

CAREER SERVICES GUIDE: Navigating Your Future

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YOU are responsible for your future!

The Career Services staff will assist you in career exploration, career assessment, and career attainment. You, however, are responsible for making your own decisions – no one else can do it for you. You must take the initiative when preparing for the imminent job hunt and/or impending search for graduate schools. You should take control of your future by actively engaging in career counseling, attending career workshops, obtaining internships, researching opportunities, and following up on all leads in a timely and professional manner.

We look forward to helping you achieve your goals!

The Career Services staff is eager to help you determine and achieve your career goals and aspirations. Through careful assessment, thoughtful exploration and conscientious planning, you can secure the future you desire. In light of your various commitments to academic pursuits and extracurricular activities, you must be diligent in carving out time to pursue your career goals. Our staff is dedicated to providing the resources you need to be successful.

We encourage you to take advantage of the many programs, services and resources available to you through Career Services. Meet with one of our career counselors to explore your interests and develop an individual plan to reach your career goals.

This handbook has been written exclusively for Rhodes junior and senior students. **The first half of the book is dedicated to the job search process, and the second half covers topics related to graduate/professional school admissions.** We hope you will find the information helpful to you as you plan for your future!

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To schedule a counseling appointment call:

901-843-3800

Location:

Lower level, Burrow Hall

Hours:

8:30am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday

rhodes.edu/careerservices

Introduction to Career Services

CAMPUS SERVICES

Preparing for the Future

Counseling

We encourage you to schedule an appointment to meet with a career counselor to discuss your individual questions and map out a plan for your future. You may use this time to explore career interests, examine appropriate graduate school programs, review your résumé, prepare for interviews or discuss other career-related issues. To schedule an appointment, call 901-843-3800 or stop by our office, located in the lower level of Burrow, next to the Buckman Center for International Education.

***NOTE: Due to high demand, we unfortunately cannot see walk-ins or review résumés via email, and ask that you make an appointment with us if you have any questions.**

Career Quest

The first necessary skill you must develop in the career search process is the ability to articulate your interests, values and skills. Many students struggle with this step. Uncertainty regarding your future and lack of knowledge of available career options may lead to frustration and general avoidance of the job search process altogether. The Career Quest program is a series of inventories that examine personality traits and types, values, interests and skills. Career Quest can be taken on any computer after an individual orientation appointment with Amy Oakes Ware. Call 901-843-3800 to schedule an appointment and start your career search!

Skills and Values Inventories

The free skills and values inventories

offered by Career Services are easy to access through the Rhodes website. These inventories may be included (along with Career Quest) in your search for a compatible career.

Workshops & Programs

Throughout the year, Career Services offers numerous workshops and programs. These programs provide practical tips and proven strategies to give you the competitive edge in the job search process. Programs of particular interest to seniors include: the videotaped "mock" interview program, the Graduate School Expo, Financing Graduate School, Put Your Best Fork Forward (a dinner etiquette program), the Career and Internship Expo, Test Drive and various alumni panels for different majors.

Career Library

In addition to job listings and corporate reports, the Career Library includes current career books, magazines and handouts. Regardless of where you are in the career search process, the Career Library is rich in resources. Books are shelved according to topic and include: career field information, career planning directories, résumé and cover letter resources, job search guides, graduate school and financial aid books, job opportunity information, internship and work/study abroad listings, as well as geographical job bank directories. No appointment is needed to use the self-help Career Library, which is also searchable online from the Career Services site. Computers, printers and a fax machine are also available for your use.

Job Search Outlets

On-Campus Interview Program

Throughout the year, employers representing various businesses, agencies, school systems and graduate programs visit the Rhodes campus to interview seniors and alumni. We encourage you to broaden your interviewing options by employing additional job search techniques. You are advised to begin your interviews during the fall months, since many employers who recruit during the fall semester may not recruit again in the spring.

To participate in the On-Campus Interview Program, you must properly register with Career Services by:

1. Attending Senior Registration (offered several times at the beginning of each semester)
 2. Signing the Interview Agreement and Release Form
 3. Submitting one copy of your résumé for your Career Services file
- Notices regarding on-campus interviews will be released to seniors via the career newsletter, the Career Services homepage and email.

Shadow Program

Through this program, you will spend a partial day with an employer in a field you would like to explore. The shadow experience can be arranged to fit your schedule and is available throughout the year. For additional information, pick up an application at Career Services.

Rhodes Internship Program

Each semester, Career Services coordinates and administers the Rhodes Internship Program, which

includes more than 150 opportunities in Memphis.

Information for fall, spring and summer internships is available in the Career Services office and on the Career Services homepage. To enroll in the Rhodes Internship Program, you must:

1. Attend an Internship Orientation meeting
2. Complete and submit an Internship Application and Release Form
3. Submit a copy of your résumé

Credentials Files

As you consider graduate school or full-time employment, you may wish to establish a Credentials File consisting of a résumé, letters of recommendation and a student teaching evaluation.

Your Credentials File will be maintained for seven years after graduation. You may keep it updated with current résumés and letters of recommendation during that time.

Babysitting/Tutoring Lists

Career Services maintains lists of students who are willing to babysit children or tutor elementary through high school students. Faculty, staff, alumni and the Memphis community use this list to identify reliable employees. If you would like to be included on the babysitting and/

or tutoring list(s), stop by or email Career Services to register.

ONLINE SERVICES AND RESOURCES

CareerLynX

CareerLynX is the primary source that connects Rhodes College students and alumni with campus, local and national employers. Whether you are a current student looking for an internship or for a part-time or full-time position; an alumnus looking for a new opportunity; or an employer wishing to recruit Rhodes' talented students and alumni, CareerLynX has something for you! To access CareerLynX, visit the Career Services website. Follow the login instructions located on the left side of the page to access career information and to connect with thousands of opportunities that are available within the network.

Internships.com

Internships.com is a free resource for Rhodes students and alumni. The advanced search options, such as selecting a keyword or major, a location radius, and even a specific company, means you can narrow down the possibilities quickly. And as the world's largest database of intern jobs, Internships.com is a great tool to help find an internship that is of

interest to you. There are also tips on creating a résumé, and interviewing for internships and much more. You can access Internships.com through CareerLynx.

Career Insider powered by Vault

Career Insider powered by Vault is the world's leading source of career information. It will make your efforts at researching employers, industries, and career information infinitely easier and more efficient.

These are just a few of the resources available through Career Insider:

- Search for jobs, internships, salary information and more career related topics
- Research thousands of company profiles
- Read career advice articles on topics including résumés, cover letters, negotiating salary, interview tips and other insider information
- Find industry and occupational profiles
- Access Message Boards for insider information

As an exclusive resource for Rhodes students, Career Insider is password protected. Log in to CareerLynx to access the site and create your personalized Vault account by clicking on the link to the right.



Getting Started

The most difficult aspect of any large task or undertaking is simply getting started. The job search is no different. First, you must decide what you want to do when you graduate - pursue more schooling or enter the world of work. No one can make that decision for you. For many, this is an overwhelming responsibility. Afraid of making the "wrong choice," or not knowing how to get started, many would-be job-seekers choose to "just sit back," hoping that someone else will choose for them. Remember that you have an abundance of resources on campus at your disposal. If you feel anxious, concerned or lost, talk to your adviser or make an appointment with a career counselor.



Assess What YOU Want

This is a step that most would-be job-seekers overlook. You need to examine your interests and values, as well as the skills you have to offer an employer - NOT what the employer can offer you.

When you feel you know what you want in a job, you must face the next challenge: identifying career areas in which you can utilize and incorporate your interests, skills and values. To begin identifying career options, ask yourself these questions:

- What options do I have based on my skillset?

- What skills/knowledge do these careers require?
- Do I have the background necessary to compete for these jobs?
- How do I find out about openings for these positions?

Career Services is here to help you answer these questions. However, you must be personally invested in the job search process to find the position that is right for you. Career Services is happy to assist you in your exploration of career options through consultation, but in order for you to be completely satisfied with the results of your

search, you must take a **proactive** role. Many students find the self-assessment tools offered by Career Services - including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Strong Interest Inventory - to be helpful in identifying their interests.

Commit the TIME

Many students spend more time planning for spring break than for their futures. The problem with this is that spring break lasts a week, while the job you choose will last much longer and affect a significant portion of your life. The job search process requires time commitment. During your senior year, you should plan to spend 5-7 hours per week working on your job search and/or graduate school plans - perhaps more if you are entering an extremely competitive field. The time you invest early on will be rewarded by a satisfying career or graduate school opportunity. Some seniors erroneously believe that they can begin the job search process after they graduate. By April, many employers have already hired their new employees. Maximize your options by beginning the process early during senior year, so that you will have plenty of time to plan a guilt-free spring break trip.

After you have defined your career interests and developed a realistic understanding of the job market for your proposed field, your attention should be focused on generating a list of potential employers. You must actively search for opportunities and leads. The time you invest will reap benefits for years to come.

To begin, make sure you are prepared with all the relevant job search tools. Each tool is important for its own reason, so make sure that you are comfortable with each topic.

- **ORGANIZE.** Find an outlet in which to put all of your job searching information like contacts, résumés, copies of cover letters, etc. However, if you decide to keep all of this information electronically, make sure to BACK UP EVERYTHING.

- **CALENDAR.** Have access to a calendar. Use whatever works for you (online or a physical calendar). This is extremely important for quick reference to important dates including: interviews, dates when you expect to hear back from employers, career programs, etc.

- **NETWORK.** Find Rhodes Alumni! You would be surprised how far you can go without leaving our comfortable Rhodes network. Rhodes alumni are perfect for networking purposes, so keep a list of Rhodes alumni targeted by city and/or occupation. For current Rhodes students, this information

is easily found by logging into CareerLynX, found on the Career Services home page. You may also contact the Alumni Office directly.

- **DIRECTORIES.** Locate directories of employment opportunities by city and/or occupation. Examples: CareerLynx, Chambers, Business Journals, etc.

- **RÉSUMÉ.** Make sure to have a supply of extra résumés on professional paper. Even though many résumés are submitted via email, an extra copy during an interview is always encouraged.

- **CLOTHING.** When the time comes, look the part! Professional and appropriate clothing is a must for the job search, including a good pair of shoes and, for professional interviews, a well-tailored suit.

- **YOUR PHONE, YOUR SELF.** Last but not least, students underestimate the importance of a professional voicemail recording. Present yourself professionally in all arenas, including online and off.

You should be proactive in your

search. A proactive job-seeker will generate many more leads and will be more likely to secure a position congruent with his/her career goals. As always, the early bird gets the worm and if you snooze, you lose!

Employers use many methods to recruit candidates. For some positions, employers may advertise in newspapers, professional magazines and on college campuses. Other positions are listed internally first so that current employees have the first bid. Often, employers will call associates and friends to request recommendations and referrals. **If you are entering a competitive field, you will find that job leads will be more difficult to identify.** Positions in art, advertising, journalism, creative writing, conservation, recreation, personnel and media will be limited. You should not be discouraged if you plan to pursue one of these occupations, but you should know how important it is to understand the job market in order to prepare a job search plan appropriate to



The Job Search Process

your field. Successful searches involve careful preparation, multiple strategies and, most important, good follow-through.

METHODS TO IDENTIFY LEADS

Career Services

Take advantage of us! Career Services provides you with numerous resources and contacts with employers. To take full advantage of these services, it is important for you to meet with a career counselor to discuss your goals and plans. A career counselor can help direct you to resources that will be most helpful for your specific interests. Follow up on all leads and keep the Career Services staff informed of your progress.

Networking

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 70 percent of all jobs are found through networking. Therefore, it is one of the most effective means of locating a job. To begin, develop a list of people who would be willing to assist you: relatives, friends, faculty, Rhodes alumni, former employers, high school teachers and other professionals.

- Contact each of your previous supervisors and explain that you are now beginning the process of applying for full-time positions. Ask for advice and assistance. This method may help you uncover positions of which you were not previously aware.
- Access the Alumni Database by registering for CareerLynX, found on the Career Services page. **The Alumni Database is a service that connects you to Rhodes alumni in every profession.** Provide each of these individuals with a copy of your résumé and make sure that they are aware of your career goals.
- Ask the people in your network for names of employers with potential interest in your skills and qualifications. Follow up on all leads. When contacting prospective employers, be sure to mention the name of the person who provided the lead; this information may increase an employer's interest in your candidacy.
- In addition, you may create a network through people you meet in professional meetings, seminars or conferences. Following such meetings, be sure to introduce yourself to the speaker and other attendees; ask for a business card

before leaving. You should then write or email the contacts you made, requesting information or an interview.

Keep your network informed of your progress. It is good professional etiquette to send "thank-you" notes or letters to everyone who has assisted you.

Newspapers and Trade Magazines

Reading the want ads should be only one of the many strategies you employ to identify job leads. However, this "convenient" way to identify job openings has limited value because many people - including those with years of experience - have access to the same job listings, thus creating higher levels of competition. **Trade magazines are far more helpful**, as these publications are more specialized to your field of interest and will help make you aware of advancements in your field. When applying, make sure to:

- Respond within a few days of the listing.
- Research the organization before applying and incorporate your findings in a cover letter.
- Follow up with a phone call a few days after the deadline or closing date to inquire about the hiring timeline.

Keep in mind, if a position sounds too good to be true (\$75,000 plus car, no experience required) then, most likely, it is not legitimate.

Internet

New employment information sites appear daily on the Web. Many sites offer advice on conducting an effective job search in a particular field, while others offer job listings and drop sites for electronic résumés. While Career Services encourages proactive job searching, large online websites such as Monster.com are not the best ways of "putting yourself out there" in the job market because of their anonymity. You are encouraged to review list servers, message boards/forums and Usenet newsgroups related to your field of study and/or areas of interest as a good method of tapping into "hot topics" and issues related to your interests. Researching positions effectively will open doors to jobs you might not have targeted. Also, many professional associations sponsor list servers and use this method to list available positions.

Area Job Fairs

A job fair can be an efficient method of speaking with

many employers all under one roof. When preparing for a job fair, it is helpful to have a list of employer participants prior to the event. Review the list and identify 5-10 employers you would like to meet. On the day of the event, dress professionally and be ready to distribute your résumé.

You should prepare a list of questions to ask employers.

When greeting the employer, smile, extend your hand and state your name clearly. You should be prepared for a brief discussion, so be sure you know what you want to ask or tell the employer. Ask him/her for a business card. After speaking to all your targeted employers, spend some time meeting other employers - you may be pleasantly surprised by the opportunities they can offer. **You should follow up on all job fair leads within a week;** be sure to mail the employer(s) another copy of your résumé in case it was misplaced during the job fair. Local and regional job fairs are listed in the Career Services newsletter. **The Rhodes Career and Internship Expo is held in February.**

Targeting Employers

If you have identified employers for whom you would like to work, you should consider sending targeted cover letters accompanied by your résumé. **Do not try to shortcut the system by sending generic cover letters;** an employer can easily identify a form letter and will assume that your interest is not sincere. To increase effectiveness, try to identify an internal contact in your targeted organization with whom you can discuss organizational needs and goals, and incorporate this information in your cover letter. Also, it is important to realize that for many organizations the hiring process is done simply by placing the open position on their web sites.

If you are planning a long-distance job search campaign in cities where you have no connections, keep in mind

that you will probably meet with a lot of rejection unless you can offer unique skills. For most positions, employers have access to qualified candidates in their immediate geographical vicinity. An effective way to counteract this disadvantage is to plan a time that you can visit the area and inform the employer of your plans and availability for interviews. Do not be surprised or disappointed if you do not hear back from employers; many do not send letters unless they have an opening and feel that you are qualified.

Third Party Agencies

Employment agencies may be contacted by various businesses to find part-time and full-time candidates for their vacant positions. If you decide to work with an employment agency, be sure to do your research. You are encouraged to check with the Better Business Bureau regarding the reputation of the agency. Also, BEWARE! Make sure that the fee is assumed by the employer, and that you will not be charged a fee.

When meeting with an employment agency representative, be sure to have a clear career goal; some job-seekers end up feeling that they have been persuaded to take a position in which they have no real interest. Also, be sure to read all contracts carefully before signing

Informational Interviewing

Informational interviewing will provide you with a personal glimpse into the world of work. Through these interviews, you will gain knowledge about the type of work that is performed on a daily basis and learn about organizational settings and specific work environments. Informational interviewing is also a great way to learn about careers or companies that you may not find much information on in books or on the internet, such as nonprofit organizations or



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small businesses. Additionally, informational interviewing will provide a way for you to ask questions that may have remained unanswered in your research.

Additional Sources

City and County Personnel Offices: Local municipal and county offices have job postings for government positions. Be sure to carefully follow application procedures as stated on the job posting.

Chamber of Commerce: These organizations may be contacted to obtain information about employers in the area. Generally, a small fee is required to receive information about local employers. For a listing of U.S. Chamber addresses visit the Career Library or check for listings on the Web.

Directories: In the Career Library, there are various directories to help you identify employers by geographical or career preference. Bookstores and public libraries also carry employment directories to help you identify possible employment leads.

Reciprocity: If you wish to relocate to an area outside of Memphis, we encourage you to take advantage of the reciprocity agreement that we have with various colleges and universities throughout the U.S. This agreement gives Rhodes students access to many services and resources at Career Services offices located in the area in which you plan to conduct your job search. You must be willing to physically visit the Career Services office in your chosen geographical area; these offices will not provide resources over the phone. Some colleges and universities will charge a fee, while others make services available at no charge. If you would like to receive reciprocity, please contact Staci MacDougall in Career Services at least 2-3 weeks prior to your visit to an area.

Volunteering or Temp Agencies: If you find that you have graduated and are unable to find meaningful employment, consider volunteer work or working for a temporary agency 10-20 hours/week. This will allow you to build a stronger network system and develop additional skills, while providing you time to work on your job search campaign.

Job Search Tips

Work! - The best way to find work is to work. The more relevant experience you have, the more appealing you

{ Tips for a Successful Informational Interview

Research the career before contacting someone for an interview

Ask your professors and Career Services for suggestions on professionals to contact

To contact, send a letter of introduction and then follow up with a phone call

When arranging the interview, establish that you are gathering information and not seeking employment

Respect the time offered by the professional and be prepared for the interview

Dress appropriately, arrive 10 minutes before the appointment, and conduct yourself in a professional manner

Be observant of the climate and ask questions about what is needed to enter the field

Send a typed letter within 24 hours of the interview thanking the employer for his or her time and information

{ Informational Interview Questions

What are typical entry-level positions?

What skills do you think are essential for success in this field?

What is the job market like for people in this field?

What are the predominant responsibilities of this position?

What is the career progression for someone who is successful in this field?

What do you consider the most interesting/exciting aspects of your job?

What do you consider frustrating regarding this type of work?

How would a new professional learn about job openings?

will be to potential employers. Also, remember that an internship may lead to full-time employment; many employers decide to hire those workers who have already proven they can do the job well. Any full-time, part-time or volunteer work experience can both increase your familiarity with a given field and sharpen your skills for future success.

Set Goals - Set realistic goals. Don't exclude options because you are too focused on the ideal. Many career paths require years of hard work in less-than-desirable positions before advancement can occur. Having said that, make sure you know what steps are required for you to advance in your field of choice. **Form short-term and long-term goals.** Today, college graduates need to remember that they may change professions several times after graduation. Don't feel as though you only have one chance to find the perfect career. Stay focused - seek positions that will help you fulfill your immediate goals and advance toward your ultimate goals.

Online Reputation - Keep your online reputation in mind. It is not uncommon for employers to run potential employees' names through online searches in an effort to negate undesirable applicants. Recently, employers have also begun to check candidates' profiles on popular sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn, and the discovery of inappropriate photos and/or comments may lead to the dismissal of those candidates they consider to be unprofessional. Run a search of your name and make sure that your "online reputation" is one of which you are proud - edit when necessary, or simply take steps to ensure that information you do not wish others to see is inaccessible. Act online as you would in person!

Research - Know which fields are hiring. Do the necessary

research to determine which industries have the highest demand for applicants. For instance, the education sector is constantly in need of new teachers, counselors and administrators.

Deadlines - Keep track of your progress in the job search; mark a calendar with personal deadlines (e.g. number of applications to send in every week; number of networking calls to make per day). Don't try to do too many things at once - you might become frustrated and give up altogether. As you become more comfortable with the process, you can increase your goals incrementally. For example, once you become familiar with the networking process, you can move on to informational interviewing.

Friends & Family - Friends, family, professors, advisers and professional acquaintances can provide valuable information to assist you in your job search. Remember - never rely on only one opinion. Ask several individuals for advice; your family and friends - and even your professors and advisers - may think they each know what's best for you, but only YOU can know for sure.

Stay Motivated - Stay positive and motivated. It may seem difficult (even impossible) at times, but a positive attitude will make all the difference in your search. Stay focused and task-oriented; it's only a matter of time before you get the one "yes" that you need.

Rejection - Don't take rejections personally. Everyone experiences rejection at some point in the job search; the trick is to accept rejections gracefully and learn from them. Try to determine why the employer did not hire you - was it your résumé? Your interview? Or were you just not a good fit for the job? Reassess your skills and experiences. Reevaluate your goals and career objectives. Meet with a career counselor if you have any questions.



Résumés and Professional Correspondence

Writing a résumé is similar to developing an advertisement. You are responsible for concisely "selling" your qualifications to potential employers in a manner that is positive and honest. A mere listing of your education and experience is not enough; you must market your skills and convince the employer that you will be an asset to the organization. You must be prepared with a defined career plan and a well-written résumé if you are to succeed! The job market is competitive, so your résumé will need to set you apart from your competitors. One way to distinguish yourself from other college graduates is to commit the necessary energy and attention to your job search; you will spend approximately 50-60% of your waking hours at your job for the next 40 years - the time invested in your job search is time well spent!

Getting Started

Before you begin writing your résumé, you must decide what kind of work you want to do. Are you interested in teaching? Banking? Sales? Nonprofit management? **Whatever your plans may be, you must develop a résumé that markets your skills for the position you desire.** Your résumé should match whatever career opportunity you are currently pursuing. In order to earn the competitive edge, you must analyze your skills, determine the traits necessary for success in your chosen field and then develop a résumé that demonstrates your ability to perform the responsibilities of that position. To begin, make a list of your qualifications. Start with several sheets of paper with the headings "Education," "Experience," "Activities" and "Special Skills/Recognitions." Prepare a list of your accomplishments in each of these areas. On the "Education" sheet, include significant courses, related course projects, foreign language proficiency, study abroad and computer skills. Under the "Experience" heading, list summer jobs, internships, volunteer jobs, etc. Be sure to

list your responsibilities and accomplishments in each position. When listing your activities, include both campus and community organizations. If you held a leadership position, include the responsibilities that you performed. Finally, develop a list of your skills not previously noted, as well as a list of your honors and awards.

This preliminary work will help you develop an effective résumé. Next, think in terms of the skills an employer may seek in your chosen profession. Can you demonstrate your ability to perform these skills based on your accomplishments? As you begin to work on your résumé, keep your objective in mind - you are writing an advertisement, and the product is you!

Types of Résumés

Chronological - A chronological format presents your experience and educational background in reverse chronological order, beginning with your most recent experiences. This is the most common style and is considered the easiest to write. The chronological style highlights position titles and organization names while demonstrating career growth and

continuity. Many employers prefer this style; however, if you have little or no direct experience in your chosen field, you may want to emphasize your skills and potential using the functional or combined format.

Functional - In a functional résumé, achievements are listed by skill areas rather than by jobs. This format allows you to demonstrate your ability to perform the responsibilities of the position. When developing a functional résumé, identify 3-5 skill areas; under each skill area, highlight specific achievements or experiences as evidence of your ability. It is your decision whether or not to include position titles with your descriptions. **BEWARE:** A functional résumé is more difficult to write, and many employers find it difficult to read.

Combined - A combined format gives you the opportunity to list your skills at the top of your résumé, followed by a brief listing of your work history. This format allows you to stress your transferable skills while demonstrating career growth and continuity. Some employers appreciate this style, while others find it redundant.

Résumé Content

Listed below are sections that should be included on your résumé:

Identification - In this section, include your full name, address (current and permanent if applicable), telephone number(s) and email address.

Objective - Often the most difficult section to write, the objective of the résumé states your career plans and goals. This statement should be targeted and concise. An objective should identify the type of position desired (e.g. accounting, broadcasting, social work), as well as a list of skills you possess that apply to the position. Some job-seekers find the career objective too limiting; however, well-written objectives may greatly enhance one's résumé. When writing your objective, keep in mind the "advertising" concept. In other words, your objective should focus on what you have to offer the employer.

Objective Examples

- Aggressive pharmaceutical sales position that will utilize my communication skills as well as my sales and management background
- An administrative position in the health field using my background and experience in organizing groups, clarifying ideas, making public addresses and writing reports, articles and newsletters
- An internship in a magazine publishing organization that will utilize my writing and editing skills

Education - List your degree, the name of your institution, city and state, your major(s) and date of graduation. You may also find it advantageous to list significant courses or course projects, especially if you

do not have a great deal of related work experience. Study abroad experience(s) may also be listed in this section. Include your GPA if it is above a 3.0. Scholarships or other academic awards may be included in this section as well. If you have taken responsibility for personally financing a portion of your education, you should also include a statement similar to: "Personally financed 40% of college tuition."

Experience - Your experience (full-time, summer, intern and/or volunteer) should be listed in reverse chronological order. When listing your experiences, be sure to include: the name of the employer, city and state of employment, your title, dates of your employment and a summary of your responsibilities and/or accomplishments. Whenever possible, utilize "key action verbs" to describe your experience. Do not begin your sentences with "I" or "My" - always try to begin with a verb.

To enhance your written descriptions, be sure to consider the following information:

- What/who was affected?
- Why was the task important?
- What results were achieved?
- What impact did your work have on people, events and/or things?

If you have a long work history, you do not need to include all positions. You may list the positions that are most relevant or the ones indicating the most responsibility. If you are a senior, you do not need to include information from high school unless you believe it to be relevant to your chosen career. Remember, your résumé is a marketing tool, not an



Résumés and Professional Correspondence

autobiography. If seeking a specific position, you may want to tailor your headings to draw attention to related experience (i.e. "Marketing Experience"). This section would appear first, before general work experience.

Activities - If you have very little work experience, the Activities section of your résumé can be extremely important. Your involvement on campus and in the community indicates your social skills, leadership potential and energy level. When listing your activities, be sure to indicate the name of the organizations to which you belonged, dates of affiliation and positions held. If you were an officer in an organization, be sure to include a brief description of your accomplishments while in office. Again, utilize action verbs when describing your responsibilities. Also, try to list specific accomplishments; dollar amounts can convey an impressive message.

Activities Example

- **Weak style:** As sorority treasurer, managed chapter budget.
- **Action style:** As sorority treasurer, managed an annual budget of \$45,000.

Skills and/or Recognitions - This section can be used to list specific, relevant skills as well as honors or awards that you have received. When listing honors and awards, be sure to indicate the nature of the recognition (e.g. leadership award). Computer skills and foreign language proficiency are particularly valuable and can be included in this section.

Additional Categories - Some of the sections listed above may be eliminated if they do not pertain to you, and other categories may be added. You may wish to include sections such as "Publications," "Presentations," "Research," "Professional Associations," "Accomplishments," etc. Information regarding your age, marital status, health, religion and political affiliation should not be included; this information may be used inappropriately by the employer to discriminate against you.

If space permits, a statement regarding the availability of your references is generally included at the end of a résumé. Include a short sentence stating, "References Available Upon Request."

Design Tips

The design of your résumé plays an important role in its overall appeal. The following tips will help give your résumé a professional look:

- A résumé is generally one page in length; however, if your experience is relevant and warrants a second page, be sure to include your name and the words "page 2" at the top of the second page.
- Generally, a 10-14 point font is most acceptable. Palatino, Times, Helvetica, New Century Schoolbook and Courier New are the most commonly used.
- Depending on the amount of your content, choose a font size that will allow you to fill the page. Do not include graphics or pictures or any other items that may distract the eye.
- Carefully plan the layout of your résumé. Appropriate use of white space, bold type and bullets gives your résumé visual appeal.



- Your most relevant information should be placed at the top of your résumé. Employers spend less than a minute looking at your résumé. Give them information to make them want to interview you.

General Résumé Rules

- ALWAYS send a cover letter with your résumé.
- Fold your résumé neatly only if you are mailing it. (If it will be scanned, use a large envelope that does not require your resume to be folded).
- Try your best to fit all your information onto one page; one-page résumés are cleaner and easier for the employer to peruse.
- Use concise, positive phrases beginning with action verbs (see page 17 for sample verbs).
- Use indented or "bulleted" statements.
- Use quantities, amounts and dollar values to enhance your job descriptions.
- Make sure your objective applies directly to the position for which you have applied.
- Stay away from personal irrelevancies such as sex, weight, health, race, religion, marital status, political affiliation, etc.
- No pictures! No fancy binders!
- DO NOT list references on your résumé (except journalism and art) or include street addresses of former employers.
- DO NOT use words such as "I," "me," or "my" in your résumé.
- DO NOT explain unrelated information in detail or use personal evaluations such as "learned a great deal through this experience".

{ EDIT, PROOFREAD AND SPELL-CHECK REPEATEDLY FOR POSSIBLE ERRORS! }

Electronic Résumés

Many large corporations keep a database of résumés scanned into their computers. While many companies still accept paper résumés, these résumés are most likely scanned into a database as well. Other organizations only accept electronic résumés. How do these practices affect you, the job-seeker?

If you are planning to apply to a large corporation, chances are your résumé will be scanned and placed into a database. Whenever possible, contact the human resources department and ask for guidance. To make your résumé "computer friendly," and to increase your odds of getting more "hits," follow these guidelines:

- **Use "key" words to fully describe your knowledge and experience.** For example, if you know that the employer is looking for experience in PageMaker, make sure that "PageMaker" appears somewhere on your résumé. Read the employer's ad carefully, and try to include whatever skills you have that the employer has requested.
- Some employers will request that you send your résumé via email. You may be able to send it as an attachment, but many employers prefer that you **paste your cover letter AND résumé into the body of the email.** This ensures that the employer receives your résumé, and that you don't send unintentional viruses to the employer. Also, sending your résumé in the body of the email guarantees that the employer can access it; all companies may not use the same word-processing program you do. In addition, your résumé will most likely be scanned for key words by a computer, and an attachment would be ignored by such a program.
- When sending your résumé via email, **make sure to CC yourself.** It doesn't hurt to send a test copy to a friend with a different email program to identify potential problems and incompatibilities before it's too late.
- You should **send an additional copy of your résumé in the mail** to ensure that the employer receives it. Some companies receive 10,000 or more electronic résumés a month; sending an additional copy by mail gives you another opportunity to get your information to the right person.

For additional information on sending résumés via email, check out our resources in the Career Library and/or look for information at eresumes.com.

General Email Rules

Email correspondence may be used when one is networking, making initial contact with organizations of interest, responding to job opportunities after electronic correspondence has been requested, thanking interviewers and gathering references. Though

Résumés and Professional Correspondence

email correspondence may appear to be less formal than written correspondence, it is important to realize that words sent over the Internet are no more retractable than those sent by mail. Therefore:

- Do not assume that you may be more personal in an email than in other types of correspondence; always strive to maintain a level of formality. Avoid using casual salutations or endings. Generally, a title and last name will suffice as an opener. Close with your full name and contact information.
- Send emails from a professional username; no files sent from 'sk8erboi' or 'cheergurl' will receive serious consideration when they appear in an employer's inbox.
- Edit your emails for grammar and spelling mistakes as thoroughly as you would a printed letter. Never use abbreviations or smiley faces in your business communications, and always separate your text into short, easy-to-read paragraphs.

For helpful tips on using email correspondence in your job search, consult careerinsider.vault.com.

References

Before offering you a position, most employers will want to verify your work habits and experiences with people who have already seen you perform, such as previous employers or faculty members. Most potential employers will ask for a list of your references, while others may request actual letters from previous employers or faculty. You should always be prepared by developing a typed list of your references. A reference list consists of the names and contact information of those persons who can best attest to your professional characteristics and experiences. Consider these guidelines when preparing your list of references:

- You may wish to add "References Available Upon Request" to your résumé and set up a credentials file at Career Services, in which you may place up to 4 letters of recommendation.
- Ask those persons whom you feel know your strengths in a work capacity, such as past or present employers, professors or other professionals. Comments from relatives and friends are generally not considered relevant.
- Always get permission from these individuals prior to

Sample References

Mark C. Allen

References

Dr. Anne Bright-Griffin
Professor of Business Administration
Rhodes College
2000 N. Parkway
Memphis, TN 38112
901-843-4444

Fred Jones
President
International Express
41 N. Riverside
Memphis, TN 38882
901-526-0190

Paula Smith
Volunteer Coordinator
Salvation Army
919 Union Avenue
Memphis, TN 38103
901-327-2945

including their names. You want to make sure they are willing to represent you in a positive light.

- List 3-5 individuals and their title, place of employment, business address and phone number.
- THINK AHEAD. Requests for recommendation letters should be made as soon as you complete a course or job. If you wait too long, the people you want to write your letters may not be available or may not recall the quality of your contributions.
- Give reference writers up to a month to complete their letters. Show your appreciation when they consent to write, when they deliver the letters and when you've finally found a job or been accepted to graduate school by sending a handwritten thank-you note.
- If possible, set up appointments with your reference writers to discuss your request. Take a copy of your résumé or job description to help them tailor their letters to the job requirements.

- Reference letters may be written on organizational stationery; confidential recommendation letters must be written on a Career Services recommendation form.
- It is advisable to take a copy of your reference list with you to an interview in case these names are requested.

If you are searching for helpful tips regarding the acquisition of professional references and reference letters, go to [wikihow.com/Ask-Your-Professor-for-a-Letter-of-Recommendation-Via-Email](http://www.wikihow.com/Ask-Your-Professor-for-a-Letter-of-Recommendation-Via-Email).

Cover Letters

Job search correspondence is an important and necessary tool when mailing your résumé to prospective employers. Many employers will carefully read your cover letters to determine "fit" and motivation. Therefore, you are advised to craft a letter that will help you "sell" your skills and demonstrate your sincere interest in the position and/or employer. You should ALWAYS send a cover letter when submitting your résumé; not doing so might negatively affect your chances. While a résumé conveys general qualifications for a particular field or occupation, a cover letter clearly states your specific skills and interest for the position at hand. **Always try to personalize and target each letter.** There are three important parts of your cover letter: the opening, the body and the conclusion.

OPENING

- Address your correspondence to a particular person, including his/her title. Letters beginning with 'To Whom It May Concern' or 'Dear Madam/Sir' demonstrate that you did not do your homework.
- Read company literature or visit the company's website to gain an overall understanding of the purpose of your letter. Are you writing in response to an advertisement? Did someone refer you for the position? Did you identify the position/organization through your career research?
- Mention your interest and briefly state your enthusiasm or qualifications for the position.

BODY

This paragraph is the most important in terms of demonstrating your understanding of - and qualifications for - the position.

- Throughout the text of your letter, prove your knowledge of the company and/or position by stating specific skills that you would be able to provide. Think in terms of your class work, internship(s), summer employment and research experiences that would prove you to be a "good match" and viable candidate.

• **Be sure that the information you share in this section augments the information provided in your résumé.** Many job-seekers erroneously use the cover letter to repeat the same information found in their résumé. The cover letter should be used to provide details or explain particular experiences and achievements related to the available position.

CONCLUSION

In the closing paragraph, restate your interest.

- Request an interview, indicating that you will call to arrange a convenient time for an appointment.
- Request application materials, if applicable.
- Indicate that you will wait to hear back from the employer. Whenever possible, call the employer two weeks after mailing your résumé and cover letter to ensure that both were received, and to inquire about the hiring process.

Finally, make sure you use the same font and high quality stationery for both your cover letter and your résumé, and send both in a matching envelope. Keep a copy of all correspondence for your file.

Thank-You Letters

Each time you experience personal contact with a potential employer, you should send a follow-up letter. Most often sent after a formal interview, the thank-you letter can be used to enhance your candidacy and demonstrate good professional etiquette skills. In your letter, you may first express your appreciation for the interview, and then:

- Emphasize your continued interest in the position
- Re-emphasize your skills by referring to specific points of discussion
- Provide additional information regarding your qualifications that were not discussed during the interview

As a general rule, thank-you letters should be sent within 24 hours of your interview. When preparing these

Résumés and Professional Correspondence

letters, use the same word-processing font and paper that you used for your résumé.

During the course of a formal interview, you may meet with several individuals. You should send a separate thank-you letter to each person you believe has input in the hiring decision. Each letter may have a slightly different message, depending on the scope of your discussion with that individual. It is also appropriate to send thank-you letters to others who have assisted you in the job search process such as professors who have written reference letters on your behalf, as well as friends and acquaintances who have provided information, advice and/or referrals to jobs. Handwritten note cards are appropriate for informational interview referrals and close acquaintances (including faculty) who have assisted you in your job search process. Otherwise, your notes should be typed.

Acceptance Letters

Once you have accepted a job offer, you should write an acceptance letter restating the employment terms that were agreed upon, including start date and related procedures necessary for beginning your new position. In your letter, express your excitement about beginning your career with the company or agency, and provide any additional information requested by the employer.

Withdrawal/Declining Letters

As soon as you make a decision regarding acceptance of an employment offer, you should write to all other organizations and decline their offers or withdraw your candidacy. Be sure to show your appreciation for their interest in you, and express regret that you could not accept their offer. Try to leave the door open for future contact.

OTHER RÉSUMÉ TYPES

Curriculum Vitae

Vitae or curricula vitae (CV), while similar to résumés, are very detailed documents often used for **academic or research positions** including: grant proposals, teaching or research positions in higher education, academic tenure reviews, speaking engagements and publishing. The format and style of a CV is different from a résumé

and often differs among disciplines. Typical categories would include: publications, professional presentations, grants received, consulting experience and research work, among others. If you need assistance in writing a curriculum vita, schedule an appointment with a career counselor or talk to a professor in your field of study.

International Résumés

Résumés for international positions often differ from those used for positions in the U.S. They may simply detail academic and formal work experience in chronological order. They may also be two or more pages long, and can include age, marital status, race and/or religion. Keep in mind as you apply for international jobs that hiring procedures abroad may be unfamiliar. Take the time to research!

Create a Portfolio

If you are **pursuing a career in education, journalism, or art**, a portfolio will provide visual evidence of your accomplishments. Your portfolio should contain copies of your résumé, a list of references, letters of recommendation and documents highlighting your experience, accomplishments, knowledge and skills. **Try to obtain a job description and a realistic concept of what qualities your interviewer will be seeking, and tailor your portfolio accordingly.** Always use copies of original documents in your portfolio. Place these copies in plastic sleeves, altering them to fit the size of a page if necessary, and arrange them in a binder.

Education portfolios should contain lesson plans, unit plans, a copy or photograph of classroom rules and positive consequences, and documents highlighting your interactions with parents and community agencies.

Journalism portfolios should include copies of published articles, unpublished writing samples with positive handwritten comments by an instructor and copies of any award or certificate you have received for your writing.

Art portfolios should contain photographs of your work, copies of awards, brochures or printed Web pages documenting a gallery exhibition and positive reviews of your work.

{ KEY ACTION VERBS FOR RÉSUMÉS, COVER LETTERS & PROFESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE

Communication Skills

Advertised
Arbitrated
Authored
Clarified
Composed
Contacted
Corresponded
Demonstrated
Edited
Facilitated
Informed
Interpreted
Leveraged
Mediated
Moderated
Negotiated
Notified
Presented
Persuaded
Promoted
Proofread
Publicized
Published
Wrote

Creative Skills

Adapted
Built
Composed
Conceived
Conceptualized
Constructed
Created
Cultivated
Designed
Developed
Devised
Formulated
Founded
Generated
Invented
Launched
Originated
Performed
Perfected
Produced
Prompted
Proposed
Streamlined

Helping & Counseling Skills

Advised
Advocated
Aided
Assessed
Assisted
Coached
Collaborated
Counseled
Diagnosed
Directed
Encouraged
Guided
Inspired
Led
Mentored
Represented
Served
Supported
Validated

Leadership Skills

Accomplished
Achieved
Clarified
Commanded
Coordinated
Decided
Delegated
Enhanced
Exceeded
Excelled
Established
Formed
Founded
Headed
Improved
Influenced
Instigated
Leveraged
Marketed
Motivated
Orchestrated
Participated
Presided
Recommended
Succeeded
Strategized
Targeted

Management & Organizational Skills

Accelerated
Administered
Aspired
Arranged
Assembled
Completed
Conducted
Controlled
Correlated
Determined
Directed
Drafted
Eliminated
Engineered
Evaluated
Executed
Expanded
Implemented
Increased
Integrated
Maintained
Managed
Planned
Prepared
Procured
Provided
Reduced
Revised
Saved
Scheduled
Simplified
Solved
Supervised

Research Skills

Acquired
Analyzed
Authored
Coded
Collected Data
Compared
Contrasted
Discovered
Examined
Experimented
Explored
Inquired
Interviewed
Investigated

Located
Reported
Reviewed
Studied
Structured
Summarized
Surveyed

Teaching Skills

Accompanied
Cooperated
Directed
Displayed
Educated
Illustrated
Improvised
Initiated
Instructed
Integrated
Mastered
Organized
Pinpointed
Progressed
Regulated
Stimulated
Taught
Trained
Unified
Utilized
Verified

Technical Skills

Budgeted
Calculated
Computed
Converted
Detailed
Financed
Handled
Installed
Innovated
Manufactured
Monitored
Operated
Programmed
Repaired
Researched
Restructured
Revamped

Sample: Chronological Style Résumé 1

William Shelton Clarkson

2000 North Parkway, Box 100
Memphis, TN 38112

claws@rhodes.edu
901-555-1111

EDUCATION

Rhodes College, Memphis, TN

Bachelor of Arts, History Major, Business Administration Minor, May 2012

- Cumulative GPA: 3.6
- **Computer Skills:** Proficiency with Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, and Bloomberg
- **Relevant Coursework:** Financial Accounting, Economic Statistics, Microeconomics and Macroeconomics
- British Studies at Oxford, Oxford University, England, Summer 2011

WORK EXPERIENCE

Mercer Capital Management, Memphis, TN

Financial Analyst Intern, Fall 2011

- Assist with preparation and delivery of business valuation opinions, transaction advisory services, and related analysis and consulting.
- Analyze assets and liabilities for possible acquisitions of Memphis-based businesses.
- Provide weekly written and oral reports for Vice President and management team.

Morgan Keegan, Memphis, TN

Investment Banking Intern, Summer 2011

- Assisted investment banker in evaluating companies' financial strategies and determined best investment course of action.
- Assisted with due diligence and financial modeling.
- Created and assembled documents and presentations for clients and internal reports.

Equity Intern, Summer 2010

- Analyzed potential assets for acquisition and produced Excel spreadsheets to provide important information and comparative analysis.
- Created PowerPoint presentations to assist Senior Level Management with acquisition decisions.
- Researched numerous subjects pertaining to strategic investments including foreign governance, logistics and law.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity, Rhodes College Fall 2008 – Present

Treasurer, Fall 2010 – Fall 2011

- Managed a \$45,000 budget.
- Reconciled monthly financial statements and filed annual tax reports.
- Provided education seminars to 65 members regarding personal budgeting and investing.
- Served on a seven person executive council to govern the overall organization including membership recruitment, risk management, social and education programming, and leadership training.

Assistant Treasurer, Fall 2009 – Fall 2010

- Assisted Treasurer in collecting monthly dues from all members.

Financial Management Association, Rhodes College, Fall 2009 – Present

Varsity Track, Rhodes College, Fall 2008 – Present

Captain, Fall 2010 – Present

MICHELLE GRACE WHITMAN

WhiMG@Rhodes.edu

(404) 555-1111

Present Address:
2000 N. Parkway, Box 222
Memphis, TN 38112

Permanent Address:
41 Pear Lane
Atlanta, GA 30311

OBJECTIVE

A position in print or on-line publications utilizing my proven research, editing, and writing skills.

EDUCATION

Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, **Bachelor of Arts** expected May 2012

Major: English, **Minor:** Spanish; **Overall GPA:** 3.44

Computer Skills: Microsoft Office Suite, Photoshop, Publisher, and PageMaker

Honors: Sigma Tau Delta, English Honor Society; Presidential Fellowship, 2008-2011

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Intern, Memphis Magazine, Memphis, TN, Fall 2011

- Checked facts, proofed copy, and edited articles for monthly magazine (circulation: 10,000)
- Participated in weekly staff meetings to generate ideas for articles and features
- Assisted the marketing department by contacting businesses to generate new subscriptions

Marketing Intern, Peach & Pair Boutique, Atlanta, GA, Summer 2011

- Worked with advertising agency to develop company's first website; updated web content
- Notified customers of new merchandise through company Facebook and Twitter accounts

Staff Writer, Sou'Wester, Rhodes College student newspaper, Fall 2009 – present

- Contribute feature articles and student opinion pieces for weekly publication (circulation: 1,000)
- Write reviews on movies, Memphis-area restaurants, and local bands

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Resident Advisor, Rhodes College, 2010 – present

- Provide guidance and develop educational programs for 32 students
- Explain, interpret, and enforce college housing policies and campus rules
- Assist in interviewing, selecting, and training of new Resident Advisors

Black Student Association, Rhodes College, 2008 – present

- Assist in planning campus-wide events to promote cultural understanding
- As Secretary (elected Spring 2010) write bi-monthly reports of meeting minutes and events

Volunteer Tutor, Snowden Elementary, Memphis, TN, 2010 – 2011

- Assisted two fourth-grade students with homework and served as a mentor

Tex-Mex Spring Break Trip, Reynosa, Mexico, Spring 2009 and 2010

- Constructed a community playground and repaired houses in a low-income area of Mexico

Sample: *Combination Style Résumé*

Stacy Lynn Parks

parsl@rhodes.edu

Current Address: 2000 North Parkway, Box 333, Memphis, TN 38112, (901) 843-1114

Permanent Address: 44-6 Owl Court, Marion, IL 60679, (303) 555-1786

OBJECTIVE

To apply my analytical skills and education in a research position.

EDUCATION

Rhodes College, Memphis, TN

B.S., Biology major, Spanish minor; Overall GPA: 3.2, Major GPA: 3.5

Expected: May 2012

Beta Beta Beta Honor Society

2009 – Present

Health Professions Society President

2010

Varsity Track

2009 – 2011

Habitat for Humanity Volunteer

2010 – 2011

SKILLS / TECHNIQUES

- Experienced in use of transmission electron microscopy and image recording
 - Studied enzyme assays and characterization, peptide sequencing, immunoblotting, and immunofluorescence microscopy
 - Conducted and interpreted experiments in molecular biology, including gel electrophoresis of DNA and RNA, recombinant DNA cloning, and DNA sequencing
 - Applied research in intracellular signals of excitable cells and cell culture
-

EXPERIENCE

Rhodes College, Memphis, TN

Lab Assistant

Academic year

Assisted professor with preparation of laboratories and maintained stock.

2010-2011

Teaching Assistant

Academic year

Assisted students with botany and zoology labs, provided weekly review sessions for zoology, and assisted professor in editing text for professional journals.

2009-2010

Methodist Hospital, Memphis, TN

Emergency Room Volunteer

Summers

Transported Patients, delivered films, and aided nursing staff.

2010 & 2011

Snowden Elementary, Memphis, TN

Volunteer Tutor

Spring 2009

Provided individual science instruction and personal encouragement to four elementary students.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

GAP Kids, Memphis, TN

Sales Associate

Summers

Assisted with opening and closing procedures. Exceeded sales goals by %18.

2010 & 2011

Houston's Restaurant, Memphis, TN

Hostess

Fall 2010

Worked 20 hours per week while maintaining a full academic course load.

M. Brent Winters

41 Pleasant View #4B, Cordova, TN 38108 · 901-754-1113 · winmb@rhodes.edu

Education

Bachelor of Arts, Studio Art
Rhodes College, Memphis, TN
Expected Graduation: May 2012
3.45/4.0 GPA
Fine Arts Award (Scholarship worth \$5,000 annually)

Related Courses:

Basic Drawing Two-Dimensional Design
Painting Three-Dimensional Design
Life Study Architectural Design

Computer:

Harvard Graphics, Adobe PageMaker 7.0, Adobe Photoshop, Microsoft Office, including PowerPoint

Skills

Design:

Designed and painted sets for college and community theater productions.

Developed brochure design for the Office of Admissions which was sent to 4,000 prospective students nationwide.

Using PowerPoint, created slides for faculty presentations at national conferences.

Served as Art Director of a fraternity for two years.

Created logo design for campus-wide leadership conference. The logo was used on t-shirts, stationery, and notebooks.

Created the design and layout of an alcohol awareness brochure for college students. Brochure won "Most Effective Educational Publication" at the 2010 National Student Activities Conference meeting in Austin, Texas.

Photography:

Skilled in black and white photography development and printing.

Served as photographer for the Memphis Zoological Society. Photos were used in monthly newsletter.

Initiated a small photography business to finance college expenses.

Taught photography class to 15 junior high students.

Volunteer photographer for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Memphis.

Portfolio

Available upon request.

Sample: Cover Letter 1

2000 North Parkway, Box 333
Memphis, TN 38112

February 3, 2012

William Blair
Director
St. Mary's Retirement Village
2100 North Main Street
Memphis, TN 38112

Dear Mr. Blair:

Through an advertisement in *The Commercial Appeal* on February 2, 2012, I learned of your need for an Activities Coordinator at St. Mary's Retirement Village. I am very interested in this position and feel confident in my abilities to perform the outlined responsibilities.

Throughout the last six years, I have participated in several community organizations. As you will note on my enclosed resume, I actively assumed leadership positions in these organizations. Through these experiences, I had the opportunity to plan fund raisers. These projects provided me with opportunities to develop organizational skills and leadership abilities. More specifically, I was responsible for securing facilities, arranging publicity, recruiting and training volunteers, and managing small budgets. As the Activities Coordinator for St. Mary's Retirement Village, I would be able to draw from my previous experiences in order to plan social and recreational events for the residents.

In addition to my experience, I offer creativity and maturity. In the position of Activities Coordinator, I would be able to employ these personality traits to plan programs and events that would appeal to diverse interests. I would strive to meet the residents on an individual basis and solicit their ideas for new and innovative programs. I have enjoyed my past experience in working with senior citizens and look forward to beginning my career in an activities coordinator position.

My resume will provide additional information about my experience and qualifications. I am extremely interested in the position and would welcome the opportunity to interview with you at your convenience. I will call you during the week of February 17 to verify receipt of my application materials. If you would like to call me prior to that time, I can be contacted at 901-843-5000. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Annette Price

2000 North Parkway, Box 222
Memphis, TN 38112

March 1, 2012

Katheryn Jackson
Jackson Advertising and Marketing
6077 Poplar Ave., Suite 900
Memphis, TN 38118

Dear Ms. Jackson:

I am writing to inquire about current or anticipated positions in account services and event planning at Jackson Advertising and Marketing. Through articles recently published in *The Commercial Appeal* and *Memphis Business Journal*, I have learned of your rapid growth in Memphis. I am interested in joining your staff and making immediate contributions to your growth and success.

My interest in advertising was heightened after completing an internship with Best Marketing in Atlanta, Georgia. Through this summer internship, I accompanied account representatives in making presentations for large and small clients. My mentor was extremely encouraging, and provided me with the opportunity to co-present an advertising campaign for a local retail chain. The campaign that we presented was well received, and was implemented in both print and broadcast forms.

In addition to my internship with Best Marketing, I participated in an internship with Memphis Arts Festival. This position required attention to detail, a willingness to work long hours, and the ability to assume responsibilities for an event that annually attracts more than 230,000 people. Through this experience, I developed an understanding of the complexity and challenges associated with event planning. I found this work to be interesting and rewarding and seek similar responsibilities in my next position.

Through various part-time positions in restaurants and retail stores, I have demonstrated my abilities in sales and customer service. I am an energetic individual who takes pride in a job well done. I look forward to applying these skills in a professional position following graduation in May.

I appreciate your time and consideration in reviewing my credentials. I have enclosed a resume and two writing samples for your review. I will call the week of March 16 to see if an interview may be arranged at your convenience. If you wish to contact me prior to that time, please call me at 843-1000.

Sincerely,



Brian McClendon

Sample: *Thank You Letter*

2000 North Parkway, Box 337
Memphis, TN 38112

February 25, 2012

William Blair
Director
St. Mary's Retirement Village
2100 North Main Street
Memphis, TN 38112

Dear Mr. Blair:

I sincerely enjoyed meeting with you today to discuss the Activities Coordinator position at St. Mary's Retirement Village. The information you shared regarding the goals and vision of St. Mary's was very exciting. My interest in the Activities Coordinator position was heightened as a result of my interview.

As I mentioned during our discussion, I have gained experience in planning major events involving more than 200 participants. Your goal of developing a city-wide "Adopt-a-Grandparent" program would require many of the skills that I have demonstrated through my previous experiences. I welcome the opportunity of initiating the "Adopt-a-Grandparent" program and am confident that I could gain the community support and participation that you desire. I am equally interested in developing additional education and social programs for the residents of St. Mary's Retirement Village.

The Activities Coordinator position closely matches my career interests and goals. I remain very interested in the position and would enjoy working with you, Mr. Perry, and Ms. Zink. I would bring to the position dedication, maturity, and a positive attitude for the worthwhile projects of St. Mary's.

As per your request, I have instructed two former employers to forward reference letters to you. If you need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you once again for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pam Palmer". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Pam Palmer

2000 North Parkway, Box 123
Memphis, TN 38112

March 17, 2012

Dr. Shelley Harper
Foggy Bottom Counseling
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20037-1196

Dear Dr. Harper:

I am a junior at Rhodes College and received your name from my professor, Dr. Robert Bruckner. As a psychology major, I am quite interested in a career as a counseling psychologist and your specialization of adolescent counseling.

If your schedule permits, I would like to meet with you to discuss your career as a psychologist and get advice from you regarding education and professional requirements, the employment outlook for the counseling profession, and referrals or advice regarding internships or summer job opportunities in the Washington, DC area. I will be in Washington, DC from March 30 to April 2, and if possible, would like to meet with you during one of those days. I will only take 30 minutes of your time.

On the afternoon of March 23, I will call to check the possibility of arranging a convenient time that we can talk in depth. If meeting one on one is inconvenient, may I call or email you with my questions? Thank you for your consideration of my request. I look forward to talking with you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patrick Day". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Patrick Day

Sample: Acceptance Letter

2000 North Parkway, Box 111
Memphis, TN 38112

February 3, 2012

Clara Johnson
Personnel Director
Computer Info, Inc.
135 Union Ave.
Memphis, TN 38101

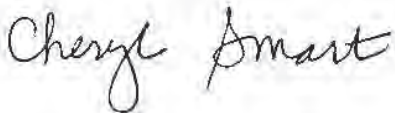
Dear Ms. Johnson:

I would like to thank you and Mr. Nelson for providing me the opportunity to work for Computer Info, Inc. I am pleased to accept the position of Research and Data Analyst. This position will enable me to do the type of work that I had hoped to pursue following graduation. I am confident that I will make a significant contribution to the Research Team of Computer Info, Inc.

As we discussed, I will begin work on July 1, 2012. In the meantime, I will complete all of the necessary forms as well as the required physical examination. I will deliver the employment forms to you personally in mid-June. At that time, we can complete any remaining items pertaining to my employment. I will contact you in May to schedule an appointment as you requested.

I truly enjoyed my interviews with you and Mr. Nelson and appreciated the opportunity to meet the staff with whom I will be working. I look forward to beginning my career with Computer Info, Inc.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl Smart". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Cheryl Smart

cc: Mr. Bob Nelson, President

2000 North Parkway, Box 111
Memphis, TN 38112

February 4, 2012

Jonathan Harvey
Human Resources Director
Technical Data Inc.
759 Madison Ave.
Memphis, TN 38102

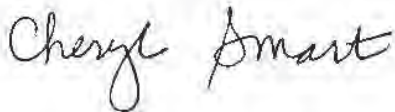
Dear Mr. Harvey:

It was a pleasure meeting with you at Technical Data, Inc. I enjoyed meeting your staff and learning more about the Research Department.

You have an outstanding organization and I appreciate your offer to join the staff as a Research Associate. Over the last few days, I have carefully considered your offer in light of my career goals and aspirations. Although I am confident that I would enjoy working with the research team, I regret that I must decline your offer.

I truly appreciate your consideration of me for your staff. You have a fine team. I wish you continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl Smart". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Cheryl Smart

Interviewing for Success

Once you have secured an interview, you should begin to focus on interview preparation. The employer will often meet with 60 - 70 candidates in order to find 2 - 3 potential employees. **PREPARATION IS KEY!**

Interviewers have many expectations of you as a candidate for potential hire. You should know general information about the position for which you are interviewing. **YOU MUST ALSO BE ABLE TO ARTICULATE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS AND INTEREST.** In addition, the employer expects you to have researched his/her organization and understand the nature of the company or agency.

Through research and practice, interviewing skills can be perfected. The following suggestions outline proven methods that may enhance your interviewing skills and improve your opportunities for employment.

See page 31 for a description of each of the Four Stages of interviewing!

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Analyze the Position

Before you are able to convince an employer that you want to be, for example, a bank management trainee, it is important that you understand what a bank management trainee does. To gather this necessary information, you may start by researching with tools such as the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (bls.gov/ooh) to understand up-to-date information regarding job responsibilities, employment outlook, educational requirements and starting salaries. This basic research will prove valuable as you prepare to demonstrate a match between your credentials and the position for which you are interviewing.

You are also encouraged to **participate in an internship in a field you wish to pursue.**

An internship will help you gain experience and provide first-hand knowledge of the field. If you are not able to participate in an internship, try the Shadow experience described in the Introduction section of this guide. In addition, informational interviews provide excellent sources

of information regarding specific career fields.

Research the Organization

The more you know about an employer, the more comfortable you will feel in an interview. A demonstrated knowledge of the organization will also help convince the interviewer that you are clearly interested in the position. In order to ascertain sincere interest, many interviewers will begin the process with a question such as "Why are you interested in our organization?" or "Tell me what you know about our company." Through your research, you should become familiar with:

- The type of organization and its function
- Mission and goals
- Products or services
- Divisions and subsidiaries
- Position description and career paths
- Sales and earnings (if company is a for-profit organization)
- Size
- Competitors
- Location - including international operations (if applicable)
- Current projects and new trends in the field

There are a variety of resources that can be used to research organizations. Publicly-held companies and government agencies are the easiest to research, as they are required by law to make certain information available to the public. Privately-held companies and nonprofit organizations do not have the same requirements and are often more difficult to research.

To begin, consider utilizing the Internet to locate general information. The Career Services website provides links to many employment databases that include company information. Annual reports and employment brochures also provide good information for beginning research. This information is generally available in the Career Library from employers who recruit on campus; it may also be obtained from the human resources department of the organization. It is important to research company trends and noteworthy ventures.

For Memphis-based companies, you may consider researching articles that have appeared in *The Commercial Appeal* or *Memphis Business Journal*. In addition, the following publications are acknowledged sources of information: *The Wall*

Street Journal, Business Week, Forbes and Fortune.

Also consider articles in trade publications, which are generally available through professional associations.

If you are interviewing with a privately-held company or agency, you will need to be more creative in your research approach. If you cannot find information using these recommended methods, try identifying employees (or volunteers for nonprofit agencies) to gather information. The Chamber of Commerce may also be able to provide limited information. You may consider speaking with employees of similar organizations to gain a general perspective of the industry.

Market Your Skills

After you have analyzed the position and researched the organization, you are ready to review your qualifications for the position. Knowing what you have to offer is crucial. Expressing yourself clearly and concisely is a key element of effective interviewing. Self-assessment of skills, interests and work values will help you organize your thoughts in order to project a positive impression. A thorough self-assessment should enable you to:

- Summarize your educational experiences as related to the position for which you are interviewing
- Articulate your related skills and abilities and cite examples of how you have developed/used these particular skills
- Know your personal strengths and weaknesses
- Discuss your work and extracurricular experiences in detail
- Talk about your career goals and objectives
- Identify any problem areas in your background and be prepared to discuss them

- Discuss variables you are willing to negotiate (e.g. salary, geographical preference, etc.)

Through your research, you should be able to identify 3 - 5 skills that you believe the employer will seek in a successful candidate. With these skills in mind, carefully consider your background and qualifications. Be prepared to discuss examples of these skills by describing specific experiences and accomplishments from your past. Do not assume that the interviewer will fully appreciate your qualifications by reading your résumé. It is up to you to demonstrate enthusiasm and "fit" for the position.

Mock Interviews

Videotaped mock interviews - conducted by the Career Services staff - are highly recommended as an effective means of preparation. A mock interview allows you to "role play" a job interview and review your performance on videotape. A career counselor will then give you constructive feedback on specific areas such as dress and appearance, first impressions (handshake, presentation, posture, etc.), content and basic interview skills (grammar, eye contact and nervous habits). To schedule a videotaped mock interview, call Career Services at 901-843-3800.

THE INTERVIEW

Making a Good First Impression

Your nonverbal skills and the manner in which you present yourself will be evaluated in addition to your verbal responses to interview questions. **Be sure to arrive for your interview 10 minutes early.** This will provide you with time to check your appearance and collect your thoughts prior to the interview. Be sure to greet the receptionist, secretary or others in the office

**INTERVIEW
IN PROGRESS**

Interviewing for Success

in a friendly and courteous manner; these employees often have some influence in the hiring process.

As you are waiting for the interviewer, be sure to position yourself so that you have a good view of the hall or reception area from which you expect the employer to enter. You want to be facing the employer when he/she enters the room. When the employer greets you, be sure to stand and offer a firm handshake. Look the employer in the eye and offer a return greeting similar to "Nice to meet you." If the employer mispronounces your name, clearly state your name as you shake his/her hand. The only thing that you should be carrying is a portfolio with paper and pen; leave your coat and bookbag (if you are interviewing on campus) in the waiting area unless otherwise instructed. You are always encouraged to take an extra copy of your résumé with you for all interviews. For on-site interviews, women may also carry a small, professional-looking purse.

As you enter the interview room, wait for the employer to indicate where you should be seated. Allow the employer to sit before taking your own seat. During the interview, remember to practice good nonverbal skills:

- Sit up straight, with your hands resting in your lap.
- Place both feet on the floor.
- Maintain eye contact to demonstrate interest and enthusiasm.
- Use limited hand gestures to emphasize key points.
- Be aware of nervous movements such as tapping your foot or playing with a ring.
- Try to relax; you will find that you are better able to respond to questions if you simply relax a little.

What To Expect During the Interview

The first interview you will encounter is called a screening interview. It may take place on campus (through the On-Campus Interview Program), at a job fair or at the employer's office. This type of interview generally lasts 30 minutes to one hour. The purpose of the screening interview is to separate unqualified applicants from qualified ones. (An invitation for a second interview may be offered anywhere from a few days after the screening interview to four weeks later. Usually, only a small percentage of candidates will be invited back for the second interview.)

Having carefully prepared for this moment, you should approach the interview with confidence. Each interview will be different; some interviews will be very structured and formal while others may be casual and informal. Do not become overly concerned if the person who is interviewing you asks difficult questions; try to remain calm and respond to all questions in a positive manner.

- A helpful outline for answering interview questions is best described through the S.T.A.R. (situation, task, action, result) method. Using this method, you would respond to an interview question with an example of a situation or task for which you were responsible. Thoroughly describe the actions that you took in this situation or task.
- Emphasize specific results or accomplishments; remember, numbers can be impressive.
- Whenever possible, try to articulate the value of the experience in terms of how it has prepared you for the position for which you are interviewing.
- Do not be overly concerned if the interviewer is taking notes during the interview process. Keep your composure, and try to keep your eyes level so that when the employer looks up, you will make eye contact. Try not to undertake the task of figuring out what the employer is thinking or writing. If you have done your homework, you can be confident in your answers.

Following this stage, the employer will often ask for your questions. Again, this is an important part of the process, as it provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate your research and interest.

- Before each interview, you should carefully prepare two or three questions based on your research. You may ask about trends in the field or ask for clarification of information that you have read.
- **This is not the time to ask questions concerning salary or benefits.**
- If you **do not** have any questions for the employer, he/she may think that you are not interested.

Following your questions, you may take a minute to summarize your interests and qualifications. For example, you may say, "At this time I have no further questions; however, I would like for you to know that I am extremely interested in this position and hope that

I have been able to demonstrate my qualifications and enthusiasm for your organization during this brief time together."

The fourth stage of the interview process is the close, which is initiated by the interviewer. A seasoned interviewer will explain the decision-making process and provide information concerning future steps in the process. **If the interviewer does not specifically state this information, it is appropriate for you to ask about follow-up procedures.** Be sure to ask the interviewer for his/her business card; this information will be helpful as you prepare your thank-you letter.

After the interview, take time to evaluate your interest in the position. Write down questions you were asked, general impressions and questions that you may now have as a result of the interview. **Also, evaluate your interviewing skills and consider ways you may improve for your next interview.** Remember to send a thank-you letter to the employer within 24 hours of your interview.

4 Stages of the Interview

1. Introduction and Icebreaker: The interviewer will try to establish rapport with you by making conversation about an unrelated topic such as the weather. Keep your comments positive, even if the weather is terrible that day. The employer will notice if you start off complaining about small, insignificant events.

2. Verifying Information and Asking Questions: The employer will look to confirm the details of your résumé and then segue into questioning. Take a moment to consider the question and your thoughts before answering, and try to maintain eye contact. Provide examples of your accomplishments that demonstrate your relevant skills.

3. Your Questions: Now is the time for you to ask questions. You should be just as professional with your questioning as you were when answering. A guide to questioning the employer is provided at the end of this chapter.

4. Closing: Be sure to thank the interviewer for his or her time. If you followed these guidelines you undoubtedly made a good impression!

{ Tips: Personal Interview

DO:

- Shake hands firmly.
- Look the employer in the eye when you are talking.
- Speak clearly; don't mumble.
- If you need time to think before answering, take time. Stick to the subject at hand - the position and your skills related to it.
- Use the employer's name; pronounce it correctly.
- Relax. Don't fidget in your seat or show nervousness with your body (hands, posture, etc.).
- Talk about school subjects and hobbies in which you have excelled, as well as those that are related to the job for which you are applying.
- If you have specific qualifications for the job, be sure the employer knows about them. No one knows what you can do unless you tell them.
- Ask questions when you don't understand what the employer is talking about. You'll want to know as much about the job as possible before making a decision.
- Before leaving the interview (assuming you still want the position), let the employer know that you really want the job. By doing this, you will make the employer feel that you will work hard if hired.

DO NOT:

- Don't take notes during the interview unless the interviewer encourages you to do so.
- Don't complain about a former boss or co-worker - you're likely to make the employer think that you are hard to get along with.
- Don't ask about salaries, sick leaves, pensions, vacations or benefits on the first interview.
- Don't exaggerate; state the facts.
- The interviewer will close the interview when he/she has enough information. Don't try to extend the interview unless you have an important point that has not been covered. If you do have such a point, briefly address it, and follow up in a thank-you letter.

Interviewing for Success

Interview Attire

The way you dress for your interview will tell the employer about your level of professionalism and - in some cases - will be one of the factors an employer will take into account when evaluating you as a candidate. Your ability to "dress the part" speaks to your knowledge of the field and your interest in "fitting in." Also, by dressing professionally, you will appear more mature and seasoned; this will aid you, as you may be competing with older and more experienced individuals. Understand that you will probably dress more professionally for an interview than may be required once you begin working in that environment. Appropriate interview attire will vary by field; however, you are best advised to dress professionally using the following guidelines:

- Review organizational literature for an idea of how employees dress for work; you should plan to dress a little more professionally than those pictured in the literature.
- The suit is the basic element of the interview wardrobe for both men and women, though tailored dresses are also acceptable for women. It is always better to overdress for an interview than to underdress.
- Tones of blue and gray are the most appropriate colors for suits; simple fabric patterns such as narrow pinstripes, muted plaids or solids project a professional look.
- Men should realize that pants and a sports coat will not give the same professional appearance as a coordinated suit.
- Always be sure your clothes are carefully pressed and your shoes are polished.
- Women should wear hemlines at the knee or lower.
- Keep in mind that pants and pantsuits are still not acceptable for women interviewing in many conservative business environments.
- Keep jewelry, perfume and cologne to a minimum.
- Candidates interested in nonprofit work and creative fields have more flexibility in interview attire; however, always be sure you are neat and pressed.

Telephone Interviews

In an effort to save time and expense, some employers will conduct screening interviews by phone. Because you may expect calls from employers at any time, it is important that you have a reliable voicemail with a professional

message; employers are not usually entertained by quirky messages or long musical interludes. This means **stay away from ring-back tones and anything that can be considered an unprofessional voicemail recording.** Many job candidates find telephone interviews more difficult than personal interviews, because you do not receive any nonverbal feedback to help you gauge your responses. You should prepare for a telephone interview with the same diligence you would use for a face-to-face interview. When the interviewer calls to arrange the telephone interview, be sure to ask for basic information if it is not offered - who will be conducting the interview, the interviewer's name and title (ask for spelling if you are unsure; again, this information is valuable for your follow-up) and the projected length of the interview, so that you may make appropriate arrangements.

The Career Services office provides offices with desks and phone lines for students conducting phone interviews. If you have a phone interview coming up, it is recommended that you call or come into the Career Services office to schedule the use of one of these rooms.

{ Tips: Phone Interview

- Conduct the conversation over a landline. You do not want to run the risk of a poor signal or interference over a cell phone.
- Make sure the room in which you will be interviewing is quiet and in a place where you will not be disturbed.
- Sit at a desk or table and have your résumé in front of you for easy reference.
- Sit with good posture! This will help you maintain a professional tone.
- If you feel it will help put you in the proper mindset, consider wearing similar clothing and grooming as you would for a person-to-person interview.
- Keep a notepad and pen nearby to take down notes or questions that you will want to ask later in the interview.
- Thank the interviewer and end the interview by expressing your interest in the position. Send a thank-you letter within 24 hours of the phone interview.

Waiting

The interview was wonderful (so you thought), and the interviewer said she would get in touch with you - but that was four weeks ago, and you are going crazy! BE PATIENT. You need to remember that no one makes you wait without a reason. Before you panic, try to recall if the interviewer indicated the time frame for selection. It may be weeks or even months before an employer is able to get back to you regarding a decision. If you do not hear from the interviewer in the time frame discussed (always allowing a few extra days), follow up with a phone call to inquire about the status of your application. Common reasons for a delay in response from an employer include:

- You are on a second list, and the employer is still following up with the first list. Depending on the percentage of acceptances from the first list, the employer may invite you for a second interview.
- The employer is interviewing all possible sources and is taking longer than anticipated.
- Office emergencies that have nothing to do with you are requiring immediate attention. If you have any questions about the "right" thing to do, or if you are feeling anxious, speak to a career counselor.

Unfortunately, there is nothing immediate you can do to speed the process up. Just be patient, continue your job search and stay positive!

The Second Interview

Q: *Why have you been asked to return for a second interview?*

Very few employment offers are made after a screening interview. Before an offer is extended, an employer will generally require a second interview. Being invited for a second interview indicates that the employer has sincere interest in you as a candidate; however, it does not mean that a job offer is pending. Again, it is your responsibility to prepare for the interview. Before accepting the invitation, carefully assess your interest in the organization. **Only accept an invitation for a second interview if you have a definite interest in the organization.**

Q: *What should you know about second interviews?*

A second interview may last from one hour to two full days; most interviews last from four to six hours. If the interview is within driving distance, be sure to confirm

directions and parking instructions. You may even want to drive to the location a day in advance to alleviate any logistical concerns; you don't want to get lost on your way to the interview and arrive late. If your second interview necessitates long-distance travel, a company representative will generally make airline and hotel arrangements for you. **Be sure to ask this representative if other expenses (such as meals) will be pre-paid, or if you should plan on paying for these expenses and submitting receipts.**

Before the interview occurs, you should receive a schedule that includes the names and titles of the people with whom you will meet. If you do not receive a schedule, you should call and ask for this information. **Be sure to know the name of the person with whom you will meet.** Plan to arrive 10 minutes early so you can check your appearance and collect your thoughts prior to the start of your interview. As always, politely greet the receptionist or others you may meet while waiting for your interview.

Throughout the course of the day, you may meet with a number of employees. Pay close attention to their names and titles. A title may help you understand the type of response that particular individual is seeking. For example, if the interviewer is a manager, he/she may be looking at work ethic as well as general knowledge; if the interviewer is a potential colleague, he/she may be looking for someone who is a team player; if the interviewer is the financial manager of the organization, his/her questions will probably center on your knowledge and experience in budgeting and finance.

Q: *How should you prepare for your second interview?*

You should prepare for the second interview just as you prepared for the screening interview: thoroughly review your research on the organization - gathering additional information if possible - and be prepared to demonstrate a "match" between your qualifications and the position. Good communication skills are very important at this stage.

Q: *What can you expect to do during your second interview?*

Although each organization has different methods of conducting second interviews, you should anticipate one or more of the following formats:

Interviewing for Success

Panel Interviews - As a time-management method, some organizations will arrange panel interviews. You may be interviewing with as many as five or six individuals at one time. This can be a very intimidating situation. Try to establish rapport with each person through eye contact. Whenever possible, try to incorporate their names in your responses.

Group Projects - If an organization intends to hire a large training class, a group project may be a part of the interviewing process. The group project is used to see how potential employees would work together to address a situation or problem. Managers or human resource personnel will be present to evaluate individual contributions to the group project. The evaluators will be looking for assertiveness, analytical abilities, communication skills and the ability to involve others in solving the situation.

Simulations - In an effort to determine how you would respond to typical job responsibilities, an employer may engage you in role play or other simulations. For example, if you are applying for a position in sales, the interviewer may pick up a paper clip from the desk and ask you to "sell" the paper clip to him/her. Other simulation projects may include reading through a scenario and responding in writing with your recommended course of action for the situation.

Pre-Employment Testing - Some employers utilize personality tests and tests of knowledge as part of their interviewing process. As with any test, be sure to read all instructions carefully before beginning.

Lunch/Dinner Interviews - Your interview schedule may include a lunch or dinner meeting. Although this may seem like a more relaxed and social time, remember that you are still being evaluated. Conversation should be your major concern, not the food. Always wait for the employer to open his/her menu as your cue to examine the menu. Often, the employer may talk with you for 10-15 minutes before considering the menu. Always follow the employer's lead. Spend only a few minutes looking at the menu; choose something that is easy to eat and familiar to you - this is not a good time to try something new. Take small bites of your food so that you are always prepared to answer the employer's questions. For additional information on dinner etiquette and interviewing, attend the Career

Services program "Put Your Best Fork Forward," offered each semester for seniors.

Throughout the course of the day, you may meet with different people who will ask you the same questions. It is important that you give complete answers to each person. Interviewees have a tendency to shorten their answers as the day progresses. You must keep your interest and enthusiasm up throughout the day. As the employer is evaluating you as a potential candidate, you should also be evaluating the organization and work environment. Consider:

- Is the work challenging and/or interesting?
- Are you comfortable with the culture of the organization?
- Do the employees seem happy/challenged?
- Do you feel that your potential supervisor would be a good mentor?
- Were your questions answered thoroughly?
- Can you work within the policies of the organization?

After the interview, take time to write down your thoughts, perceptions and remaining questions. Follow up with thank-you letters to everyone you feel may have input in the hiring decision. If you are no longer interested in the position, it is appropriate to send a professional letter withdrawing your résumé from consideration.

Illegal Questions

In most interviewing situations, the questions that you will be asked are standard and relevant to the position for which you are applying. However, in a rare situation, you may be asked questions that make you feel uncomfortable or seem irrelevant to the position at hand. State and federal laws regulate the kinds of questions a potential employer can ask.

How To Respond to Uncomfortable Questions:

If you feel that the questions you are being asked are illegal, you have three choices of response. First, if you are not offended by the question and do not feel that your response will hurt your candidacy, you may answer the question directly. A second option would be to politely refuse to answer, stating that you are uncomfortable with the question; you should also remember to consider whether you would feel comfortable working for the employer. Finally, you may answer the question in an

indirect way. For example, if the employer asks about your marital status due to the long hours that will be required, you may respond by saying that you are fully aware of the work schedule and are willing to commit the necessary hours.

Some questions, such as those concerning marital status, family or religious beliefs, are only acceptable if you are applying for a counselor or teacher position in a religious organization.

You should be aware of the following illegal questions, as they are unprofessional in the interview atmosphere:

1. Are you married? Single? Divorced? Engaged? Living with anyone? Do you see your ex-spouse? *Acceptable variants:* Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? Would you be able and willing to travel as needed?
2. Do you have children at home? How old? Who cares for them? Do you plan to have more children? *Acceptable variant:* Would you be able to work overtime as necessary?
3. How tall are you? How much do you weigh? *Acceptable variant:* Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as this is part of the job?
4. Have you ever been arrested, convicted, spent time in jail? *Acceptable variant:* Have you ever been convicted of _____? (Crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)
5. If you served in any of the armed forces, what type of discharge do you have? What branch did you serve in? *Acceptable variant:* What type of training or education did you receive in the military?
6. How old are you? *Acceptable variant:* Are you over the age of 18?
7. Are you a U.S. citizen? *Acceptable variants:* Are you authorized to work in the U.S.? What language do you read/speak/write fluently? (If ability is relevant to the performance of the job.)
8. To which clubs or social organizations do you belong? *Acceptable variant:* List any professional or trade groups or other organizations to which you belong that you consider relevant to your ability to perform this job.

Follow the Principles of College Recruiting for Candidates National Association of Colleges and Employers

Career Services and the National Association of Colleges and Employers expect students to adhere to the following principles of college recruiting:

- When seeking interviews, you should recognize your responsibility to analyze your values, interests and abilities, and consider carefully your employment objectives and appropriate ways of meeting them. You should read available literature, consult other sources for information about the employer and organize your thoughts in order that you may intelligently ask and answer questions.
- You should contact Career Services well in advance regarding desired interviews or cancellations.
- You should use care in filling out forms that may be requested in preparation for the interview.
- In your interview, you should recognize that you are representing Rhodes College as well as yourself, and you should be punctual and professional in your conduct.
- You should promptly acknowledge an invitation to visit an employer's premises. You should accept an invitation only when you are sincerely interested in exploring employment.
- When you are invited to visit an employer's location at the employer's expense, an accurate record of actual expenses incurred should be kept. The actual expenses pertaining to the trip should be the only expenses reported on the expense report. If two or more employers are visited on the same trip, expenses should be pro-rated among them.
- As soon as you determine that you will accept an offer, you should immediately notify the employer.
- You should not continue to present yourself for interviews after accepting an employment offer.
- Your acceptance of an employment offer should be made in good faith and with the sincere intention of honoring the employment commitment.
- You should notify Career Services when you accept employment and/or admission to graduate or professional school.

Interviewing for Success

THINK AHEAD:

Questions Generally Asked of Applicant

General Information

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What are your interests/hobbies?
3. Who has been a role model for you?

Educational Background

1. Why did you attend Rhodes College?
2. How did you decide on your major?
3. Which class(es) did you enjoy most?
4. Which class(es) did you like least?
5. Based on your understanding of this position, which classes have best prepared you for this job?
6. How would your professors describe you?
7. What is your GPA?
8. If you could change anything about your undergraduate education, what would it be?

Work History

1. Tell me about your previous jobs/internships.
2. Which job did you enjoy most? Why?
3. What are the three most important skills you developed in your previous jobs/internships? Please provide detailed examples.
4. How would former employers describe you?

Career Interests

1. What are your career goals?
2. Why are you interested in this position?
3. What do you know about our company/agency?
4. Why are you interested in our company/agency?
5. What are your long-term goals?
6. What economic, political and/or social trends do you think will affect our industry/system over the next five years?

Leadership Skills

1. What experience do you have in campus and/or community activities?
2. What have you learned/gained from your extracurricular activities?

Motivation

1. What distinguishes you from other candidates?
2. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me regarding your qualifications?

THINK AHEAD:

Questions To Ask Potential Employers

1. What will be expected of the person who is hired for this particular position?
2. Can you describe in detail the responsibilities of this position?
(Your chances for career success and personal happiness will be maximized when your strongest skills are those required for top performance on the job. If you have evaluated yourself - as previously suggested - the interviewer's answers to the above questions should help you determine if the job being discussed is the right one for you.)
3. How does this job fit into the overall structure of the department?
4. What are typical career paths for people who start in this position?
5. What qualities are you looking for in candidates for this position?
(Listen carefully to the answer. This provides the perfect opportunity to communicate the qualities you have that the employer has just stated he/she requires. Take advantage of what you have just heard.)
6. How does this position interact with other departments?
7. How will training be conducted?
(The information gained from asking these questions will let you know how soon you will have to initiate projects and take charge.)
8. Can you tell me about the work environment?
(This enables you to evaluate your potential "fit" within the environment.)
9. How is job performance evaluated?
(Since job security and pay raises are frequently determined by job performance, it will be to your advantage to know how the organization will determine whether or not you have done a good job.)
10. Would you like to know about my _____?
(Example: extracurricular activities)
(If you are strong in a particular area - such as extracurricular activities - and the interviewer's questions have not given you a chance to communicate those

strengths, a question like this one will help you initiate the discussion.)

11. Is there anything else I can tell you about my qualifications?

(This may elicit the response, "Is there anything you would like to tell me?" If you have not told the interviewer what you want him/her to hear, now is the time.)

12. I hope that I have demonstrated my qualifications and interest in this position. When can I expect to hear from you?

(Ask this question at the end of the interview if you want the job. Your enthusiasm and interest will be reinforced.)

THINK AHEAD:

Questions **Not To Ask Potential Employers**

1. Questions that will put the interviewer on the spot.
Example: "How are women treated here?"
2. Questions that broadcast that you haven't done your homework. Example: "What do you do here?"
3. Questions that tip the interviewer off to a problem you might have. Example: "Are people in this department easy to get along with?"
4. Questions that imply you think you already have the job.
Example: "Will you show me my office?"
4. Questions that cause the interviewer to wonder about your priorities. Example: "How much money will I make? How much vacation will I get?"



The Teacher Route

Education

While Rhodes does not offer a major in Education and students are typically not certified to teach immediately upon graduation, there are still many choices available for those interested in the teaching profession. Although certification is preferred, private schools do not always require it for their teachers, especially in areas of high demand. Even some public school districts will accept teacher candidates without certification (generally science, foreign languages and math). Each year, several Rhodes students apply for alternative teaching programs such as Teach for America or the Mississippi Teacher Corps. Other students decide to enroll in a teacher certification program or a master's degree program to add to their Rhodes education.

Testing

The Praxis Series is a program of tests and other services that are employed by states for certification and licensure. Approximately 80% of states requiring testing as a part of their teacher licensure process utilize the Praxis Series. The Praxis I is a preprofessional skills test that is generally taken early in your college career to measure basic skills in reading, writing and math. This assessment may be taken by paper and pencil on any of the dates listed below, or by computer at a testing center. The Praxis II measures your knowledge on the subjects that you will teach. These subject assessments include: specialty area tests, principles of learning and teaching tests, and teaching foundations tests. If you have questions about a state's requirements for licensure, contact the state's Department of Education.

2011-2012 Praxis Test Dates

The test can be taken at anytime online. You simply log in to the Praxis website and register to take a test. The exam will be available for you a week after registration. To register or to view other possible testing dates in 2011 - 2012 visit ets.org/praxis.

Questions Employers Ask Teacher Candidates

1. What is your philosophy of education? Of discipline?
2. What education issues are of greatest concern to you?
3. Describe the role of the teacher in the learning process.
4. What is the role of the teacher in the community?
5. How would you individualize instruction in your classroom?
6. Why do you want to teach?
7. What special abilities do you have that would benefit your students?
8. What prompted you to go into the field of education?
9. Do you grade on ability or effort? Why?
10. Are you interested in working with students in some extracurricular activity? If not, why not?
11. What are the most important rewards you expect from your career in teaching?
12. How do you determine or evaluate success in teaching?
13. Why did you decide to seek a position with this school district (or school)?

Average Starting Salary Offers, By Major

National Association of Colleges and Employers Average first year salary by major for Spring 2011

Accounting_____	\$50,316
Biological/Life Sciences_____	\$47,760
Business Administration/Management_____	\$46,832
Chemical Engineering_____	\$66,886
Chemistry_____	\$38,384
Communications_____	\$34,076
Computer Science_____	\$63,017
Economics_____	\$54,634
English_____	\$35,144
Environmental Science_____	\$40,093
Finance_____	\$53,048
Foreign Languages & Literature_____	\$37,743
History_____	\$37,295
International Business_____	\$37,714
Journalism_____	\$31,591
Marketing_____	\$44,432
Mathematics (incl. Statistics)_____	\$55,300
Physics_____	\$54,297
Political Science/Government_____	\$48,129
Psychology_____	\$40,611
Public Relations_____	\$48,000
Sociology_____	\$37,464
Teaching	
• Physical Education/Coaching_____	\$31,955
• Pre-Elementary/Early Childhood_____	\$29,948
• Elementary Education_____	\$34,290
• Secondary Education_____	\$32,661
• Special Education_____	\$36,700
Visual & Performing Arts_____	\$32,371

Job Offers

Congratulations! Your dedication to the job search has paid off, but NOW WHAT? Job offers are generally made by mail or phone. Most employers will confirm a verbal job offer in writing, including salary, position and start date. And although you may want to, DO NOT ACCEPT JOB OFFERS ON THE SPOT! Ask for some time (usually a few days - not more than a week) to think about it. Before you accept an offer, evaluate the position carefully. Consider:

- Job responsibilities, type of work, job security, supervision, coworkers
- Size of company, working conditions, environment, company reputation
- Salary range, employee benefits
- Geographical location, required travel
- Advancement opportunities
- Future possibilities - where could the job lead?

REMEMBER: Rejections are a real part of the job search process; you should expect to receive several.

Try not to take the rejection personally. If you get very discouraged, the best thing to do is give yourself a "day off"; do something that will take your mind off the search and help you relax. On the following day, re-evaluate your search, consider new strategies and continue. **The key to a successful job search is persistence!**

There are several reasons you may be rejected - there was not a good match between you and the job, your background is not strong enough to start in the position, or there was a good match and your background is competitive but you simply did not interview well. **If the employer found there was not a good match, you probably would not have been happy in the position.** If, on the other hand, your experiences have not prepared you for the position, meet with a career counselor to examine your interests and marketability. If your rejection came as a result of your interviewing skills, take heart - interviewing skills can be improved.

Schedule a videotaped mock interview with a career counselor and review the information in this guide.

Replying to a Job Offer

Only accept one job offer. You should only accept an offer after you have carefully considered all your offers. Be ethical in all of your employment dealings. When you accept an offer, you should stop interviewing, cancel any further interviews and notify other employers who are considering you as a candidate.

Accepting an Offer - If you decide to accept an offer, you should write a letter confirming your acceptance, even if you have already accepted verbally. In your letter, confirm the start date and time as well as the salary. Keep a copy of the letter for your files.

Requesting a Deadline - If no deadline is given, express great interest in the position and ask how soon they need a decision. If you need more time in order to complete other interviews, you may ask the employer for an extension.

Request More Time - It's acceptable to ask for more time, especially if you

are given only a short amount of time to think about an offer. Specify the amount of time you would like. But remember, there's a risk involved - the employer could withdraw the job offer.

Leverage - You must be careful if you attempt to use an offer as leverage with other employers. If you are awaiting word of an offer from another employer in which you are very interested, call and say that another employer has made you an offer; clarify that before making a decision, you would like to know your status. However, do not push too hard, or the employer may lose interest.

Declining an Offer - Reply as soon as possible by phone, followed by a letter. Indicate why you are declining if you can do so tactfully and constructively. You may just say you have accepted a position with another organization. It is acceptable to mention the name of the organization. End with an appropriate statement to keep the door open for some possible future contact. In other words, stay on good terms with the company.

Salary

Salary is rarely discussed during the initial interview. Wait for the interviewer to broach the topic. Most recruiters cover salary information during the second interview. If he/she does not discuss salary with you, it is not appropriate to inquire until an offer has been made. It is a good idea to have a general idea of salary level for positions you are considering prior to interviewing. You can research this information in the Salary Survey compiled by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. Both resources are available in the Career Services Library. If you don't have immediate access to our library, **Salary.com** allows you to research salaries for prospective jobs and compare those salaries with the national averages. You can also compare two salaries for the same job in different states.

Negotiating for Money

Negotiating for a salary offer is a delicate process designed to initiate a discussion between you and the employer about your initial worth.

RESEARCH. Before you begin, objectively evaluate the offer. Compare the offer to the most recent National Association of Colleges and Employers salary statistics and to other salary surveys in the Career Library. Remember that salaries must be considered in light of a number of other factors: evaluation processes, cost of living and salary subsidies - such as a car, tuition reimbursements and benefits packages. Only after careful and objective consideration should you decide to negotiate salary.

ASSESS YOURSELF. Carefully evaluate what you have to offer that would be worth the extra salary - excellent grades, career related experience, specialized course work, strong

leadership indicators, proven performance in a particular area, etc. What do you have to negotiate with? You must have more than a simple desire to make more money. Also, evaluate the flexibility of the offer. If the employer already indicated that the salary levels are predefined and not flexible, it will probably not be fruitful or prudent to initiate a discussion.

STAY CONFIDENT: Negotiating Tips

- Go into the discussion with a win-win attitude.
- Always be objective and discuss the factors you want and why you feel you should get them without being personal.
- Throughout the negotiations, reassure the employer that you are interested in the position.
- Don't rush the discussion, and don't let silence make you feel uncomfortable.
- When you have discussed the factors that you want to discuss, listen to the employer's counteroffer. If you decide the counteroffer is acceptable, write an acceptance letter detailing the new employment specifications and thanking the employer for the support. If you are still unhappy with the offer, you can reopen the negotiations.*

**Remember, at some point you will have to decide whether you will be happy with the offer as it stands. If not, and you have tried to negotiate, you may need to write a letter declining the offer of employment.*

BE PROMPT. Deadlines for accepting or rejecting an offer range from one week to the end of the semester to open-ended. Do not wait until the last minute to accept a job offer. An employer has the right to withdraw the offer anytime prior to acceptance.



The Real World: From Backpack to Briefcase

Whether you decide to enter the workforce or commence postgraduate study, there will be a period of readjustment. Being "on your own" can be both exciting and frightening. You will be responsible for finding a home, paying the bills and buying your own groceries.

As you begin this new phase in your life, rest assured that everyone has the same questions, fears and doubts. Did I make the right career choice? Am I really qualified for my new job? What happens if I don't like my supervisor? Starting your career should be an exciting climax to your educational achievements. Although responsibilities will vary among graduates, you will have an important role to fulfill. It is up to you to accept the challenges of your new role and work to ensure your professional success.

Expect a period of adjustment during your first few weeks of employment. You may have held significant leadership positions while at Rhodes, but now you may find yourself working on details rather than developing the master plan. **You must be willing to take the time to prove yourself as a responsible professional.** Many new professionals become frustrated after the first few weeks; they begin to feel that their work is routine or boring. You should willingly accept all responsibilities, regardless of their insignificance, and perform them to the best of your ability. Soon you will be recognized for your work, and more meaningful projects will be assigned to you. **REMEMBER: A job well done always gets another job!**

Develop Good Work Habits

Practice good work habits. As a student, you may remember sleeping in on a rainy morning or skipping a class to enjoy a sunny day. Two-day weekends occasionally stretched to 3- or 4-day road trips. You will find that these innocent practices are not well-received in your new environment. **Good work habits are just as important as the skills and abilities you will bring to your job.**

If you would like to establish yourself as an employee with great promise for success, follow these suggestions:

- Arrive early to work every day.
- Observe the manner in which people communicate in the organization - memos, meetings, informal chats - as these observations will help you understand the standards of acceptable behavior for your organization.
- Be courteous to everyone you meet; introduce yourself to others as appropriate.
- Always be prompt when working on deadlines.
- Always check your work to ensure that it is correct (grammar, financial calculations, etc.).
- Never work on personal affairs during office hours.
- Never participate in office gossip.

Accept Responsibility

Whenever your current work load allows, seek and accept additional responsibilities. Make sure you have performed all current responsibilities to the best of your ability before inquiring about additional work. Your willingness to take on additional responsibilities will help you build a reputation as a dedicated, hard-

working employee. It may also help you develop additional skills that you will need for advancement.

If your employer approaches you about accepting additional responsibilities, consider other projects to which you may be assigned. Express interest, but be sure to inquire about deadlines. Review the proposed project with your supervisor, taking detailed notes regarding expectations. If you feel that you can manage the project in addition to your other daily responsibilities, accept the project.

Discipline yourself to deliver on your promises. Contribute the time needed to produce high-quality work while meeting deadlines.

Accept Criticism

We all have areas in our professional lives that could use improvement. If your supervisor criticizes your work, try not to take it too personally. There may be a difference in opinion regarding the best way to accomplish a task. Listen closely to feedback from your supervisor - try not to be defensive. As you become more familiar with the expectations and style of your supervisor, you will be in a better position to work together. Be very careful not

to place blame on another employee if the work was assigned to you. When appropriate, thank the employer for the feedback and incorporate his/her suggestions.

Be a Team Player

Organizations value cooperation in and among groups. Demonstrate your willingness to do whatever is necessary to get the job done. Contribute your ideas and extend your best effort to group projects.

Whenever possible, share the credit for success with your boss or other colleagues. This strategy will help you develop good working relationships. Also, take part in organized social events, such as company softball teams or organizational picnics.

Identify a Mentor

Your supervisor will usually provide ongoing support and feedback to assist you in your professional development. To begin, make sure you have a detailed job description. Review this description with your supervisor, and ask for clarification when necessary. **Be sure to inquire about expectations and goals; let your supervisor know you are willing to work hard to achieve success for the department.** If you believe you are not getting the feedback necessary for your own growth, be sure to ask for a periodic review.

Study other professionals in the organization, and identify someone whom you feel reflects success. Try to get to know that individual by asking for suggestions on your work, as well as strategies for professional success. Always be cognizant of the time you spend talking to others about your own professional development; your first priority is to complete your work.

Review Your Own Progress

Take an active role in managing your career development; you must evaluate your work and decide if you are professionally satisfied. Most recent graduates are ready to take on additional responsibilities within a couple of years. You may find that after 2-3 productive years, you are eligible for a promotion. You may also decide that you would like to seek challenges outside of the organization. **Continually review your career goals, making modifications as time passes.** Do not stop being a "student" - try to incorporate new developments into your work. Read professional journals, and participate in professional associations and training programs.

On Your Own

Moving from the college campus to the working world requires some adjustment. This adjustment will affect both the work and social aspects of your life. For many recent college graduates, the social adjustment to life after Rhodes is more challenging than the professional adjustment. Finding a suitable place to live, developing a budget and establishing yourself in the community are among the many personal tasks you will need to consider; each task is a piece of the puzzle you must construct in order to remain successful and happy in your new career or graduate school.

FIND A NEW HOME - Locating a place to call "home" is an important task. You should find a place that is convenient, comfortable and well-suited to your individual needs. When looking for a place to live, you must first consider your budget. Do you want to live by yourself? What can you afford? After determining your



The Real World: From Backpack to Briefcase

budget, you should consider personal safety, distance to work and amenities. Apartment living is the most common housing choice for recent college graduates. In large cities, apartment locator services are available (usually at no cost to you) to assist in identifying an appropriate apartment.

Safety should be one of your first concerns.

- Choose an apartment in an area of town in which you feel comfortable. **You may want to contact some of the people you met during the interview process and ask them about the city in which you will be living.**
- As you look at apartments, make sure that there is adequate outdoor lighting and secured premises. If you are looking at a large apartment complex, check to see if there are security guards or TV monitoring.
- Pay particular attention to the exterior door of the apartment; a solid door is preferable to a hollow one. If the door does not have a deadbolt lock, check to see if one can be added.

Examine the building's maintenance.

- Do the grounds appear to be well-kept?
- Do the tenants seem to respect public areas?
- Do the appliances seem to be in working condition?
- Is there a 24-hour service for maintenance emergencies?

Think about Your Personal Needs.

- Do you prefer to live in an area with people your age? Be sure to inquire about the current residents.
- Consider your commute to work and which facilities are close and available to you.
- Consider the parking options, storage space and recreational facilities in and around the residential building.
- **Carefully read the lease— or any other contract— before signing.** If there is a clause you do not understand, be sure to question it. If the landlord assures you that a particular rule is never enforced, ask the landlord to cross it out and initial it.

LIVE WITHIN YOUR MEANS - Developing a budget - and successfully living within that budget - is an important and lifelong task. Most college graduates plan on being financially independent and do not intend to move back

home with their parents, but this independence requires planning. Budgeting your expenses is a relatively simple task. You will have fewer financial concerns if you develop and follow a realistic budget.

When you begin your job, a well-planned budget can be very helpful. Some people have a tendency to overspend, as this may be the first time they will actually be receiving a steady income. What initially may appear to be a large sum of money is quickly consumed by small expenses.

Plan Ahead:

- Determine your monthly salary.
- Calculate taxes, health insurance costs and other automatic deductions your employer will subtract from your paycheck.
- Now consider your expenses (food, gas/transportation, entertainment, etc.). **Within the first few months of employment, you should begin a savings/investment program.**
- Discipline yourself to save a certain amount of money each month. By saving consistently (as little as \$50-\$100/month), you are developing a good financial pattern. As your pay increases, you can increase the amount you put into savings and investments.

ESTABLISHING A NEW SOCIAL LIFE - While at Rhodes, you were surrounded by people your age. Now you may find you are several years younger than your colleagues at work. You may have several college friends living in the same town you do, but your schedules may conflict, leaving little time for social interaction. Developing a new social life is important; your professional and personal satisfaction will be interwoven, so that happiness in one area will affect your happiness in the other. **Finding new friends may be as easy as joining a professional or social organization.** Be sure to become involved in a Rhodes alumni organization as a means of networking and meeting new people. Participating in organized sports programs or joining a health spa are other great ways to meet people your age. You can also devote time as a volunteer - helping others is a good step on the path to getting involved in your community.

Many students graduate still unsure of what path they want to take, whether it is starting a career or continuing education. Some do not even feel that they are ready to make this decision, or they just want a year or so to assess things and make the best possible choice. The good news is there are many options for the undecided student or those who want to enter graduate, law or medical school, but not quite yet!

The bridge year is a way for students who are undecided about their futures to enjoy a productive and meaningful experience that will support their future endeavors. Many notable organizations offer employment or involvement both nationally and abroad. There are a number of programs with which Rhodes students have had great success. Information on all of these programs is available online. We highly recommend that you come to the Career Services office where we can offer one-on-one guidance to help you make the decision that is best for YOUR future.

Peace Corps

The Peace Corps is a government sponsored volunteer program where participants travel to different areas of the world serving as needed and promoting understanding across cultural lines. Help is needed in various fields including the environment, agriculture, HIV/AIDS, information technology and more. Those who are interested should visit peacecorps.gov.

JET

The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme has been promoting international cultural exchange for more than two decades. Students from all over the world are placed in Japanese programs where they teach foreign language classes to students of all ages, promote cross-cultural understanding and even instruct and participate in sports training and planning. For more information, visit JET online at jetprogramme.org.

BUNAC

BUNAC is a nonprofit student organization that provides work and travel placement programs for young people wishing to live abroad. The program offers opportunities in many different countries and cultures across the globe. By nature, the program is very flexible regarding the individual's financial needs and time available for travel. For more information visit bunac.org/usa.

Teach for America

Teach for America is a two-year program for teaching in schools in inner-city and rural America. It seeks to foster the educational experience in low-income communities throughout the country. There are many benefits to becoming a member of TFA, which caters to all majors. Find out more online at teachforamerica.org.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps offers an opportunity to partner with local and national nonprofit groups in an effort to serve the community and nation at large. Through the program, you can work to help fight illiteracy, tutor and mentor disadvantaged youth, help improve housing and health services in low-income communities and much, much more. There are several benefits to working with AmeriCorps, including tuition assistance and, depending on your situation, living expenses. The organization can be reached at americorps.gov.



The Graduate School Decision

Based on recent statistics compiled by the Career Services staff, 49.4% of the Rhodes class of 2009 obtained employment, while 36.8% enrolled in graduate school. 6.4% decided to attend a graduate/professional program while working and 3.7% are full-time volunteers.

Make Your Decision

If you are confident about your career goals, and an advanced degree is required for entrance into your chosen field, you should apply for graduate school admission.

Students who have decided to go into medicine or law tend to be in this category. In addition, students who wish to pursue advanced studies in a chosen field - regardless of specific career goals - may also choose to enter graduate school. Take into account that graduate school admission is generally very competitive - you may need to complete additional coursework or gain work experience to be considered a strong candidate for the graduate program of your choice.

Ask yourself whether your decision to attend a graduate or professional program will satisfy your goals/ambitions. Furthermore, very few admissions officers are willing to take a risk on a misdirected candidate, regardless of his/her educational credentials. If postponing a career decision is your reason for considering graduate study, schedule an appointment with a counselor in Career Services to discuss your options.

It is also important to find the right program within your field of interest. Each year, several graduate students realize the programs they are studying are not consistent with their values and interests.

Many of these students have already completed 1-2 years of study before coming to this realization. YOU can avoid this predicament. **Examine all your choices while you are an undergraduate, and make your decision with confidence.**

Q: *Should I take time off before attending grad school?*

Some people will argue that attending graduate school immediately after completing your undergraduate studies better ensures your success because your study skills are well-developed and you are comfortable within the academic environment. Others will insist that you need a break and that work experience will help you solidify your career goals, as well as give you some "worldly experience." **While both arguments are valid, your decision must be based on your own situation and level of motivation.**

It is important to consider the value of work experience prior to graduate school. Related work experience will add to your credentials and may strengthen your application for more competitive graduate programs. Work experience may also help you identify related career paths that were previously unfamiliar to you. This exposure may cause you to redirect your interests and apply to programs you may not have originally considered. However, if you do feel you need more experience before entering graduate school, be sure to have a specific plan during the period

of time you postpone your studies. Do not let the "break" become permanent!

Q: *Will I be able to make money AND attend grad school?*

It is difficult to earn money while in graduate school; with little income - and, in many cases, mounting debt - graduate students often complain of financial pressure. Nevertheless, students find ways to successfully finance their studies. Moreover, the degree that they earn may give them the opportunity to gain more lucrative and rewarding jobs. **If you choose immediate employment over graduate school, you will still have the choice of going back to school.** Many employers value continuing education and will help their employees fund advanced degrees on a part-time basis. Some employers will even pay 100% of educational expenses for their employees.

The decision to attend graduate school is yours to make; NO ONE else can make it for you. Be sure to give this decision careful thought. You - not your parents, teachers or friends - have to live with the outcome.

Identifying Graduate Programs

Graduate degrees can be academic or professional.

Academic degrees focus on original research, whereas professional degrees concentrate on practical knowledge and skills needed for a particular profession.

The amount of time it will take you to complete an advanced degree will vary depending on your academic preparation, the availability of summer courses, required internships and the general academic structure of the program. Most master-level programs (M.A., M.B.A., M.S.) can be completed in 2 years. A law degree (J.D.) generally takes 3 years to complete. A doctor of medicine (M.D.) degree requires 4 years plus specialty training, which can account for 1-7 additional years; and a doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) is generally awarded 3 years after completion of a masters-level program, as well as an original research dissertation. People who obtain a Ph.D. almost always go on to teach and/or conduct research - do not pursue this degree unless that is your objective.

After you have identified your area of study, you should begin researching appropriate programs. **Begin by talking with faculty members who share your academic interests, or by speaking to a career counselor.** For a listing of all accredited programs in your area of interest, consult one of the graduate school reference guides (such as *Peterson's Guide*) available in the Career Library. You may be able to obtain printed materials from the professional association affiliated with your area of study (e.g., American Psychological Association or American Medical Association). The reference sections of most public libraries also house graduate school guides. These directories provide general information, including: degrees offered, faculty/student ratio, the percentage of women and minority students enrolled, average tuition

costs and contact information. **In addition to this information, you may consider graduate school ratings that have been gathered by various organizations.**

The Gourman Report, U.S. News & World Report's Graduate School Issue (also available online at usnews.com), and other resources are available in the Career Library and at many public libraries. All of this information should be carefully reviewed as you develop your list of graduate school preferences.

The Grad School Expo, held in September, hosts representatives from many programs who may open up a new range of possibilities to you. After identifying your target list of programs, you should contact those schools to inquire about a course catalogue, application materials and financial aid information. Most graduate schools have information and applications online. The number of schools you include on your "target" list will vary depending on your academic credentials, the kind of degree you are seeking and the prestige of the programs to which you are applying. As you receive graduate school information, consider your individual interests and goals. **When you have reviewed all of the information sent to you, use it to create a list of schools to which you wish to apply.** This list should include schools you are confident will accept you (safety schools), schools that will possibly accept you (target) and schools for which admittance may be difficult (reach). Experts advise students to narrow their list to 4 or 5 schools; a condensed list will allow you more time to focus on each application, and you will also save money.

REMEMBER: Write down deadlines on a calendar that you frequent; missing a deadline can be frustrating and might completely alter the plans you have made.



The Graduate School Decision

Below is a suggested timeline to follow as you research your options for graduate school. Be sure to complete each task in a timely fashion, as it is hard to recover when

you have fallen behind. Contact Career Services if you have questions about any of the steps listed.

{ Graduate School Timeline/Checklist

Summer 2011

- _____ Research various programs online.
- _____ Contact schools of interest for more information.
- _____ Take the LSAT in June.
- _____ Take the MCAT in July or August.

September 2011

- _____ Attend a Senior Registration Meeting, September 7 - 8, 12 - 14.
- _____ Register for Career Services' Referral Services.
- _____ Research graduate schools using Career Library resources.
- _____ Begin studying for graduate admissions test. Practice test-taking skills at Test Drive, September 17.
- _____ Participate in Graduate School Awareness Week, September 19 - 23:
 - September 22: Graduate School Expo

October 2011

- _____ Meet with a career counselor to discuss postgraduation plans.
- _____ Prepare a personal statement.
- _____ Request letters of recommendation; place copies in your credentials file in Career Services.
- _____ Take the GRE, GMAT or LSAT.

November 2011

- _____ Complete applications.
- _____ Order transcripts from Rhodes Express.
- _____ Research/apply for financial aid.

December 2011/January 2012

- _____ Mail applications EARLY.

February 2012-May 2012

- _____ Interview at/visit schools.
- _____ Evaluate acceptance letters to find your best "match."
- _____ Notify faculty and Career Services when you decide where to attend graduate school.
- _____ Send thank-you letters to your references.

When you are applying to graduate school, carefully read all the material you have from each school so that you are able to return completed applications on time. Application deadlines can range from the August before your senior year to a few weeks before graduate school matriculation.

Graduate and professional schools usually require a specific admission test, among other requirements. The tests taken most frequently by Rhodes College students include the GRE, GMAT, LSAT and MCAT. Before taking an admission test, it is beneficial to become familiar with the specific test structure and questions by reviewing sample tests, which are available in the test bulletin and various preparation manuals. Several companies offer preparatory courses. Some colleges and universities may also offer test preparation courses (check with their continuing education departments).

You are strongly advised to take admissions tests between your junior and senior years, or at the beginning of your senior year. Do NOT procrastinate - you may find it necessary to retake a test to improve your scores! It is very important to prepare for these tasks, as a poor performance on a test will likely be seen by schools (and potential employers) as unwillingness to prepare. Therefore, it is highly preferable to achieve a top score on your first attempt. **Before retaking a test, be sure you understand the manner in which your test scores will be interpreted by a given institution.** Some universities will average the scores you earn on all tests, while others may only look at your best scores. Most graduate admission test scores are considered valid for 5 years.

(For ALL testing dates and deadlines, please see page 55)

Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

The GRE is required by most universities for admission into graduate programs. The General Test of the GRE measures verbal, quantitative, critical thinking and analytical writing

skills. The test is computer-based and is offered daily (Monday-Saturday). Appointments are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis.

THE TEST: The General Test of the GRE consists of three different sections:

- (2) 30 minute sections:

The verbal section of the General Test measures reading comprehension and verbal and analogical reasoning skills in a multiple-choice format.

- (2) 35 minute sections:

The quantitative section tests your ability to understand basic concepts of arithmetic, algebra, geometry and data analysis; reason quantitatively; and solve problems in a quantitative setting.

- (2) 30 minute sections:

The analytical writing section measures your ability to articulate and support ideas and to analyze arguments. In addition to these sections, an unidentified section that does not count toward the final score will be included as a means of evaluating questions for future tests.

Total testing time is up to 3 hours and 45 minutes, not including the research section. When you're finished, you may choose to "view scores;" your unofficial score will

immediately appear on the screen. Or you may choose to "cancel scores." You will not see your score prior to this decision. If you choose to cancel your scores, they cannot be reinstated, and no refund will be made. The GRE Program makes essay responses available electronically to GRE score recipients.

SCORING: The first two sections of the GRE General Test are scored from 200-800; the analytical writing portion is scored from 0-6. According to the Educational Testing Service, examinees who repeated the General Test obtained a slight gain in scores. Scores are mailed to you and up to four institutions 10-15 days after you take the test. If you do not select score recipients on the test day, you must pay \$28 per recipient to have scores sent at a later date. For more information concerning the GRE, visit the GRE website at gre.org.

Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT)

The GMAT is required for admission into most management/business programs. The GMAT is a computer-based test that measures basic verbal, mathematical and analytical writing skills.

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THE TEST: The test consists of four sections that are timed separately. Prior knowledge of business is not required.

- 30 MIN - Writing Task
- 30 MIN - Writing Task 2
- 75 MIN - Quantitative Section
- 75 MIN - Verbal Section

SCORING: When you receive your report, you will have four scores: verbal, quantitative, total and writing. The scores for verbal and quantitative range from 0-60 (scores below 9 and above 44 are uncommon). Your GMAT total score will range from 200-800; two-thirds of test-takers score between 400 and 600. You will also receive a separate score ranging from 0-6 for your analytical writing assessment. If you find it necessary to repeat the test, you should know that the scores from your immediate test - as well as tests you have taken in the last five years - will be reported to the institutions you designate.

To learn more about the GMAT (and planning for the MBA), visit the Graduate Management Admission Council website at mba.com. You will be able to register online, search accredited business schools and review information on available preparation materials. You can also register for the GMAT by calling 1-800-717-GMAT.

Law School Admission Test (LSAT)

The LSAT assists law schools in assessing the academic promise of applicants. The Law School Admission Council recommends that students take the LSAT by December for admission the following fall semester.

THE TEST: The LSAT consists of five multiple-choice sections and one writing sample, including:

- 35 MIN - Reading Comprehension Section
- 35 MIN - Analytical reasoning Section
- 35 MIN - Logical Reasoning Section 1
- 35 MIN - Logical Reasoning Section 2
- 35 MIN - One section of new test items that will not contribute to your score.
- 35 MIN - Writing Sample (Although the writing sample is not scored, it is made available to law schools to which you have applied.)

SCORING: Approximately five weeks after the actual test

date, you will receive your score in the mail. The score scale for the LSAT is 120-180. The Law School Admission Council recommends retaking the test only if you believe that your score is not indicative of your abilities. Most scores do not change dramatically. All of your test scores will be reported to the institutions to which you are applying. These scores appear separately, but they are also averaged together.

For more information about the LSAT, visit the Law School Admission Council website at lsac.org. Information concerning LSAT dates, deadlines and fees, as well as information about Law School Forums and publications is available there.

Medical College Admission Test (MCAT)

THE TEST: The MCAT is a standardized, multiple-choice exam. Scores are reported in verbal reasoning, physical sciences, writing sample and biological sciences. If you are considering medical school, you should plan to take the MCAT about 1 year before you plan to enter a program. The overall length of the test is 4.5 hours.

- 60 MIN - Verbal Reasoning Section
- 70 MIN - Physical Sciences Section
- 70 MIN - Biological Sciences Section
- 60 MIN - Writing Sample

SCORING: Your raw score on the MCAT will be "scaled" ranging from 1-15 for each multiple-choice section. The writing sample will be scored and converted to an alphabetic scale ranging from J (lowest) to T (highest). The range of acceptable scores will vary among medical schools. According to the AAMC, approximately 30% of medical schools use the writing sample essays in the decision-making process. Some schools will review the information at various stages of the evaluation process. You may take the MCAT 3 times per year. MCAT scores are generally valid for 3 years. All of your scores will be reported to potential medical schools. Most medical admission committees will look at all test scores when evaluating your candidacy.

For more information about the MCAT, visit the American Association of Medical Colleges website at aamc.org, or contact Professor Alan Jaslow in Biology - ajaslow@rhodes.edu or 901-843-3602.

Dental Admission Test (DAT)

The DAT measures general academic ability, comprehension of scientific information and perceptual ability.

THE TEST: You will have a total of four hours and fifteen minutes to complete the four tests in the DAT.

- 90 MIN - Survey of Natural Sciences Section
- 60 MIN - Perceptual Ability Section
- 60 MIN - Reading Comprehension Section
- 45 MIN - Quantitative Reasoning Section

Fifteen minutes are provided for an optional break, and if you decide to take that break, the testing session will resume automatically after 15 minutes have passed.

SCORING: Test scores range from 1-30; 17 is considered average. You are encouraged to review sample test questions (available in the application) to familiarize yourself with the testing format and procedures. Candidates may retake the test; your four most recent scores will be sent to selected dental schools.

For more information about the DAT, visit the American Dental Association website at ada.org/dat.aspx.

***To learn more about ANY of these admission tests,** review the bulletins and registration materials available to you in Career Services. You will find information about testing procedures, fees, fee waivers, accommodations for persons with disabilities and methods of test registration. Depending on your field of study, you may need to take one of these tests, or other tests related to your intended discipline. For example, you may need to take the Optometry College Admission Test, Veterinary College Admission Test, Pharmacy College Admission Test or the

Miller Analogies Test (often accepted in place of the GRE)
For ALL testing dates and deadlines, please see page 55.

THE GRADUATE APPLICATION PROCESS

Transcripts

Graduate schools require official transcripts for completion of your application. Contact Rhodes Express to request that your transcript be mailed; allow 2 - 3 days for processing. If you have taken classes at any other college or university, you will also need to have an official transcript mailed from that institution.

Letters of Recommendation

Most graduate schools will request 2 or 3 letters of recommendation. Faculty recommendations are essential for academically-oriented programs. Professional programs (business, law, medicine, etc.) may request letters from professionals in their respective fields. When selecting people to write recommendations on your behalf, be sure to consider those who have seen you perform in an academic or professional role. **Recommendations from family members and/or friends do not carry as much weight, unless that person is an active alumnus serving on a committee or board.**

To request a recommendation letter, you should schedule an appointment with the faculty member/professional to discuss your goals and plans. You should provide each person with your résumé or a summary sheet of your accomplishments. After discussing your plans, you should then ask if he/she would write a letter on your behalf. **Remember, faculty tend to get very busy near the end of each semester, so do not wait until the last minute to approach them.** If the person agrees to write a recommendation, give him/her a recommendation form



GRE in
3 weeks

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(available in Career Services), or ask that the letter be written on the person's letterhead. You should provide your reference writers with an addressed, stamped envelope if you would like for them to mail the letter directly to a graduate program.

Some graduate programs request that the letters of recommendation be sent with the application. In this case, ask your reference writers to send the letter of recommendation to you, and have them sign their name across the seal on the back of the envelope. If the letter is nonconfidential, you may also request that the writer provide you with a copy of the letter for your personal file. **Most graduate admissions officers prefer confidential letters.** If you would like your letters to be of a confidential nature you must use the recommendation form provided by the graduate admission office or the confidential recommendation form available in Career Services. On the form, you should sign the confidentiality waiver before offering it to the faculty/professional. These recommendations should be sent directly to the graduate admission office or to Career Services (by the faculty/ professional). At your request, Career Services will then send the letters out on your behalf to prospective graduate schools. All recommendations will be mailed within 2 working days of the request.

It is always a good idea to obtain letters of recommendation from faculty while you are still at Rhodes, even if graduate school is a few years away.

By waiting for a few years to request such letters, you may find that a faculty member is on sabbatical and unable to be reached, or that the faculty member has left Rhodes. A faculty member may also have a more limited recollection of your academic achievements if you wait for 2-3 years to request a letter. Remember, letters of recommendation can be stored in your credentials file (in Career Services); this service provides an efficient method of maintaining your letters until the time that they are needed.

Application Essays

Writing an essay or personal statement is often the most difficult part of the application process. Requirements vary widely in this regard. Some graduate schools are very specific about what to include in the essay or personal statement. If they do not specify, the essay or personal

statement for an application should be a statement of your goals and interests. **When the requirement is a "personal statement," the possibilities are virtually unlimited.** There is no set formula to follow. You should develop a clear statement demonstrating interest in - and understanding of - your chosen field. Your essay should reflect well-developed writing skills and clarity, focus and depth of thought.

Admissions committees try to evaluate a number of factors from your statement, including:

- Motivation and commitment to a field of study
- Expectations regarding the program
- Career intentions and major areas of interest
- Writing ability
- Research and/or experience; educational background
- Immediate and long-term goals
- Reasons for deciding to pursue graduate education in a particular field and at a particular institution
- Personal uniqueness - what would you add to the entering class?

Organize Your Essay

There are two main approaches to organizing an essay. **You can outline the points you want to cover and then expand on them, or you can put your ideas down on paper as they come to you, editing them until you achieve a logical sequence.** Developing an outline will probably lead to a well-organized essay, whereas writing spontaneously may yield a more individual piece of writing.

Have It Critiqued.

Regardless of the approach used, you should have your essay critiqued. Your adviser, a career counselor or those who wrote your recommendation letters may be very helpful in critiquing your writing. Seek the advice and counsel of people in your chosen field; they should be able to guide you in terms of factors to emphasize in your essay. Do not be surprised, however, if you get differing opinions regarding the content of your essay. In the end, only you can decide the best way to present yourself.

Explain Yourself.

You should explain anything that could be construed as negative in your application; failure to do so

may eliminate you from consideration. If there is information in your application that might reflect badly on you - such as poor grades or a low admission test score - you may want to briefly offer an explanation in your essay, or on a separate sheet titled "Addendum," which you can attach to the application. However, your explanation should be short and to the point - you do not want to give long, tedious excuses.

Check It Twice.

Unless stated otherwise, essays should be typed. It is usually acceptable to attach pages to your application if the space provided is insufficient. As with all writing you produce, spelling, grammar and neatness are important.

Admissions Decisions

Admissions committees will use several standards to evaluate your candidacy. Some programs have very competitive admissions requirements and may accept less than 10% of all applicants. *Peterson's Guide to Graduate and Professional Programs* lists the acceptance rates of most programs. **Do not let a low admission rate discourage you from applying to a program in which you have sincere interest.** But if the program has a low admission rate, consider applying to other programs of interest with higher acceptance rates. Overall, most admission committees will review your credentials using the following criteria:

- GPA
- Graduate admission test scores
- Undergraduate curriculum
- Reputation of undergraduate institution
- Overall content of application
- Timeliness of application materials
- Level of involvement in research, extracurricular activities and volunteer services
- Previous work experience (especially for MBA programs)
- Strength of recommendation letters
- Interview

Graduate School Interviews

Although not all programs require interviews, the on-campus visit can help you strengthen your candidacy. In addition, the campus interview will provide you a better understanding of the program and help you assess your interest in the university. An interview can be extremely beneficial to your decision-making process.

If the university does not require an interview, you should request one. Keep in mind that some schools will interview only selected candidates. If this is the case, you should arrange a "campus visit," during which you can tour the campus, evaluate the facilities and talk with faculty and students.

Prepare for graduate school interviews as you would for an employment interview. Research the programs and faculty, polish your interviewing skills and be prepared to discuss your strengths, weaknesses, goals and educational achievements. You should be familiar with the faculty's research and publications. When interviewing with faculty, discuss how your interests, goals and skills are compatible with the program.

Thorough research and on-campus interviews may seem costly in terms of time and money. However, your decision to attend graduate school is an important one that should not be taken lightly. You will be investing more money into your education and foregoing several years of income if you choose to attend a graduate program. Compare the cost of campus visits to this investment, and you will soon realize that it is a small price to pay for a decision that will have a lasting influence on your professional and personal life.

Listed below are a few tips specific to graduate school interviews:

- Interview early in the semester (this does not apply to medical schools). Law schools do not conduct interviews but will generally arrange an on-site visit.
- Arrange interviews or campus visits early in your senior year; this strategy will help you evaluate and perhaps redefine your interests. (If you are interested in medical school, you may want to visit the campus during your junior year.)
- To arrange a campus visit, write a letter to the director of the program expressing your interest. In

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your letter, state that you have plans to be in the area during a defined period of time and would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss the program. You should follow up with a phone call approximately 2 weeks after mailing your letter to inquire about the professor's availability and, if possible, to confirm a campus visit. Make sure all contact and correspondence is done professionally. Even if you are informally contacting a school, unprofessional conduct may be remembered when you apply later.

- Prepare for the interview. Spend time researching the university, the field of study and the departmental faculty. **Read published articles from the faculty to develop an understanding of the research and focus of the program.**

- Prepare to discuss your interests, specifically demonstrating how the program will help you meet your academic and professional goals. You should also be prepared to discuss the strengths that you would bring to the program, citing examples of your own research, independent study and experiences.

- It is appropriate to inquire about scholarships or assistantships during your visit.

- Often during formal interviews, the program director will arrange a time for you to talk to graduate students currently enrolled in the program. If this is not part of the interview process, try to arrange a meeting with current graduate students. When talking with the students, inquire as to their satisfaction with the program. Ask about the academic challenges of the program and availability of the faculty outside the classroom, as well as the program's strengths and weaknesses. **Try to assess the overall student perception of the program.**

- Always follow up with thank-you letters. Following the interview or campus visit, be sure to write a letter to the department chair and other faculty with whom you met, expressing your continued interest in their program. Also, be sure to state your appreciation of their time. You may also send a thank-you note to any graduate students with whom you met, thanking them for their time and advice.

{ Questions Asked of Graduate School Candidates

- Why did you choose to attend Rhodes College?
- Why did you choose your academic major?
- How would you describe the academic climate of Rhodes?
- What are your immediate career goals? Your long-term career goals?
- Why are you interested in this profession?
- What is your GPA? Is it reflective of your abilities?
- What contributions do you expect to make to this program?
- What subjects did you enjoy the most in college? The least? Why?
- Why did you choose to apply to this institution?
- What activities, aside from classroom studies, have you participated in?
- What are your strengths? Your weaknesses?
- What have you accomplished in the past that demonstrates your interests and commitment to this profession?

{ Questions Asked by the Candidate at Graduate School Interviews

- What research is currently being conducted in this department?
- Do faculty members have research teams?
- What are the strengths of this program? What makes it unique?
- How would you describe the faculty-student relationship in this department?
- How flexible is the program? Would I be able to design my own program?
- How long has this program existed at the university?
- How would you describe the facilities (library, computer labs, etc.) available to students?
- Are teaching and research assistantships available? If so, how are students selected? How many are available? In what areas are they?
- Are internships or other practical experiences a part of the curriculum?
- What type of career assistance is provided to graduate students?
- What kinds of positions do graduates of this program obtain?

2011-2012 Graduate Admissions Test Dates

Graduate Record Examinations (GRE)

The GRE is offered year-round at computer-based test centers with a scheduled appointment. Visit gre.org or call 1-800-GRE-CALL for registration.* Practice material will be mailed to you up to 4 weeks after registration. General test fees are \$160 in and the U.S. Subject tests (offered as paper-based tests) are \$140 each.

Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT)

The GMAT is administered as a computer-adaptive test with a scheduled appointment. You may call 1-800-717-GMAT to register.* The fee to take the GMAT is \$250 worldwide.

**In Memphis, you may also call the Prometric Testing Center in Cordova at 901-756-1425 or The University of Memphis Testing Center at 901-678-1457 to schedule a test date for the GRE or the GMAT.*

Law School Admission Test (LSAT)

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Regular Registration</u>	<u>Late Registration**</u>	<u>Score Reported***</u>
October 1, 2011	August 30, 2011	September 1-9, 2011	October 26, 2011
December 3, 2011	October 31, 2011	November 1-11, 2011	January 6, 2012
February 11, 2012	January 10, 2012	January 11-20, 2012	March 7, 2012

***Only by phone at 215-968-1001 or online at lsac.org.*

****Score by email - for online account holders only; no additional charge.*

Registration fees for the LSAT are \$139. Late registration requires a \$68 additional fee. Most ABA-approved law schools require that their applicants register for the Law School Credential Assembly Service (LSCAS) when they register for the LSAT. The LSCAS prepares a report for each law school to which you apply. The registration fee is \$124, and each report is \$16.

Medical College Admission Test (MCAT)

19 test dates***

Registration for the MCAT opens 6 months prior to the exam date listed - register as EARLY as possible. The fee to take the exam is \$235. Late registration costs \$60. You may also register for the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS), a service for applicants to the first-year entering classes at participating U.S. medical schools. AMCAS fees for the 2011 entering class are \$160 for the first designated school and \$33 for each additional school. Visit the Association of American Medical Colleges website at [***aamc.org](http://aamc.org) to register or for more information.

Dental Admission Test (DAT)

You must first register with the American Dental Association to receive an application by calling 1-800-621-8099. For further information, visit ada.org.

Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT)

Register for the exam at tpc-etesting.com/pcat/. Applications for pharmacy school can be found at pharmcas.org.

Veterinary College Admission Test (VCAT)

Students interested in veterinary school should check with their prospective institutions for test requirements. The VCAT is not always a prerequisite. For information on the VCAT, visit aavmc.org.

Financial Aid/Scholarships

After graduating from Rhodes, the thought of taking on additional debt for advanced educational pursuits may be daunting. Financial considerations must be painstakingly reviewed; however, many forms of aid are available. As a graduate student, you are automatically considered "independent" in terms of federal financial aid purposes; therefore, your parents' income and assets will not be considered in determining your financial need. You should also note that graduate financial aid is often awarded on the basis of academic merit. For these reasons, the following advice is offered:

- Apply for financial aid even if you think you will not qualify. Do not assume that you will not be considered.
 - Apply for financial aid early. Deadlines are often a month or so earlier than regular admission deadlines.
 - Most graduate and professional schools have a need-blind admission policy, which means your chances of being admitted are not affected by your request for financial aid.
 - Make sure you have all the necessary forms for each institution. Many schools use a needs analysis document such as the CSS (College Scholarship Service) or Financial Aid PROFILE form (request forms are available in Financial Aid). Other schools use different analysis systems. Be sure you use the correct forms.
 - Complete all forms legibly and accurately. Errors and omissions can cause delays.
 - Follow up on all forms you submit if you receive no response within a reasonable period of time.
 - Keep copies of all forms!
 - Apply for aid every year.
 - After graduation, research programs that consolidate loans.
- There are three basic types of aid: grants, work programs and loans.

Aid can be secured from various sources, including the federal government, state governments, educational institutions, foundations, corporations and other private organizations, such as churches and professional associations.

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS*

Grants and fellowships generally require no service in return. Often, they provide the cost of tuition and fees plus a stipend to cover living expenses. Some grants are based exclusively on financial need, some exclusively on academic merit and some on a combination of need and merit. A fellowship is a prestigious award and is an indication of excellence, which is important to a student's total career. Financial need is usually not a factor in awarding fellowships. Several states offer support for graduate study. In order to qualify for a particular state's aid, you must be a resident of that state. Residency is established in most states after you have lived there for at least 12 consecutive months prior to enrolling in school. Most state awards are based on financial need.

WORK PROGRAMS*

Teaching Assistantships (TAs)

A TA position may involve delivering lectures, leading study groups, grading papers, counseling students and supervising laboratory groups. Most TAs work approximately 20 hours each

week. TAs generally receive a salary (now considered a taxable income), and tuition is often waived. Appointments are based on academic qualifications and are subject to the availability of funds within a department.

Research Assistantships

A research assistantship usually requires the student to assist in the research activities of the faculty. These assistantships are rarely offered to first-year students. You should contact individual faculty members directly to determine if you are eligible.

Administrative Assistantships

This type of position generally requires 10-20 hours of work each week in an administrative office of the university. Some administrative assistantships provide a tuition waiver, while others provide a salary. Details concerning these positions can usually be found in the school catalogue or through the academic department.

Federal Work-Study Program

This federally funded program provides eligible students with employment opportunities on campus or in nonprofit organizations. Work-study is available to both graduate and undergraduate students who can demonstrate financial need. Not all schools have an earnings ceiling. The

dollar value of a work-study award depends upon financial need, the amount of money the school has to offer and the aid received from other sources.

LOANS*

Federal Stafford Loans

This government-sponsored program provides low-interest loans to graduate students in two forms: subsidized and unsubsidized. The subsidized component of the program provides an interest-free loan as long as you are in school on a part-time or full-time basis. Under the unsubsidized component of the program, you are responsible for paying the interest of the loan as soon as the loan is processed. In order to qualify for the subsidized loan, you must demonstrate financial need. You may borrow up to \$8,500 per year through the subsidized program (up to \$65,000 including undergraduate borrowing); an additional amount per year may be borrowed through the unsubsidized program.

Federal Direct Loans

Similar in scope to the Federal Stafford Loans, some graduate schools offer Direct Loans, which are funded through the Department of Education's Direct Lending Program. Interest rates and policies are very similar to Stafford Loans; however, there are more repayment options with Federal Direct Loans.

Federal Perkins Loan Program

Through this long-term loan program, students who meet established financial need criteria are able to borrow up to \$6,000 per year up to a total of \$40,000, including undergraduate borrowing. The interest rate is 5%, and interest does not accumulate while you are in school.

Repayment begins 9 months after you graduate or drop below half-time status.

To apply for federal financial aid, you must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This application must be completed after January 1, preceding fall enrollment. You may secure the FAFSA from the Rhodes Financial Aid office or the financial aid office at the college or university to which you are applying. You may also complete a Web-based version of the FAFSA at fafsa.ed.gov.

**Peterson's Graduate & Professional Programs: An Overview 2008, Lawrenceville, NJ: Thomson Peterson's, 2008, pp. 6-8.*

Military

Support for graduate/professional education is available in exchange for future military service.

Employers

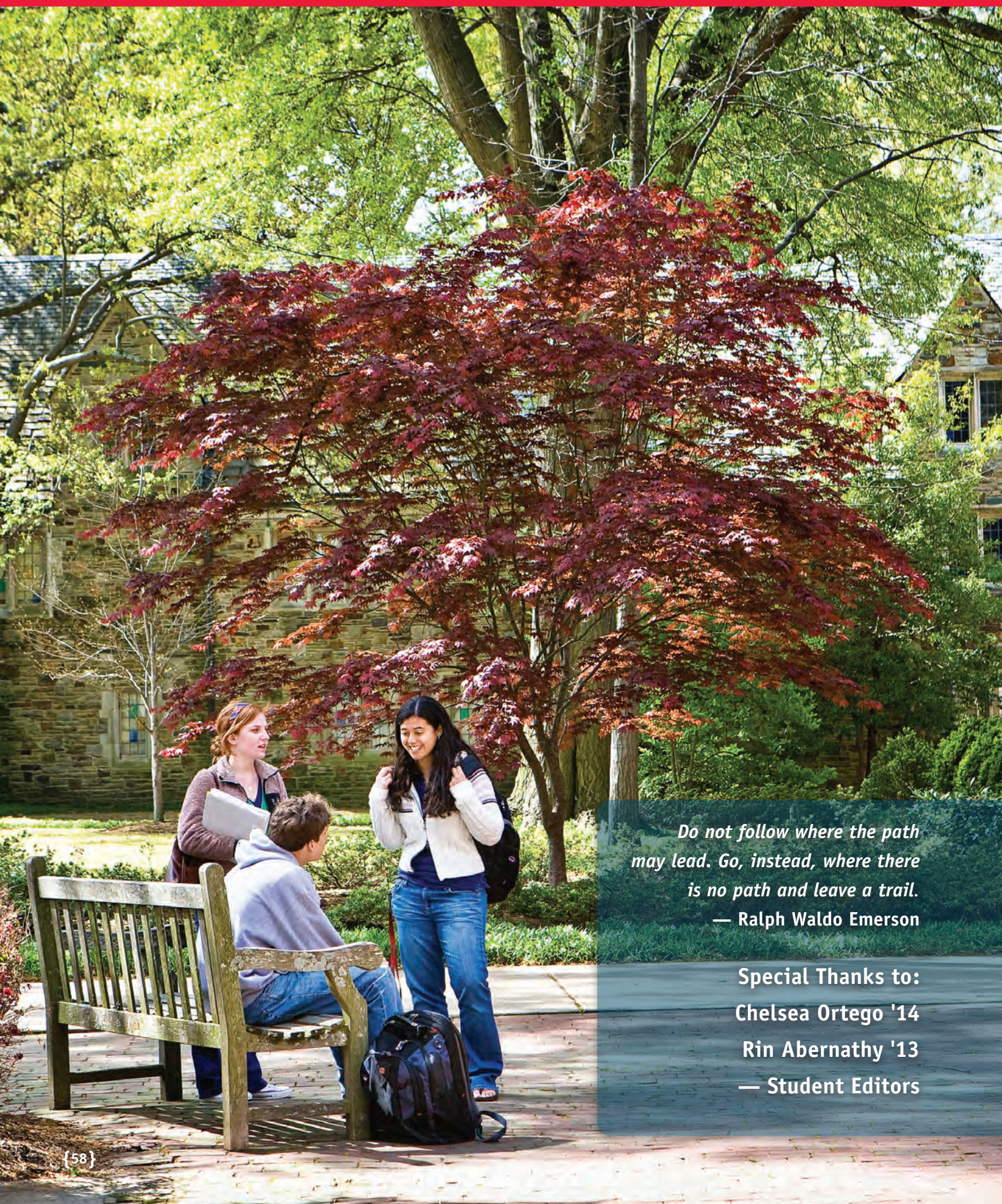
Some employers have reimbursement programs for employees who continue their education in a field related to their jobs.

Postgraduate Fellowships

It is never too early to think about postgraduate opportunities like the Fulbright, Watson, Rhodes, Marshall, Truman or National Science Foundation fellowships/scholarships. A faculty committee works to provide information and support for students who wish to pursue these opportunities, and invites your inquiries.

Please visit the staff and the Career Library at Career Services to supplement your graduate school knowledge, help you identify the right school and provide you with up-to-date scholarship information!





*Do not follow where the path
may lead. Go, instead, where there
is no path and leave a trail.*

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

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