx,
Arduino, Raspberry Pi

Publications & Presentations

Evaluation Systems,” submitted for publication.

Sangiovanni, R., B. Lee, Y. Wong, G.E. Dermer, “The ZS-1 Central Processor,”
presented at the Second International Conference on Architectural Support for
Languages and Operating Systems (ASPROS II), IEEE/ACM (March), Palo Alto,
California, 20XX.

References

Professor Roberto Sangiovanni
Dept. of Electrical & Computer Engineering
University of Wisconsin-Madison
1234 Engineering Dr.
Madison, WI 53706
sprofessor@engr.wisc.edu
608/123-4567 or 608/987-6543

Professor Lee Park
University of Wisconsin-Madison
1234 Engineering Dr.
Madison, WI 53706
professor@wisc.edu
608/123-4567

Dr. Atul Parikh, Manager
Astronautics Corp. of America
544 Research Park
Madison, WI 53711
employer@company.com
608/123-4567

QUICK TIPS
If space permits, list references as last
résumé section, instead of using an
addendum page for references.
Diego A. Arias

1234 Engineering Drive
Madison, WI 53706
608.123.4567

netid@wisc.edu

1234 Greenwood Drive
Madison, WI 53711
608.765.4321

Objective
Research and development position in a major internal combustion engine manufacturing company in the areas of thermodynamics, fluid dynamics and combustion. Interested in the development and application of computational fluid dynamics, thermal system modeling and artificial neural networks.

Education
PhD Mechanical Engineering, expected August 20XX
University of Wisconsin-Madison
• Thesis: “Numerical modeling of air and fuel flow in carburetors for small engines”
• GPA: 3.9/4.0

M.S. Mechanical Engineering, Sept. 20XX
Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia
• Research Project: “Development of a methodology to evaluate the mechanical and environmental performance of vehicles under on-road type tests”
• GPA: 4.7/5.0

B.S. Mechanical Engineering, March 20XX
Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia
• GPA: 4.1/5.0

Experience
Research Assistant, Sept. 20XX–present
Multiphase Flow Visualization and Analysis Laboratory—Engine Research Center UW-Madison
• Developed numerical model of carburetors for small utility engines, incorporating:
  • dynamic effects, two-phase flow, compressible flow and losses across metering orifices.
• Implemented carburetor model in one-dimensional engine simulation software to study the effect of carburetor elements on power and emissions.
• Studied single-phase flow through complex geometries inside carburetors with numerical simulations in a commercial CFD package.
• Designed and built experimental setups to characterize single-phase and two-phase flow in carburetor parts, as well as to validate numerical simulations.
• Supervised three undergraduate research assistants.

Short Projects Funded By Industry
Argonne National Laboratory, 20XX
• Heat recovery from an internal combustion engine for a hybrid vehicle. Determined technical feasibility of an ammonia-water cycle in a heat recovery system from an internal combustion engine.

Ingenium-Project Development, 20XX
• Feasibility of numerical simulations of surface-piercing propellers.
• Results indicated the CFD models required for the complete simulation of the interaction between the rotating propeller and the water free-surface.

Water Consultants International, 20XX
• Numerical simulation of a spray drying application. Results of analysis used for the design of an industrial prototype of a spray drying system for brine treatment.

(Continued on the next page)
Experience (continued)

Research Assistant, Energy Conversion Research Group, October 20XX – July 20XX
Department of Mechanical Engineering, Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia
• Compared typical fuels found in Bogotá, based on analytical combustion calculations for
  adiabatic flame temperature and NOx emissions.
• Conducted an energy audit to minimize the cost of electric energy consumption in the
  Aqueduct of town Facatativá.
• Reviewed international experiences of running CNG- and diesel-fueled transit buses and
  generated recommendations for the successful implementation of CNG in Bogotá’s mass
  transport system.

Intern Engineer, July 20XX – January 20XX
General Motors, Bogotá, Colombia
• Supplied technical assistance to Commercial and Engineering Departments.
• Conducted market research for new vehicles.

Computer Skills
Thermo-fluid simulations with Fluent 6 and Gambit: Definition of geometry and flow cases
by running scripts in Unix environment
Advanced knowledge of EES
Intermediate knowledge of GT-Power 6, with implementation of user defined functions.
Code writing in C and Fortran
Experience in neural networks implemented in Matlab
Experience in ChemkinII, Stanjan, Gaseq, Matlab, KivaLite and SolidEdge

Laboratory and Instrumentation Skills
Labview and data acquisition systems
Implementation of unsteady compressible internal flows
Implementation of unsteady boundary conditions with user defined functions
Combustion gas analyzers
MOUDY impactor and Total Suspended Particle samplers
DMA electrostatic particle classifier
Condensation particle samplers
Inductively Coupled Plasma Optical Emission Spectroscope

Languages
Spanish (native speaker)
French and Italian (reading proficiency)

Professional Societies
American Society of Mechanical Engineers
Society of Automotive Engineers

Awards and Honors
Best Paper Award—SAE Small Engine Technology Conference, Graz, Austria 20XX
Graduated with Honors—Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia 20XX
Young Researchers Scholarship—COLCIENCIAS Colombian NSF, Bogotá, Colombia 20XX

Interests
Photography, theatre, windsurfing


**Presentations**


**References**

**Professor Timothy A. Shedd**  
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608.123.4567  
professor@engr.wisc.edu

**Professor Sanford A. Klein**  
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Department of Mechanical Engineering  
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Madison, WI 53706  
608.123.4567  
professor@engr.wisc.edu

**Professor Emeritus William A. Beckman**  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Department of Mechanical Engineering  
1234 Engineering Drive  
Madison, WI 53706  
608.123.4567  
professor@engr.wisc.edu

**QUICK TIPS**

- Never print résumé materials back-to-back! Do not staple résumé pages except for use at career fairs.
- 3-4 references are common for BS and MS candidates; 3-5 are appropriate for PhD candidates.
- Choose a balance of academic and work experience references. Include a reference from MS institution if different from PhD institution.
Jo Martinez
alumni@uwalumni.com   608.123.4567                    123 Mineral Point Rd., Madison, WI 53705

References

Associate Professor Patricia Arnn
Advisor
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1234 Engineering Drive
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608.123.4567
professor@engr.wisc.edu

Professor Juan Piacenza
Advisor
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608.123.4567
professor@engr.wisc.edu

Assistant Professor Paul Beachley
University of Wisconsin-Madison
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608.123.4567
professor@engr.wisc.edu

Byron Guerin
Manager
Toys We Sell
530 E. Park St.
Appleton, WI 54957
920.123.4567
guerin@toys.com

NOTE: See an ECS advisor for questions regarding your references.

1. The reference page should always include your full name.
2. The header should include a page number if the reference page is to be included as a second or third page of the résumé.
3. Or, the reference page should include the full header (name and all contact information), as shown here. This page should be used as an addendum page to the résumé.

QUICK TIPS

• Ask 3 people to be references for your job search. Share a résumé with each and keep them up-to-date on your interviews.

• One reference should be from a work setting, while another should be from the UW-Madison, if possible. The third reference can support either your work or your academic qualifications.

• If you have 1 or 2 other people who would be strong, professional references, include their names and contact information as well.
CONSIDER AND ASK REFERENCES

Think carefully about selecting your best three to four references: one to two academic and one to two work-related.

Carefully consider people who are enthusiastically willing to serve as references for your job search. Employers will generally contact references by phone or email; they will not request a formal letter of recommendation.

So, how do you select references? Some factors to keep in mind as you review past and present mentors, supervisors, advisors and professors in an attempt to develop the best reference list possible:

- The ideal reference list includes a former employer or supervisor and an engineering professor, assistant professor or lecturer. The third reference will be an additional employer, professor, or in rare instances a mentor.

- Always ask individuals if they would be willing and able to serve as your job search reference. Provide them a relatively easy way to decline your request. By proceeding in this manner, you will be assured that, if accepted, the reference is genuinely enthused about your career path and will not be “bothered” when employers call.

- References should be included as an addendum to your résumé. Provide only when requested.

- Although employers generally do not check references prior to the first interview, you will be better prepared for your job search if you have completed your references list as soon as possible.

- Include a phrase or title defining the relationship between you and the reference. It should state “advisor,” “co-op supervisor,” “mentor at Harley-Davidson” or “professor for ME 309 and ME 416.”

- Provide each reference with your updated résumé.

Be ready to provide complete information regarding 3 to 4 references at on-site interviews. You also can attach a reference list in your follow-up thank you email. Send this email immediately after the screening interview.

Formatting suggestions:

- Do not include the statement, “References available upon request,” on your resume. It simply states the obvious. Use this valuable résumé space more effectively to further describe experiences or list qualifications.

- For a one-page résumé, develop a separate reference page as an addendum to your résumé.

- Graduate students or experienced alumni with a multiple-page résumé should develop a reference page as an addendum or may present references as the last section of résumé.

- Obtain approval from each reference and determine which contact information to present to employers (phone, email, or both—what does the reference prefer?).

- Keep your references aware of the status of your job search—still looking, considering offers, or accepted employment.

- Thank your references.
## EXPLORE POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS

*Keep an open mind to all potential employers; small business employs almost half of all engineers.*

### WHERE TO FIND ORGANIZATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Handshake</th>
<th>LinkedIn</th>
<th>Recruiter business cards</th>
<th>Family and friends</th>
<th>Alumni</th>
<th>Past supervisors</th>
<th>Professors</th>
<th>Industry journals</th>
<th>Vault.com</th>
<th>Consortium contacts</th>
<th>Glassdoor.com</th>
<th>Employer websites</th>
<th>Co-op/intern colleagues</th>
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### CREATE A LIST OF YOUR TOP EMPLOYERS:
RESEARCH EMPLOYERS

The quality of your employer targeting and research determines much of your job search success.

Long before actually applying, research which employers have the greatest potential for your interests and qualifications. In fact, employer research parallels résumé writing and serves as a major component in writing effective cover letters/emails.

After creating a targeted list of employers, you will use your time more effectively by exploring opportunities with only those employers whose needs match your qualifications.

Glassdoor is one way to learn more about specific organizations. The site contains information on open jobs, real employee salaries, reviews from employees, company overviews, CEO approval ratings, salary reports, interviews and questions, benefits reviews, office photos and more! Obtain valuable insight into interviewing with and working at the organization.

BUILD PROFESSIONAL CONNECTIONS

The purpose of building professional connections is to:

- Gather a list of contacts who will help you with your career, professional development and current/future job searches.
- Screen jobs before you take them, careers before you transition to them, locations before you move there.
- Find answers to very specific questions you have about your job search.

With whom should you connect?
Start with those familiar to you: roommates, family, friends and acquaintances, however near or far geographically.

- Ask each contact for the names of two or more people they know who are in your current field or in your field of interest.
- Ask for contact names from groups and sources in which you are a member, college alumni, co-workers, places where you study, shop, or spend time.
- Continually build this network by building professional relationships.
- Keep careful notes and records of your contacts. LinkedIn is a great way to help you keep in touch with your connections.

How do you do it right?

- Deliberately attend meetings, conferences or conventions in the field of interest.
- Talk with people and exchange contact information.
- Ask for names of contacts from your co-workers, from departments at local colleges, or career offices.
- Once you have names, email them, using your contact as a referral person. Introduce yourself and state your purpose. Ask if they have specific advice ... and start building a relationship. Honor their time. Have specific questions for them. Thank them for their assistance.

Signs you’re doing it wrong
You are doing it wrong if you approach busy individuals, ask them to have lunch with you, and have no specific agenda or prepared questions. If they ask during lunch what you need to talk about, and you lamely say, “Well, I don’t know. So-and-So just thought we should get to know each other,” this is not networking. You have clearly not done your homework!

Unadvertised jobs: The hidden job market
Prospective employees secure 60 to 80 percent of jobs through networking ... before those positions are even
advised. Once employers advertise available positions, there is fierce internal and external competition.

Pyramid scheme
Networking is a pyramid scheme—in a good way. Consider every contact an important one; talk to everyone you know and ask for referrals.

Keep active
Keep your contacts current on your job search. Check in with them often to indicate your seriousness of purpose and to extend appreciation for any assistance they might offer. Do not just contact them every time you need job search help.

Grow contacts
Ask your contacts to provide two new contacts. Do your homework to show new contacts your seriousness and willingness to work hard. Ask intelligent questions: “Based on my research of Medtronic’s website, I know the company is currently researching XYZ. Mr. Daniels mentioned that you are familiar with XYZ. What do you think makes this research unique? Perhaps you know someone I could talk with directly about it?”

You can’t do it alone
It is important that you enlist the assistance of everyone you know, as well as conduct thorough employer research yourself. You will experience success by increasing the number of people who know of your career strategy and by asking for information, advice, recommendations, and referrals.

Employers do it
Employers network to find good candidates! To reduce risk in hiring new people, they talk to people within the company and to colleagues across the country to identify strong candidates. Employers have a desire to hire people to whom they have a “link,” and the most logical way to do this is by networking.

Quick Tips
- ECS career fairs are excellent places to build professional connections.
- The career fairs are designed to allow you to meet employer representatives (in many cases, UW-Madison alumni) in a casual environment as you begin your formal job search.
- Engineering Career Services sponsors two large-scale career fairs a year, one at the beginning of each semester.

LinkedIn: An Essential Tool
Every day new online tools emerge to help you find potential employers. Today’s top tool is LinkedIn.

LinkedIn is the resource for developing your professional connections. Surveys have indicated that people do not want to use Facebook for their job search—it’s purely social. LinkedIn is just as powerful as Facebook but with a focus on connecting professionally. You want to take great care and time in creating your LinkedIn profile—showing the strength of your professional development. Like a résumé, this is often your first introduction to potential employers, so it needs to be well-crafted.

In addition to your professional connections, LinkedIn has job postings, links to relevant articles, discussions on key industry topics, “groups” based on alma mater or interest. Use these services to expand your contacts. You will need to be active on the site; don’t think you can just create a profile and job offers will pour in. You need to actively connect and engage with other users to build your professional relationships and research opportunities.

Quick Tips
Join the “Hire a Badger Engineer” LinkedIn group. It’s coordinated by ECS and has over 5,000 members.

Key tips for LinkedIn:
- Complete the profile thoroughly, including descriptive headline with keywords
- Include a professional photo
- Always customize the email when requesting to “connect”
- Actively use Groups to engage other professionals
- Only make professional connections, not personal
- Recommend people you would like to have recommend you
CONTACT EMPLOYERS

Every résumé requires an introduction—an explanation for why it was sent. An effective cover letter introduces your résumé, summarizes your immediate career goals, and is used for many reasons:

- Respond to specific job postings for direct hire
- Request an interview invitation
- Inquire about opportunities
- Follow-up an interview to show appreciation

FORM LETTERS

Never send a form letter to employers. This might seem like an easy and quick way to contact hundreds of employers with your résumé. Candidates erroneously use this approach—often called the “shotgun” approach—to claim they have done an “exhaustive” job search, sending résumés to hundreds of employers and receiving no responses. Upon this premise, they conclude that there are no jobs out there, and they blame the bad economy or others for their joblessness. How often have you heard, “I’ve sent out 400 résumés and posted a résumé on every major job board, but no one is getting back to me. There are no jobs.” ECS would never condone this as an “outlier” strategy for conducting an effective job search.

TRADITIONAL COVER LETTER FORMAT

Using form letters is a waste of your time, so create a targeted list of employers. Then develop letters or emails specifically for each employer. Each communication will include these basic elements:

Introduction
Clearly and simply state why you are writing to the employer. It is crucial for you to make it clear that you deserve further consideration. If appropriate, identify the person, by name, who suggested you contact the employer. This use of connecting is particularly effective.

Body
Emphasize the match between your qualifications and the employer’s needs. Do not simply repeat your résumé but expand upon 1 or 2 qualifications that fit the specific position for which you are applying. Describe how your background has prepared you as a “good match” for the ongoing and/ or future needs of that specific employer.

QUIK TIPS

Every résumé requires an introduction or explanation for why it was sent. Most likely, you will email your “cover letter” as the body of the email and you will attach your résumé.

Closing
Request employer action (i.e., an interview or a response for a site visit) at the employer’s earliest convenience. Indicate the next step you will take, such as “I will contact you during the week of October 2 to follow up on this request.” Close with a goodwill/appreciation statement: “I look forward to meeting with you. Thank you for your time and consideration.”

TONE AND TIMING

Professional tone
While the message content is important, the tone is equally important. Be professional. Address the message to Mr., Ms. or Dr. XXX. It is rarely acceptable to use first names in a business salutation. Avoid using slang and contractions (“I’ve” and “you’ll”). Be courteous and respectful.

Effective timing
Traditionally, employers recruit new college hires on campus in early fall and early spring, but new market needs and budgets affect timing.

EMAIL REMINDERS FOR JOB SEEKERS

In most cases, it is acceptable to communicate with employers by email. This includes the initial contact, follow-ups after an interview, and thank you’s. Email can be very effective (i.e., quick)—or disastrous—if sent to the wrong person, written too informally, conveying a negative message, or containing spelling or grammatical errors. Use strictly formal business communication tones when communicating with an employer by email.
BUSINESS EMAIL ETIQUETTE

- The biggest mistake students make in using email for their job search is treating it too casually. This is business! Not social.
- Be professional. Edit your message and double check the address prior to selecting the “send” button.
- Don’t be sloppy. This isn’t texting. You are not asking someone for a date or gathering a group to study or hang out. You are looking for a job.
- What emotion does your email convey? What are the implications and perceptions? Email does not project emotions as well as face-to-face or even phone conversations. It lacks vocal inflection, gestures, and a shared environment. It also does not communicate normal cues such as dress, diction or dialect. The reader will make assumptions based on your name, email address and facility with the language. You need to be meticulous. Write in a precise, clear manner.
- Make everything completely clear and unambiguous. Use perfect spelling, eloquent words and correct grammar. Don’t be conversational. Do not use funny, cute or non-professional email addresses.
- Sarcasm and humor are particularly dangerous to use in email.
- Choose your words very carefully. Sadly, a large number of people suffer mishaps because they did not understand how to adjust their communication styles to the medium of email.

SAMPLE LETTERS AND EMAILS

The following pages contain cover letter and email text samples for you to reference when contacting potential employers during all aspects of your job search.

- Business letter format
- Letter of application
- Career fair follow-up
- Interview thank you and follow-up
- First and second follow-up emails
- Accepting a job offer
- Rejecting a job offer

Some things to note:

- Always attach a résumé—perhaps a revised version, if you have made changes. If requested, you also may attach a list of your references.
- Attach your résumé as a PDF file or a lower MS Word document version to reduce problems in opening the attachment.

QUICK TIPS

- Email business communication is MUCH different than personal email communication. Re-read this statement. Slow down and think of what you are doing.
- Do not hit the “send” button! Review and spell check. Check the tone for professionalism. This is not a social, how ya’ doin’ type of email!
August 29, 20XX

Ms. Sara Rooney Manager  
GIM Medical Systems 98 GIM Building  
Arlington Heights, IL  64039

Dear Ms. Rooney:

On the recommendation of UW–Madison Professor Zhang Wei, I am inquiring about research-oriented engineering opportunities within GIM. I will complete my PhD in electrical engineering in August 20XX and have an excellent academic record and solid employment experience in both industry and academia.

My research initiatives in optimal sensors and signal-processing algorithms for apnea monitors match the research of your recently established facility in Arlington Heights. While at the regional IEEE conference in Chicago last month, I presented a paper on this topic and received positive feedback from a number of colleagues, including Mr. James Smith, a representative of GIM. My major area of study at UW–Madison has been biomedical engineering. Combining my minor in computer science and my work experiences, I feel I can make significant contributions to GIM.

My résumé is enclosed for your review. I would like to arrange an interview with you at your earliest convenience.

I will follow up this letter with a phone call on November 2, in the hope of arranging an interview. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Signature]

Sneha Muherjee

Enclosure: Résumé

FOR HARD-COPY LETTERS:

• 1” side margins
• Use 10–12 pt. font size
• Use simple font styles
• Sign the letter if mailing
• Emailed cover letters are appropriate for your job search
• Professional communication rules apply for both paper letters and email communication
LETTER OF APPLICATION

Harris Corporation came to my attention as I researched firms specializing in small engine design (more detail about your background and the company’s area of research/manufacturing/services). I am seeking a co-op position as a design engineer and am available for up to three co-op work terms.

Currently, I am a junior in mechanical engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. My particular interests are in the area of small engine design and testing. I have pursued my interest in small engines in a variety of ways, both on and off campus (more details here). While at UW–Madison, I have successfully completed required and elective mechanical engineering courses, including (include some courses taken or currently enrolled in). In addition, I have worked 10-15 hours per week while maintaining a strong GPA. To develop my communication and leadership skills, I have actively sought key positions in engineering student organizations on campus.

Some highlights of my experiences and preparation are:
- Career Connection volunteer
- ASME member
- Strong academic background: GPA 3.2/4.0
- Avid lifelong interest in rebuilding and maintaining small engines

I would like the opportunity to talk with you about my qualifications as they relate to your engineering needs. I will contact you in two weeks with the hope of arranging an interview with you at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to meeting with you.

CAREER FAIR FOLLOW-UP

It was a pleasure meeting you at the engineering career fair on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. We discussed the possibility of interviewing when you returned to campus on October 12. Please know that I am very interested in working in your Phoenix manufacturing facility and being a part of your newly developed engineering training program.

As you may recall, I have just completed a 2-term co-op experience with Plexus in Neenah, Wisconsin, and look forward to seeking opportunities for full-time employment.

I hope to hear from you soon regarding my invited status for campus interview sign-up. If you have any questions regarding my qualifications, please contact me. My résumé is attached for your review. Thank you for your time and consideration.
INTERVIEW THANK YOU AND FOLLOW-UP

Send immediately after interview.

Thank you for your time and consideration during our interview on Thursday. I enjoyed our discussion on the new widget product you are developing and appreciated your tour of the facility. As we discussed your needs and toured the facility, my interest in joining your team became even stronger.

In giving further thought to our discussion about working in the widget industry, I realized I had a similar experience several years ago while working with new optical technology at ABC Corp. While it required more time to get up to speed, I dedicated extra personal time to become familiar with the specifics of that project, and was able to deliver our prototype ahead of schedule. With my dedication, team work, and experience in developing optical technology, I am confident I would be an asset to your team and make a valuable contribution to Techno Products, Inc.

I appreciate your consideration and am excited by the prospect of working with you and developing the new widget product line. Enclosed is an additional copy of my résumé for your convenience. I look forward to talking with you again soon.

FOLLOW-UP EMAILS

Send two weeks after thank you email for interview.

I am still very interested in pursuing opportunities with ABC Corp. in the widget division. As we discussed on campus in Madison last month, my academic project in XXX will enable me to make immediate contributions as an entry-level engineer. Please let me know if I can provide you with any other materials to help you make your decision. I look forward to scheduling an on-site visit at your convenience.

Thank you, once again, for your time and consideration.

Send 2 weeks after first follow-up email. (A professional phone call of continued interest is also appropriate instead of this email.)

After meeting with you on October 14, I remain extremely interested in your XXX position and I feel confident that I can work with your team to maintain your high level of performance and customer service.

Recently, I have scheduled second interviews with two other companies and received one offer on which I will need to decide by the end of the month. Since ABC has always been my employer of choice, I would very much appreciate a communication regarding my application status and would like the opportunity to interview on-site with you.
ACCEPTING A JOB OFFER

Send after first accepting job offer by phone (in person).

I am pleased to formally accept your offer for the industrial engineer position with Maynard, Inc. After our phone conversation of last week and after reviewing your written offer, I understand my starting date will be January 15, 2007, and that my monthly salary will be $4,020.00.

Enclosed is a copy of your formal offer letter with my acceptance signature. I look forward to beginning my career with you.

Thank you for your confidence in my qualifications. I will work hard to meet and exceed your expectations.

REJECTING A JOB OFFER

This letter confirms our phone conversation this morning indicating that I will not accept your job offer to join the staff at Rollando Products. As you know, this was a very difficult decision for me, but I have decided to accept another opportunity.

As I approach graduation and reflect on my experiences and prepare for the future, I am grateful for the many opportunities offered me. While at Rollando as an intern engineer, I learned a great deal. You have always treated me with professionalism and provided me with mentorship that forms a solid foundation upon which I will build my career.

Thank you.

NOTE:

Do not “burn bridges.” Graciously turn down an offer while keeping the door open for future opportunities.
The initial screening interview normally lasts 30 minutes (45 minutes to 1 hour for PhD candidates). Like any presentation, the better prepared you are, the more successful you will be.

Be aware of the importance of first impressions.
- Use a solid handshake.
- Make eye contact, and smile.
- Be friendly and relaxed, yet professional.
- Expect some small talk.
- Follow the recruiter’s lead.
- Focus and show interest.
- Listen to questions carefully. Never respond simply “yes” or “no.” Provide examples and explain “why.”
- Display confidence, not arrogance.

One person—an engineer or a human resource manager—will usually interview you. It is less common, but sometimes two recruiters will interview you at the same time. This can be more stressful. Try to relax. Maintain eye contact with each recruiter as you answer their questions.

Remember that the interview is an opportunity for you to learn more about the employer as well as for the employer to evaluate you as a potential employee. Keep in mind that you are not an ideal match for every employer’s needs, so it is important to understand early that a “match” between employer and candidate is imperative, not only for the employer, but also for you. Individuals on “both sides of the table” should evaluate each other, discuss needs and interests, and honestly determine the “fit.”

Provide specific examples with all answers. Ask questions (see future pages for suggested questions) either during the interview or at the end. Be prepared to supply a 2- to 3-minute summary of your qualifications and interests. Prepare a confident closing statement reiterating your interest in the position and be ready to highlight any important information that was not discussed in the interview.

Ask if you can supply other materials (transcripts, list of references, project summaries). Also ask about the employer’s timeline for making hiring decisions. Obtain a business card for your records so you may accurately address a thank you letter. Shake hands, continue making good eye contact, and thank the recruiter for her/his time, mentioning your strong interest and enthusiasm to work with the employer.

Interviews are business meetings. Prepare accordingly. Know what you want to talk about; know your résumé thoroughly; be able to cite examples of skills, lessons learned or goals met all across the résumé page. Dress like you care. Give the impression that this is an important meeting for you.

A good recruiter has only one goal in mind during an interview—to obtain the most accurate and positive information possible on each candidate.

Recruiters will not try to embarrass you or cause you stress. They have a difficult task in conducting 10 to 15 interviews daily. Ultimately, recruiters must find from 1 to 5 candidates who “fit” their needs. The quality of candidates referred for second, on-site interviews is a direct reflection on the recruiter’s ability to know and choose talent. His or her job is a difficult one.

This is where all your work ultimately pays off—skills assessment, résumé development, and communication with targeted employers.

Preparation and practice are key to successful interviewing. A lack of thorough employer research is often interpreted as poor preparation and a lack of interest in the employer.

- Know your résumé inside and out. Be able to thoroughly and comfortably discuss any item on the résumé by citing specific examples.
- Understand that your résumé emphasizes your skills and accomplishments; it will serve first as a deciding factor leading to an interview. Once an interview is scheduled, the recruiter will often direct the interview using the résumé as an outline.
QUICK TIPS

• Preparation is the key to successful interviewing. Know the kinds of questions you will be expected to answer. Describe how you used skills/strengths to meet goals, successfully complete projects, work with others.

• Your résumé gets you the interview. But your interview gets you the job offer.

• Verbally practice answering questions (Yes—out loud!) and talking about your skills and accomplishments. Recall how in “Assessment,” we emphasized the importance of spending time writing descriptions for skills, strengths and accomplishments. Now is the time to practice again!

• Review and organize facts found in employer research. Demonstrate your knowledge of the employer’s products or services. Take it a step further by clearly drawing the link—the match—between your skills and the employer’s needs. Do not leave this important step open for employer interpretation. Show them the match!

• Attend employer information sessions on campus. Introduce yourself to the recruiter(s) and mention that you are looking forward to your interview the next day. Ask intelligent questions and show enthusiasm.

• Prepare your portfolio, clothing, and transportation the night prior to the interview. Check the weather forecast for any contingencies you will need to make. Get plenty of rest. Set dozens of alarm clocks, if necessary. You will not be able to recover if you are late.

• Dress with respect for the importance of the interview. Show you care!

• Every answer requires a specific example to support your claim; never provide a simple one- or two-word answer.

• At the end of the interview, it is extremely important for you to ask questions. Lack of questions indicates lack of interest. Finally, summarize your interests and qualifications for the position.

WHAT TO WEAR

Business attire is appropriate for interviews. Business casual is appropriate for career fairs, employer information sessions and for more informal segments of an on-site interview.

WHAT TO BRING

Résumé
Include several copies of your current résumé. Provide one to the recruiter as you are sitting down to interview. Your complete résumé will provide detailed information for the recruiter and indicate a sense of preparedness.

Transcripts
Go to your MyUW account and print several unofficial copies of your transcripts. Or, go to the Registrar’s Office to obtain official copies if you need them. Employers will want your unofficial transcript, so do not scramble to print them at the last minute.

References
Bring your reference list and any evaluations of work performance.

Other
Not required but may be helpful: photos/illustrations of projects (Vehicle Teams, Concrete Canoe, Bridge Building, Engineering EXPO, Transcend or any of the other student competitions), articles, abstracts, publications.

PRACTICE OUT LOUD

Now is your time to talk about yourself. After all this preparation, you should know what to say! If you are thoroughly prepared, you know skills employers are seeking, what strengths and accomplishments you have developed, and what this particular employer needs in new engineering hires! You know your résumé and do not need to refer to it throughout the interview. You have practiced talking about your skills and have reviewed lists of potential questions. You are ready and able to talk.

Before you go through an actual interview, you should first go through at least one mock interview. Practicing interview responses is key to understanding how to improve your interviewing skills.
The mock interview is more than an opportunity to work out interview jitters; it is an opportunity to practice and improve your interviewing technique and answers. It is also a chance to hear constructive feedback from someone with experience in the field. It is not enough to look at an interview question and say, “Yeah, I know the answer to that one.”

» Connect with ECS about mock interview resources.

ATTITUDE

The most important aspect of interviewing. The key element to successful interviewing is not your experience, your grades, what classes you took, your co-curricular activities, or any of the other basic necessities. Those skills are what got you the interview. The key element to successful interviewing can be summed up in one word: attitude.

If you want to rise above others with better experience, better grades, or better anything, you will need to work on developing a highly positive work attitude.

Your attitude determines whether you will make the cut or be discarded. Remember, there are plenty of competitors with the ability to do almost any given job—especially at the entry level. The way most employers differentiate at the entry level is by candidates’ attitudes toward the job. Your attitude is often what recruiters will remember when the dust has settled after reviewing 10, 20, or even 100 candidates—the one who was sincerely willing to put forth [his or her] very best effort. If you have the attitude of wanting to do your very best for the organization, of being focused on the organization’s needs, of putting yourself forth as the person who will be committed and dedicated to fulfilling their needs, you will likely be the one chosen.

You can show your winning attitude in the way you present yourself. Incorporate the actual words “positive attitude,” “excellence” and “striving to be my best” into your interview language. Then show by your stories and examples how these words positively affect your life. Show them when and where and how you have put forth extra effort above and beyond the call of duty. Show them how you beat a deadline, how you excelled in a project, or how you made a difference by going the extra mile.

DISCUSSIONS OF SALARY

Do not be caught off guard if the employer brings up salary near the end of an interview. Conversely, do not be the one to bring up this subject. If questioned about salary expectations, however be prepared to discuss the topic. Know the going rate for an entry-level engineer by reviewing ECS salary statistics as well as national statistics.

We recommend that you give a salary range or indicate that you are willing to consider any reasonable offer. For example:

Give a range: “I would hope that with my background and qualifications, a salary in the $58,000 to $63,000 (or low-$60s) range would be offered.” The range you give should be realistic and based upon prior research of starting salaries in the industry and for the position being discussed.

If a verbal offer is extended at the interview, be appreciative and graciously ask for two things:

1. The offer in writing.
2. Time to consider the offer. Most employers will offer an acceptance date of between 2 and 8 weeks after the initial offer.

If asked to make a decision on the spot, show your appreciation for the offer but say that you need time to consider such an important decision.

TYPICAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Don’t try to memorize (or fabricate) the “right” answers to interview questions. The only right answers are those that truthfully describe an event in your life, including what you learned from the event, what skills you developed, what skill you used, or what you would have done differently. Have confidence that your response is strong if it reflects active self-assessment, specific details and relates to the question being asked.

Also try to understand the question behind the question; understand why the question is being asked and what the employer is evaluating. Respond with specific, thoughtful descriptions of your real past and present experiences, the skills developed and lessons learned from them.
If you have thoroughly prepared for all aspects of the job search and followed us carefully to this point, you will know what to say and how to respond. Questions are not as important as answers. However, a list of potential interview questions can be helpful!

**REASONS FOR STUDYING ENGINEERING:**

- What led you to choose your field of major study? Why did you select UW-Madison? Was it a good decision?
- What classes were the most challenging? The least challenging?
- Describe your most rewarding college experiences.
- Are your grades an accurate indication of your academic achievement?
- Do you have plans for graduate or professional school?
- Why weren’t you more involved in college activities?
- What was the best part of your college experience?
- A college degree is nothing special; everyone I am interviewing has one. What else do you have to offer me?
- Provide an example of how you acquired a technical skill and converted it into a practical application.
- How frequently did you skip classes while in college?

**EMPLOYER KNOWLEDGE/INTEREST:**

- How have you prepared for this interview?
- Why are you interested in opportunities with my company? What do you know about our company?
- Why should we hire you instead of other equally qualified candidates?
- Which trade publications do you read to keep informed about current trends?
- What technical skills would you bring to this position?
- What qualities do you think this position requires?
- What interests you least about this job?
- What do you see as the major trends in the field?
- Why do you want to leave your current employer?
- What salary would you anticipate?

**WORK AND ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES:**

- Describe a situation in which your ideas or work conflicted with the ideas or work of a co-worker or supervisor.
- What type of people do you find difficult to work with?
- What have you learned from your past jobs?
- How did your co-op/intern position contribute to your career growth?
- Tell me of a situation where you worked under pressure.
- You seem to have limited work experience; why do you think you could do this job?
- What part of the position’s responsibilities interests you most?
- If I contacted your references, what would they each say about you?
- Have you ever been fired?
- Do you make your opinion known when you disagree with a supervisor?
- How would you handle a situation in which you couldn’t get along with your boss?
- What new idea or suggestion did you make to your immediate supervisor in the last couple of months?
- How would you describe the perfect supervisor?

**QUICK TIPS**

- It is not enough to look at an interview question on a long list of questions and say, “Yeah, I know the answer to that one.”
- Take time to practice responses out loud.
- Listen to the “question behind the question.” What is the interviewer trying to learn about me?
MOTIVATIONS AND GOALS:

- Tell me about the last time that you made a change in your life.
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?
- Give me two examples of good decisions you have made in the last six months. Why were they good?
- What have you done that demonstrates your initiative?
- What would you change about yourself if you could?
- When have you been a leader?
- Would you rather write a report or give an oral report? Why?
- What was the latest book you’ve read or movie you seen?
- Are you a risk-taker?
- How do you handle pressure situations?
- How do you relieve stress?
- Tell me about yourself.
- How have you gone about determining that this field is right for you?
- What is the biggest risk you have ever taken?
- What is your strongest transferable skill? How has it been helpful to you?
- What accomplishment has given you the most satisfaction? Why?
- What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- How do you define success?
- Tell me about two or three accomplishments that have given you the most satisfaction. Why?

RESPONSE TO FAILURE OR CRITICISM:

- How do you react to criticism?
- Think about something at work or school that you consider a failure. Tell me about it.
- Tell me about a mistake you made, and how you handled it.
- What is the worst communication problem you have experienced?
- Tell me about a time when you put your foot in your mouth (misspoke).
- Describe the biggest problem you have faced within the last six months. How did you handle it?
- What is the most unethical situation you have encountered?
- Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
- When was the last time you lied?
- Who is currently angry with you?
- Tell me about a team you were on when all members did not carry their weight.

INTERACTION WITH OTHERS:

- Describe an instance where you made effective use of facts to secure the agreement of others.
- Describe a creative idea that you produced which led to a significant contribution to the success of an activity or project.
- What is leadership? Describe your vision of a leader. When is it time to follow?
- What qualities are essential for success in business today?

FUTURE GOALS:

- What are your short-range goals? How are you preparing for them?
- What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
- Which of your personal goals have you reached and not reached?
- What are your long-range career objectives?
- Tell me about a time you overcame obstacles to reach a goal?
QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO ASK THE RECRUITER

• What attracted you to this organization?
• What do you think its strengths and weaknesses are?
• What are the most critical factors for success at your organization?
• How would you describe your management style?
• What are the greatest challenges for entry-level hires within your organization?
• Can you tell me about the people who will look to me for supervision?
• What is the organization’s customer service philosophy?
• What is the makeup of the team as far as experience?
• What does the organization value most?
• What kinds of processes are in place to encourage collaboration?
• How do my skills compare to other candidates you have interviewed?
• What kinds of assignments might I expect during the first few months on the job?
• What characteristics help a person succeed in this field?
• How often are performance reviews provided?
• What do you consider ideal experiences for this job?
• Please tell me about the people with whom I would be working.
• What would be a typical career path for someone like me entering your organization?
• Please describe the management style or engineering environment at your organization.
• What are my opportunities for learning new skills?
• How much influence will I have over the type of work I will do?
• What do you like best about working at ABC Co.?
• Do you promote from within?
• What would be my primary responsibilities?
• What would I be expected to accomplish in the first six months on the job?
• What are some of the department’s ongoing and anticipated special projects?
• How much contact does the department have with management?
• What do you like best about working for this department/organization?
• Can you describe a typical workday in the department?
• Do you feel free to express your ideas and concerns here?
• What are the possibilities for professional growth and promotion?
• How much interaction do you have with superiors, colleagues and customers?
• How long have you been with the company?
• Is there anything you would change about the company if you had the chance?
• What do employees seem to like best about the organization?
• How large is the department where the opening exists?
• What type of orientation or training do new employees receive?
• What is the next course of action? When should I expect to hear from you? What are the next steps in this process?
• I would like to leave you with some final thoughts regarding my qualifications and enthusiasm for working with your company.

QUICK TIPS

DO NOT ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

• What will my salary be?
• What does your organization do?
• Where are you located?
• Do I get paid for overtime?
• How much vacation will I receive?
DIFFERENT TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWS

The basic premise behind behavioral interviews is that past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior. Most employers use this interview method.

“Tell me about a team experience in which one member did not meet expectations.”

This question demonstrates the type of question common in behavioral interviews. Based on the premise that the best way to predict future behavior is to evaluate past behavior, this form of questioning allows the recruiter to assess your abilities based on what you have already done.

Typical behavioral question structure:

• Tell me about an obstacle you have overcome.
• Tell me about the most unethical situation you’ve observed or experienced.
• Tell me about your last experience with success.
• Tell me about a goal you have met.

S.T.A.R. response style for behavioral questions:

In responding to behavioral questions, it is best to provide a specific example to support your response. Frame the response using an example from your resume including academic projects, classes, work experiences, and out-of-class activities.

Be very specific as you cover the four necessary steps (Situation, Task, Action & Result) for optimum success:

• Situation: Give an example of a situation you were involved in that resulted in a positive outcome.
• Task: Describe the task(s) required in the situation.
• Action: Talk about the various actions you initiated or completed.
• Result: Provide the results directly connected to your actions.

To maximize this method, you should add what you learned from the situation that you will bring to the job.

• Be sure the outcome or result reflects positively on you. If the result itself was not favorable, talk about what you learned or would do differently next time.
• Be honest. Don’t embellish or omit any part of the story.

CASE INTERVIEWS

Simply put, a case interview is the analysis of a business plan or situation. Unlike most other interview questions, it is an interactive process. Your interviewer will present you with a business problem and ask you for your opinion. Your job is to ask the interviewer logical questions that will permit you to make a detailed recommendation. The majority of case interviewers don’t have a specific right answer that you, the candidate, are expected to give. What the interviewer is looking for is a thought process that is both analytical and creative (what consultants love to call “out-of-the-box” thinking). Specific knowledge of the industry covered by the case question is a bonus but not necessary. An understanding of the business models and processes as well as global business experience is helpful for success.

Question categories can be identified as:

• Market-sizing questions focus on determining the market size for a particular service or product.
• Business operations questions refer to running a business and getting a product out the door. The focus may include purchasing and transporting raw materials, manufacturing processes, scheduling of staff and facilities, product distribution ... the day-to-day of running the business.
• Business strategy questions deal more with the future direction of a firm. Good strategy questions may have a market-sizing piece, a logic puzzle, multiple operations issues, and a dose of creativity and action. These types of questions tend to be quite complex.
• Résumé case questions come directly from the candidate’s résumé. One example may be, “I see that you play rugby. Describe all the different positions on a rugby team, and the play strategy for each.”
TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

Telephone interviews are often used as a screening device prior to extending face-to-face interviews. An employer will evaluate you to determine the benefit of inviting you for an on-site visit. Because of the obvious focus on communication skills, the phone interview can be intimidating. In addition, students often make the mistake of not preparing as thoroughly for this type of interview as they would for an on-site or campus interview.

Using the telephone for social and informal purposes is easy for most of us. However, using it for business purposes is quite another matter. During the job search, remember that a telephone interview (much like business email) must be strictly professional. You must adopt a manner in using the phone that conveys your seriousness of purpose, ability to concisely communicate your strengths, and desire to work for the employer.

The clear advantages of the telephone interview are that you are in a comfortable, familiar place and that you can have all your papers at your fingertips.

The disadvantages are also quite obvious. Your voice is the sole means of communication. You cannot use eye contact, facial expressions, body language, or other visual means of communication, nor can you respond to the recruiter’s nonverbal cues or attempt to interpret his/her interest. You are selling yourself using only words and the tone of your voice.

Some general advice:

- Prepare as if this were a face-to-face interview. Know your résumé inside and out. Be able to provide specific examples to support your strengths, interests, and abilities. Show enthusiasm. Ask questions.
- Write down the names of the recruiters. Refer to them as Mr. or Ms., unless otherwise indicated. Take quick notes during the interview. At the close of the interview, thank the interviewer using his or her name.
- Speak slowly. Articulate clearly. Choose words carefully. Your diction, voice level, intonation and choice of words are your main forms of communicating.
- Don’t chew gum. Don’t use a speakerphone. Keep the mouthpiece close to your mouth. Enunciate.
- Smile. Believe it or not, smiling while you talk helps! You will sound more interested and friendly. A smile over the phone can be recognized.
- Allow for silences or pauses. If you need more time to consider a question, simply ask for it, since silences are more pronounced on the phone.

QUICK TIPS

- Did you know that you can reserve a room in the ECS offices for phone interviews? Contact ECS staff with a specific time and date for your interview. A phone is available for you in a quiet, closed-door office.
- Be sure to schedule your interviews between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- Listen. With no other communication clues except a voice, it is critical for you to focus and listen carefully. Ask for clarification if you don’t understand a question.
- Dress nicely. It will help you maintain a serious, professional manner.
- Don’t interrupt, although some “over-talk” is bound to happen on the phone. Confirm that what you said has been “heard.”

In addition, always have materials ready for interviews:

- Résumé, references page, transcripts, and other portfolio items, such as list of publications, presentations, patents, as well as sample projects and papers.
- Any correspondence with the employer, employer website information, and other literature.
- Pen, paper, personal calendar, and class schedule for scheduling employer visits. A “do not disturb” sign on your door.
- Turn off the TV and music. Turn off any alarms scheduled on your phone or calendar. Mute the sound on your computer.
- Have a glass of water nearby.

Occasionally, an employer will call you unexpectedly asking you of your interest in job opportunities and/or wanting to ask you a few questions regarding your qualifications. If the employer has caught you at a bad time, it is perfectly acceptable to request that you talk at another time, provided that you express your appreciation and interest in the opportunity.

Another tactic is to ask if they (or you) can call back in five minutes—or later in the day—for an interview. Of course, it is also acceptable to politely decline an interview if you are truly not interested.
**INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP**

*The interview is not the end of the job search process; follow-up is required.*

It is important not only to reflect on your interview performance, but also to continue a dialogue with the recruiter. What does this mean? It means that it is in your best interest to follow-up the interview with a thank you email or letter and maintain a regular follow-up schedule. Employers are interested in hiring people who are interested in the position!

Indicate your interest by continuing to communicate with the recruiter until a decision has been made. Use discretion regarding frequency—do not become a pest.

Within one to two days, send an email message thanking the recruiter for the interview, clarifying topics discussed in the interview, and re-emphasizing interest in the employer’s opportunity. A well-written, well-timed thank you message will not get you a job, but it can tip the scales if all other factors are equal.

By sending a thank you message, you will:
- Show courtesy and appreciation
- Stand out from the crowd
- Reiterate interest in the opportunity
- Make points you forgot during the interview
- Demonstrate your writing skills

Regularly contact the recruiter after the thank you letter; do so approximately every 2 weeks until a decision is made. Offer to provide other materials, such as transcripts or samples of your work.

Develop a spreadsheet with employer names, recruiter contacts, interview dates, and follow-up dates. Since you are actively searching, a spreadsheet will help you track the interactions with many, many, many employers and recruiters.

**ON-SITE, SECOND INTERVIEW PREPARATION**

After a successful campus or phone interview, you will often be asked to participate in a second interview at the employer’s site. The employer visit is generally a full day of interviewing and related activities. The on-site/employer visit is often the last step before an offer is made.

The employer visit is given many names: plant trip, second interview, site visit, or office visit. Just as the employer visit has many names, it has a variety of faces. It is difficult to describe every aspect of what to expect in an employer visit because employers vary greatly in how they execute them. The length of the trip, number of people involved, levels of people interviewing, types of tests conducted, and degree of formality can differ from one employer to the next.

The second interview provides an excellent opportunity for you to get a firsthand account of what it’s like to work for the employer and for the employer to determine how you would work in that environment. In other words, the interview is a mutual one.

**PURPOSE**

- Allows the employer an opportunity to make an in-depth assessment of you prior to extending a job offer. The employer visit is time-consuming and expensive for employers, so they screen a large number of applicants down to a few who are invited to visit. At this point, the employer is confident you have the technical skills and intelligence to do the job. This visit is the employer’s opportunity to confirm there is a good match between your goals, the career opportunity, and the work group.
- Allows you an opportunity to see the employer and its people firsthand to make a more informed decision if an offer is made. The employer visit provides you with an opportunity to learn more about the position, the long-term career opportunities, the company’s employees, the company itself, and the local community. The employer will usually be doing as much selling as evaluating because this is the information you will use in deciding whether to accept or decline an offer. You, like the employer, are trying to determine whether or not a good fit exists.

**PREPARATION**

This is the final contact before an offer is made; do not take preparation lightly. Prior to the visit, review all resources available about the employer.

Be knowledgeable about the employer, its products or services, and career opportunities. The more prepared you are, the more probable it is the employer will recognize enthusiasm, motivation, maturity, and thoroughness as assets you possess.
Develop insightful questions to ask about the position, work environment, and employer’s needs. Your questions demonstrate the amount of preparation you have invested in the visit, as well as your seriousness of purpose. Appropriate questions will probe topics such as typical entry-level projects. Asking about salary or benefits is still inappropriate, but be prepared to answer any questions regarding expected salary.

* Research entry level salary ranges on the ECS website.

Finally, good preparation includes paying proper attention to appearance, dress and attitude. Dress in either business or business casual clothing. Remember, it is better to err on the side of being too conservative than too casual. Be sure all pieces of your wardrobe are clean and pressed. Practice impeccable grooming habits, including clean and freshly trimmed hair and nails.

**FINALIZING LOGISTICS**

An invitation to an employer visit will usually come from a specific contact person. This person becomes your source of information about all aspects of the trip. Address any questions prior to the trip to the contact person.

The majority of employer visits are one full day in length, but be prepared to spend 2 to 3 days, including travel and an overnight stay. Travel will be either by flying or driving, depending upon your preference, the employer’s discretion, and the distance. Usually, trips of more than 200 miles will justify air travel.

Some employers will make all the arrangements for your visit. They will reserve and pre-pay the hotel room and flights. They will send you an itinerary with flight numbers and hotel reservation numbers. Be sure to request this information and to carry the details with you while traveling. If the employer is not pre-paying the flight or hotel, talk to your contact person to clarify reimbursement procedures. Call or email your contact person, confirming all plans to avoid any last-minute mix-ups or confusion.

**Key information to have with you at all times:**

- Trip itinerary with times and names of people you will be meeting.
- Contact person’s name, phone number and email.
- Travel and accommodation arrangements (including air, hotel and car rental confirmation numbers).
- Maps and driving instructions.

**Spouse or significant other:**

- You may request that your spouse or significant other accompany you on the initial visit, but it is more common for your spouse to accompany you on a subsequent trip after an offer has been extended, but before you make a decision.
- During this later visit, you might want to meet with real-estate agents or rental agencies to evaluate housing.

**ARRIVAL**

If you have a morning interview, arrive in the area the night before. Avoid very late flights or the last flight into the area. An employer representative may arrange to pick you up at the airport, so don’t dress too casually for flying. Otherwise, take a courtesy van or taxi to your hotel. Keep all receipts for ground transportation expenditures for reimbursement.

When checking into the hotel, ask for any messages (the employer may have left information for you) and provide any pre-payment documentation. Regardless of payment arrangements, most hotels will ask for your credit card to pay for charges not covered by the employer, such as personal phone calls and room service.

Schedule a morning wake-up call with the front desk, allowing plenty of time to get ready. When checking out, review the bill to ensure its accuracy; keep the receipt for your records.

**THE EVENING BEFORE**

Some employers arrange for an employee to have dinner with you the evening you arrive, or breakfast the morning of your interview. This is an opportunity for you to meet a recent hire while getting an informal flavor for the day’s schedule, the employer, the area and any other pertinent topics. The degree of informality and nature of conversation at meals can vary, but keep in mind that anyone at the table can serve as an evaluator, so reflect maturity and professionalism.

Dress appropriately (ask for advice on appropriate dress). Eat moderately, AVOID alcoholic beverages, and participate in the discussion of employment opportunities, community and hiring needs. Be yourself, but be your best professional self.

Before retiring for the evening, confirm your morning wake-up call at the front desk and set your alarm. Get enough sleep and give yourself extra time to get ready in the morning. It is extremely difficult to recover from tardiness, so plan ahead. In most cases, you will need to check out of the hotel.
upon leaving for the employer site. Provide extra time to do so. Take your luggage if you’ll be leaving for the airport immediately from the employer site. If you’ll return to the hotel, check your baggage at the front desk for later pick-up.

INTERVIEW DAY

An itinerary is critical to help you plan for the day. It should include times and locations of interviews, names of employees, and a map. You may have 3 to 5 interviews with various levels of management in a one-on-one or group setting, or panel interview. In any case, understand that the employer does not wish to intimidate you; hiring staff simply want a variety of input regarding your “fit” with the company. In some cases, you may be part of a group visit, where a number of candidates participate in group interviews and activities. While the group visit is more difficult for the employer to arrange, the visit allows staff the opportunity to see each candidate among their peers. Conversely, it permits you to see those who might be a part of your training group.

Most employers are well prepared for your on-site visit. They conduct formal interview training for their managers and usually provide very good interview sessions. Interviewers have scanned your résumé and are familiar with your background. The interviewers will attempt to assess your motivation and drive—to see what makes you strive for success. Each interviewer will probe for strengths and weaknesses. You may be asked the same questions by many people throughout the day yet must give as fresh and thorough an answer to the fourth as to the first.

If you are interviewing at a plant-trip location it is probable that an employment manager or plant manager will conduct a tour of the plant. You should be aware that you are being interviewed and evaluated even during a tour. Pay attention and ask questions. Anyone you meet, from receptionist to CEO, is a potential evaluator. Considering this, remain sharp and professional at all times.

DEPARTURE

The last meeting of the day often will be with the contact person or human resources manager. They will address your final questions, explain follow-up procedures, discuss reimbursement and take care of other details. Be sure that all your questions have been answered prior to leaving.

AFTER THE VISIT

Following your visit, send a letter or email of thanks to all the people who interviewed you, including the main contact person. The message should reaffirm interest in the position and highlight qualifications. This letter provides you one last opportunity to position yourself for potential hiring.

Most employers will contact you within two weeks of the actual visit with an offer or a rejection. Some, however, may make an offer at the interview, while others will take as long as a month. It is acceptable to ask when employment decisions will be made, as well as to check on delays if the estimated decision date passes with no contact.

TESTING

After the second interview, many employers will make an offer contingent on a negative test for drugs and controlled substances. This test takes the form of a urine specimen analyzed for presence of a substance. Be aware this test may occur and be advised that failure to submit to a drug test may end further employment consideration.

REIMBURSEMENTS

Clarify proper reimbursement procedures with your contact person. Know what expenses are pre-paid and what will be reimbursed. A note of caution: Don’t take advantage of the employer. You should ask to be reimbursed only for legitimate expenses, not souvenirs and expensive extras.

Reimbursement of expenses will vary among employers, but many will pay for travel, lodging and food. Keep receipts and clarify what expenses will be reimbursed prior to spending your own money. Incidental expenses reimbursed may include parking, cab fares and tips.

Expenses generally not reimbursed include room service snacks, gifts, and any other sightseeing activities you might choose to do. Meals should be reasonable and items such as alcohol should be avoided. The in-house hotel restaurant is usually a good measure of how much to spend on a meal. Enjoy the visit but don’t be extravagant.

If cash or credit is a problem, the College of Engineering offers a Koresh Loan. This $500 loan is available to any engineering student, is interest free for three months, and is immediately available. Forms are available in Room 2620 Engineering Hall.
**EVALUATE & MAKE DECISIONS**

Many factors affect the number of job offers you will receive. Most of this booklet has been devoted to a key factor: your preparation—which is completely under your control. Not under your control is the cyclical economy. But even in the worst of times, jobs are available. Expectations may have to be changed, however with an effective, focused job search, you will find a job.

**THE OFFER**

While it is unlikely that you will be hired on the spot or told that an offer will definitely be forthcoming, be prepared. If an offer should be extended then, always ask for a chance to think it over. Accepting immediately is poor policy because you lose your opportunity to give thorough consideration to all aspects of the offer. Even if you think the offer is exactly right, the employer’s enthusiasm and your own may cloud your objectivity. Show appreciation, but always ask for time to consider the offer as well as a formal offer in writing.

When the written offer arrives, read it carefully. It should specify your job title, salary, and the name of the department and supervisor to which you will be assigned. The offer may be contingent upon your passing a physical exam and/or drug test. It will usually have a deadline by which you must accept in writing, ranging from two to eight weeks, depending on the time of year and the current market. The actual starting date may be specified then or after your acceptance.

Keep in mind that you and the employer have different concerns about “time.” You most likely would like ample time to hear from other employers and consider all your alternatives. Employers, on the other hand, want to know your decision as quickly as possible. If you reject their offer, they will need to quickly contact second-tier candidates.

Offer deadlines are taken quite seriously. If you do not meet the deadline, the offer may be withdrawn; if you need more time to consider an offer, ask for an extension. Be specific as to how much time you will need to make a decision. Show appreciation, enthusiasm for the offer, and emphasize the importance of making the right decision.

While making a decision on an offer, be sure to talk to all other employers who showed interest in you. Contact them directly, explaining that you are close to making a decision regarding your job search, are very interested in their opportunities, and ask about your status with them. Hopefully, they also will be able to make an offer if interested.

**In summary:**

- Only consider job offers after you receive them in writing. (Co-ops and interns should consider verbal offers, although it is good to request a written offer.)
- It is acceptable to ask for additional time to consider the offer. A minimum of 2 weeks is generally offered.
- Once you accept, honor your commitment to the employer. Don’t accept an offer while at the same time hoping that a better one will come along.
- Decline all other offers immediately to allow other candidates the opportunity. Discontinue all interviewing and other job search activities.

**Should you accept? Things to consider:**

- Will you enjoy working with your future co-workers and supervisors?
- Will you have a good opportunity to express yourself on the job?
- Is the working environment satisfactory?
- Will you be fully using your primary skills?
- Is there sufficient diversity and challenge?
- Will you be able to get the kind of feedback you require to see the results of your efforts?
- Is there an opportunity to learn and expand?
- Are there open avenues of communication?
- Will you be able to get value from your work?
- Do you clearly understand what your responsibilities will be, to whom you will report, and how evaluations will be conducted?
- Do you clearly understand typical work hours and overtime expectations?
- Is the company product or service something you believe in?
- Is the offer within your expected range? Check ECS resources for average salaries.
- What priority do you place on location? How long is the commute?
- Are your favorite activities or recreations readily available?

Job offers are often made verbally first, followed by a written offer containing various details. If you are fortunate enough to obtain more than one job offer, take time to compare and contrast various components of the offer, the employer, and the location.

Consult with an ECS staff member before accepting a position for guidance on evaluating offers.
SHOULD YOU NEGOTIATE?

In many cases, yes! It does not hurt to ask. It is important to know market rates and ask, not demand. How you ask is important. The best position from which to negotiate is to have more than one offer and strong qualifications. Generally, most students are interested in negotiating salary.

Review the following options and considerations:

- Negotiations may not be necessary. The job may be appealing and with a good employer. You may like the people with whom you’ll be working and the geographic location. The salary may be within the average range for an engineer with your background and experience. The benefits also may be good. The market might be tight. Then, there is no need to negotiate.
- Timing is critical. The opportunity to negotiate exists only between the times an offer is extended and before it is accepted.
- Do not talk salary or negotiate until an offer has been extended. If the recruiter discusses salary prior to making an offer, you might respond, “Perhaps we can discuss the salary once a job offer is made.”
- Base your salary negotiation on fact, not emotion. Use cost-of-living statistics and UW-Madison or national salary averages.
- Base salary negotiation on your market value, not on what you think you “need” or “want.”
- Choose negotiation items carefully. Do not negotiate every item. Prioritize your needs.
- Do you feel you deserve a higher starting salary? Relocation expenses? Different start date? Another week of vacation? Does your spouse require assistance in a job search? Ask for only one or two items. Base your request on fact.
- Be fair. Do not be greedy. On rare occasions, job offers have been rescinded due to what has been viewed as very unrealistic candidate expectations.
- Do not take negotiations personally. Employers may be unwilling to negotiate some items.

ACCEPT AND DECLINE ALL OFFERS IN WRITING

Once you have made the decision to accept or reject an offer, verbally accept and immediately follow-up in writing. Be sure to clarify the “start date,” relocation reimbursement, salary, and other important issues in your letter, and in particular, items that were modified during negotiations.

Immediately decline (in writing) all other offers. This is a professional courtesy, as well as a way of making opportunities available for others.

REPORT JOB OFFERS TO ECS

Look for instructions in the Offers & Negotiation section of the ECS website to report your job offer.

Find it at: ecs.wisc.edu/students/offers-and-negotiation

Note: The College of Engineering uses aggregate information for national rankings, salary surveys, and ABET accreditation.
MY NOTES:
START YOUR CAREER SEARCH

All the tools you need to connect with employers

Handshake makes it easy for every UW-Madison student to explore career events, connect to jobs and internships, and even schedule on-campus interviews.

With Handshake you can:

- Browse and register for career events on campus
- Explore thousands of jobs and internships from over 200,000 employers nationwide
- Get personalized job recommendations based on your major, interests, and more
- Manage your own campus interviews with top employers

Complete your profile today!

ecs.wisc.edu/handshake
## Employer Partners

### Gold
- Epic
- Georgia-Pacific
- Hydrite Chemical Co.

### Silver
- Boston Scientific
- Caterpillar
- Ford
- Greenheck
- Oshkosh
- PLEXUS
- Schneider
- Spectrum Brands
- SUB-ZERO
- Rally
- UTC Aerospace Systems
- X-ES

### Bronze
- Abbvie
- Capital One
- Eaton
- Ecolab
- General Electric
- GKN
- Grainger
- Lesaffre
- Sick
- Sensor Intelligence