

A Crash Course in Career Seeking

A Student's Perspective

Kalev H. Leetaru



<http://knowledge.ncsa.uiuc.edu/guidebooks.html>

UNIVERSITY OF **ILLINOIS**
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

The Ultimate Piece of Paper

- A resume is not a magic ticket to your dream job. Just one part of a large concerted process.
- Its an election and you're campaigning for office! Ads, marketing, and personal appearances.



The Six Steps to Success

- Research
- Preparing for the Seeking Process
- Writing the Resume
- Reaching Out / Advertising Yourself
- The Interview
- Wrap Up



Step 1: Research

- Researching Companies
- Researching Resumes



Researching Companies

- Possible Contacts
- Company Divisions and Product Lines
- Industry



Researching Resumes

- Advertisements
- The Competition



Step 2: Preparing to Seek

- Identifying Your “Core Competencies”
- Managing Your Online Image



Identifying Your “Core Competencies”

- Your skills and personality traits that you are really good at.
- Important to get a second opinion here, as you may not even realize some of your best strengths.



Listing your Cores

- Write down every positive thing you can think of about yourself. People person? Good at rallying teams? Creative problem solving under pressure?
- Ask friends, neighbors, others who know you to make a list too!
- List everything at this point.



Listing your Cores

- Go back through that list and find your top 10 or 20 strengths. Those are your core competencies.



Using Your Cores

- Write down all of your past jobs, big and small. Fulltime, parttime, volunteer, co-op, internship. List all details you can remember.
- Now, go back to your skills and summarize each of these jobs in terms of what you did that demonstrated those skills.



Managing Your Online Image

***YES, COMPANIES REALLY DO
LOOK AT FACEBOOK!***



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

www.uiuc.edu

Managing Your Online Image

- Most companies do extensive research on candidates and search Facebook, MySpace, and other sites and do Google searches.
- Lock your profiles and detag any photos that others have uploaded of you. This includes disabling “View Friends”.
- Don’t list the URL of your personal website on your resume.



Step 3: The Resume

- Vita vs Resume
- SKEing: Skills, Knowledge, Experience
- Accomplishments vs Requirements
- The Basics
- Your Resume by Sections



Vita vs Resume

- A vita is an exhaustive autobiography of everything you've ever done, written, or received. Unlimited length. Only for academics.
- A resume is a one-page “highlights sheet” of your best accomplishments. This is what you will be using.



SKEing: Skills, Knowledge, Experience

- **Skills.** Innate or learned talents. You may or may not have used them in a job.
- **Knowledge.** Assemblage of information you have learned over time.
- **Experience.** The application of your skills and knowledge.



Accomplishments vs Requirements

- Resume is all about what you've accomplished, not a recap of the job description at your internship.
- Maybe you went beyond the call of duty?
- How did those job requirements help you? Did you learn responsibility? Leadership? Details orientation?



The Basics

- Resumes are all about standing out, but **STAND OUT IN A GOOD WAY!**
 - Creative in content, not layout.
 - Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation.
 - Avoid Abbreviations
 - Pick a font and stick with it
 - **Bold** important elements
 - Reverse chronological order
 - Section formatting



Your Resume by Sections

- Name and Address
- Summary and Mission Statements
- Work Experience
- Education
- International Experience
- Leadership
- References



Name and Address

- Goes at very top of your resume.
- Include both oncampus and home addresses, with phone and email.
- Only text that should be different size from rest of page.



Summary and Mission Statements

- Required by some disciplines, optional in others.
- Known as your “sell window” or “branding statement”
- Summary is your short 3-sentence description of yourself. (Highlights of highlights). Good to emphasize evolution of responsibility or other trends not immediately obvious from just glancing at resume.
- Can integrate keywords



Summary and Mission Statements

- Be careful to customize mission statement, but don't overdo it.
- If uploading to a resume database, your summary and mission statements become your cover letter.



Work Experience

- All about ACCOMPLISHMENTS
($A = V + D + O$)

ACCOMPLISHMENT =

Action Verb +

What You Did +

What the Outcome Was



Action Verbs

- Lots of lists out there, categorized by skill area you want to emphasize
- Conveys action and *change*
- Past tense, avoid pronouns



Accomplishment Statements

- Solved technical challenge.
- Improved resource utilization (efficiency/productivity), reduced costs, improved communications.
- Improved the condition of others, resolved conflicts, facilitated teamwork or group cohesion
- Gained valuable in-the-field experience (internships)



Accomplishment Statements

- Qualitative vs Quantitative.
- Emphasize details.



Extras

- What kind of experience to include?
- Multiple jobs/internships at the same company
- How to handle lack of work experience
- Things to watch out for



Education

- Major and expected graduation date.
- The GPA – List unless really bad.
- Coursework – List topics/themes, not course names.
- Software Expertise – Industry-specific tools first.



International Experience

- COMPANIES EMPHASIZE THIS BIG!
- Study Abroad
- Language Skills



Leadership

- **COMPANIES EMPHASIZE THIS BIG!**
 - Self-Motivation
 - Self-Sufficiency
 - Dependability
 - Keeps Cool Under Stress
 - Motivates Others



Leadership

- Works well in teams – companies sometimes you need to be a follower too
- ROTC/Military service



References

- Don't list on resume or put "references available upon request"
- Give your references a heads-up that they may be contacted
- If you need a written letter of reference, give them plenty of time



Step 4: Reaching Out / Advertising Yourself

- Job Fairs
- First Contact
- The Cover Letter
- Timing and Presentation
- Electronic Resume Databases
- Attitude



Job Fairs

- Make a list and customize
- Tailor by theme
- Always pack a generic resume
- Get recruiter's card and send thank-you email



First Contact

- Practice your pitch
- Pre-Hire Internships
- Emailing a Recruiter
- Unsolicited Contact / Cold Calling
- Replying to Advertisements



The Cover Letter

- Your advertisement's advertisement
- “Ask not what your company can do for you, but what you can do for your company”
- Sections
- Getting a Referral



Timing and Presentation

- Have it arrive on Tues, Weds, or Thurs
- Middle of morning
- Don't get creative



Electronic Resume Databases

- PDF or Word
- Document Title
- Don't get tricky
- Summary/Mission statements become your cover letter



Attitude

Always keep positive!



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

www.uiuc.edu

Step 5: The Interview

- Types of Interviews
- Before the Interview
- During the Interview
- Types of Interviewers
- Onsite Fly-Out Interviews
- The Post-Interview Process



Types of Interviews

- Phone Interview
- Screening Interview
- Group Screening Interview
- Hiring Interview
- Situational Interview
- Stress Interview
- Social Interview
- Peer Interview



Before the Interview

- Talk to friends
- Dress professionally
- Show up early
- Don't fidget
- Turn phone off
- Bring a copy of your resume
- Memorize your resume
- Know what position you are applying for



During the Interview

- You're not there to learn more about the company
- You're not there to be truthful or open
- Every word counts
- Popular/key questions
- Never badmouth a former employer



Types of Interviewers

- Character Interviewer
- Performance-Under-Pressure Interviewer
- Skills-You-Have-Today Interviewer
- Technical Interviewer



Onsite Fly-Out Interviews

- Situational, Social, Stress Interviews
- You are being “interviewed” every moment of the day, even if you are at dinner or out at a bar with the company



The Post-Interview Process

- Followup with thank-you letter or email
- If you don't get the position, send a thank-you for being considered and ask that they stay in touch



Step 6: Wrap Up

- Things to Avoid
 - Never Lie
 - Don't Fake Anything
- Video Resumes



Thank You!

Kalev H. Leetaru

<http://knowledge.ncsa.uiuc.edu/guidebooks.html>

Thank you for having me!



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

www.uiuc.edu