



STUDENT SEARCH GUIDE

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SCFSM
STATE COLLEGE OF FLORIDA
MANATEE-SARASOTA

CAREER
Resource Center

Dear SCF Student:

The Career Resource Center (CRC) is here to assist you with every step of the job search process. This guide is designed to help you identify and acquire the job that you want and will enjoy. It will show you how to develop a resume, locate and contact employers and track communications with them.

Key points to consider as you begin your search:

- Know the position you want and where you want to live.
- Identify companies that can offer you the position you want.
- Define the personal qualities, skills and education you have to offer.

Landing a good job is full-time work and the CRC is here to help.

Sincerely,

CRC Staff

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Resume and Cover Letter	1
The Interview	5
Tracking Your Progress	7
Networking and Job Fairs.....	8
Resources	Back Cover

RESUME

The work you do in writing a resume and preparing for an interview will help you get the job you want and will enjoy. There are four basic resume formats:

Chronological Resume

- Begins with your most recent employment and works back in time to your first job; this resume covers the previous 10 years
- Good for someone with a clear and seamless career history or a person changing jobs within a given field

Functional Resume

- Organizes your experience according to specific skills; you must have a clear employment objective
- De-emphasizes employment dates
- Good for someone entering the workforce after a period of absence or with gaps in employment; with a lengthy work history; changing careers; military personnel entering the civilian job market

Combination Resume

- Merges the best elements of the chronological and functional resumes

Scannable Resume

- A document that can be successfully scanned as a graphic image and then converts it back to text
- Avoid decorative fonts and use simple formats
- Important to use key words for your employment field

BASIC GUIDELINES TO CREATING A RESUME

- Create a professional e-mail address just for your job search (e.g. adamjackson@abc.com). Do not use something like funnyface@aol.com.
- Select the resume that most supports your objective. Place resume headings and information in appropriate order to best describe your education, skills and abilities.
- Begin with the most recent dates and work backward chronologically.
- Use the same heading on the cover letter as on the resume.
- Be clear and concise, not repetitive.
- Keep the resume to one page. Start with a 12-point font size and reduce to 11 point; reduce top, bottom and side margins to fit one page.
- Use proper grammar and punctuation. Capitalize only proper nouns and use the spell checker.
- Have several people proof your resume, including a CRC staff member.
- Make sure your resume is visually appealing to the reader.
- Use quality resume paper for cover letter, resume and envelopes.

IDENTIFY YOUR SKILLS

Describe your skills using verbs or adjectives to grab the reader's attention and add power and action to your resume. Types of skills are personal qualities, transferable skills and job-specific skills. Think about the work you do on the job, at school or in extracurricular activities.

To help you describe what you can do for an employer, ask yourself:

- How would my supervisor describe my performance?
- What would my co-worker say about me?
- What would my teacher say about my work?
- What are the tasks that I do on the job?
- What projects did I complete in school?

Personal qualities: dependable, friendly, conscientious, persistent, attentive, persuasive

Transferable skills: ability to meet deadlines, problem-solving skills, written-communication skills

Job Specific skills:

Computer field: LAN, WAN, C++, VB, DOS, Win XP, configure, install, troubleshoot

Graphic Design: PC or Mac proficient, creative, logos, posters, Web page, InDesign, Illustrator

Health Sciences: Adhere to strict procedures. Experience caring for trauma patients. Educate patients on wellness and follow-up.

Here are a few verbs and adjectives to describe your abilities:

VERBS		ADJECTIVES	
assembled	generated	amiable	imaginative
assessed	greeted	articulate	keen
assisted	guided	attentive	loyal
balanced	illustrated	bold	methodical
calculated	improved	calm	persuasive
chaired	increased	collaborative	pleasant
clarified	informed	cooperative	polite
compiled	organized	decisive	progressive
coordinated	oversaw	dependable	quick
demonstrated	programmed	eager	skillful
developed	promoted	effective	strong
edited	reconciled	efficient	substantial
encouraged	referred	fervent	thoughtful
established	reviewed	friendly	tolerant
explained	solved	genuine	warm
forecast	trained	good	well-developed
formulated			

For a more in-depth list, log on to scf.edu/CareerResourceCenter.
Choose Job Search. Choose Action Verbs.

RESUME FORMAT

Name (You can add something simple to make your name stand out like a script or bold font.)

Address, City, State, Zip
Area Code-Phone Number, Professional e-mail

Objective:

An objective is a brief statement that indicates the position you want. Use two words that describe you as a person. Write in terms of the employer's needs. Example: Seeking an RN position in the dialysis unit where my friendly, compassionate care can be an asset to the medical facility.

Summary of qualifications:

In this section describe your strengths, work ethic, experience with equipment, software, hardware and experience with diverse groups. Describe skills that the employer needs. Include your computer skills and foreign language skills. Example: Organized with an ability to meet deadlines.

Education: **Degree/Major** **GPA if greater than 3.0**
School Name, City, State status or anticipated graduation date
* List related courses taken.
* List high level courses taken.

A. S. in Nursing **GPA 3.26**
State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota Graduation 5/11
Bradenton, FL
* Anatomy and Physiology I & II * Nursing Process I, II, & III
* Biology * Applied Nursing Science I & II

Licensure: Scheduled for Florida Nursing Board exam for RN license in 6/11

Clubs: **Treasurer**, Student Nurses Association, State College of Florida
1/10 - present. Recorded membership dues and balanced the accounts.

Work experience:

Job Title MM/YY to MM/YY
Company Name, City, State
• Describe skills, work accomplished and tasks. Talk in measurable terms like increased profits, decreased costs.

Mechanic 08/09 - present
Joe's Automotive, Bradenton, FL
• Assess clients needs. Diagnosis and repair of vehicles. Maintain accurate documentation on repairs. Provide excellent customer service.

Volunteer experience:

Assistant, Easter Seals, Bradenton, FL 8/08 - 12/09
• Developed fun, educational activities for children with disabilities.

COVER LETTER FORMAT

Name (You can do something conservative and different to make your name stand out.)

Address, City, State, Zip
(Area Code) Phone Number
Professional e-mail

Date

Joyce Jones
Joyce's Job Title
XYZ Company
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Ms. Jones:

Paragraph One: Begin with statements that will grab the reader's attention. Introduce yourself as a student/graduate of State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota (SCF). Identify the position you are applying for. Tell how you learned of the position. Explain why this is the right position for you. Say why you want to work for their company. Compliments are great additions to the cover letter. Demonstrate that you researched the company. Avoid beginning each statement with—I have, I believe, I am, etc.

For a real estate law firm that closes five million dollars in sales on a monthly basis, I believe my attention to detail and ability to meet deadlines are the skills you need. Currently, I am enrolled in the Paralegal Program at SCF. I will graduate May 2011. My professor, Barry Puett, told me about the legal assistant opening with XYZ. It would be an honor to work with a firm recognized for their integrity and leadership in the field.

Paragraph Two: Demonstrate that you understand the needs of the job and you have the skills, experience, education and personal qualities the position requires. **Answer the following questions:**

- What can you open with that will grab their attention?
- What statements can you add that will support your opening statement?
- What can you say about your education?
- What can you say about your skills?
- What can you say about your personal qualities?

Paragraph Three: Offer a plan of action.

- Direct them to your resume.
- Demonstrate enthusiasm for the position and the company.
- Invite them to contact you. Include your follow-up plans.

Sincerely,

Don't forget to sign the cover letter!

Your Name

PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW

Research the Company

The best way to answer the questions, “**Why do you want to work for us?**” and “**What can you do for my organization?**” is to know something about the company.

Things to know about the company:

- Mission statement and company values
- Products or services the company provides
- Past performance in terms of profits and sales
- Top performers and executives in the company
- Organizational structure and company locations
- Competitors
- Public perception of the company
- Industry trends

Things to know about the position:

- The job description
- The department needs
- The supervisor's name and job title

Dress for Success! Appearance communicates your attitude.

MEN

- Wear a white or blue long-sleeved shirt and a tie, a business suit or a sports coat and slacks.
- Socks should match your pants.
- The color of the belt and shoes should match.
- Clean-shaven or a neatly trimmed beard, mustache and a haircut are recommended.

WOMEN

- Wear a suit, skirt and jacket or a tailored dress.
- Avoid heavy makeup and extreme hairstyles.
- No more than five pieces of jewelry is the rule of thumb: earrings, necklace, watch and two rings.

Conservative colors and earth-tone hues are recommended for both men and women. Dress and grooming affect the decision to hire a candidate or promote an employee.

Hygiene

Brush your teeth, have a mint before the interview and avoid smoking.

Shower and use deodorant.

Clothes should be free of spots and wrinkles.

Perfumes and colognes should be used lightly.

Keep hands and fingernails clean and trimmed.

Body Language

Walk with a purpose. Does your body language say, “I have it together!” Or “Help me!”?

Make eye contact and smile; hold your head up and relax your shoulders.

Offer a dry, firm handshake.

MATERIALS TO BRING TO AN INTERVIEW

Bring a pen, notepad, extra copies of your resume, a portfolio, directions and contact names, three references typed on a separate sheet of paper, your driver license and work permit (social security card, etc).

Be a STAR Interviewee

Listen to the question.

Answer the question.

Be clear, concise and to the point.

Do not ramble.

Do not answer with one word.

Be prepared to explain: situation/task, action and results.

Focus your answers on the following: skills, education, experience and personal qualities.

There are 1001 interview questions, all asking for the same basic information: Do you have the skills, education and experience for the job? Can I supervise you? Will you work well with others? What's your work ethic and motivation?

Keep in mind the job ad, skills required for the position, needs of the department and information gained from researching the company as you answer questions. Draw your answers from your education, volunteer experiences, work experience, skills attained, personal traits and extracurricular activities.

Be prepared to answer the following questions:

What qualifications do you have for this position? Be able to speak about your personal qualities, skills, education and past experience.

What would your current supervisor say about your work performance?

Tell me about a conflict you had on the job. How did you handle it?

Give an example of a major problem you faced. How did you resolve it?

What has been your greatest accomplishment/failure? What did you learn from it?

What motivates you to do a good job?

Where do you see yourself in five years?

Why do you want to work for us?

Tell me about yourself?

Tell them about your skills and the value of your education. Explain how you would be the perfect candidate for the position. Talk about your strengths and always end on a positive note; "I appreciate the opportunity to interview with you."

What is your greatest weakness?

This is a trick question. You must give them something. Nobody is perfect. But turn it around so it is not a problem. For example, "When I write a letter or brochure, I want the perfect final product. I rewrite the same sentence 10 times. What I have learned to do is get input from co-workers I trust. If they approve, I move on to the next task."

Do you have any questions for me?

This is a key moment to find out if the job is right for you. Asking questions also demonstrates that you have an interest in the position and have prepared for the interview.

Good questions to ask:

What qualities would the best candidate have?

What is the next step in the hiring process?

When do you plan to make a selection?

What would you want accomplished within the first 30 days?

Don't ask about salary or benefits.

THANK YOU!

Always express your appreciation to those who help you in your job search. Saying, “Thank you,” shows good manners and makes you stand out from the competition. Mail out a thank-you note on the same day as the interview. Address the note to the person leading the interview. A thank-you note can be handwritten. Points to include in a thank-you note:

- * Thank them for their time.
- * Clarify any points if needed.
- * Restate your interest in the position.
- * Re-emphasize your qualifications.

EXAMPLE:

1/17/10

Dear Miss Carpenter:

I appreciate the time you took with me today at the interview for the position of AutoCAD Drafter. My skills and education match the job requirements perfectly. You asked if I would be willing to visit the Punta Gorda office twice a week and I am willing to travel. I eagerly wait to hear back from you.

Sincerely,

SIGN YOUR NAME

George Drafter

TRACKING YOUR PROGRESS:

Sometimes the job you are seeking is not immediately available. As you develop contacts with department managers, human resource recruiters and interviewers, you can e-mail or drop a note in the mail to let them know you are interested. This continued communication keeps your name in their minds for when the right job is available. Track the following information:

Contact name:	Job title:
Company name:	Address:
Phone number:	E-mail address:
Web page:	

Comments:

1/08/10 talked to Alice Employer. 1/9/10 mailed resume. 1/11/10 talked to Betty, secretary to see if Ms. Employer received my resume. 1/12/10 sent Betty a thank-you note for her assistance. 1/16/10 interviewed with Ms. Employer. 1/16/10 sent Ms. Employer a thank-you note for the interview.

NETWORKING

Networking is talking with people for the purpose of finding a job. Did you know that 80 percent of job openings are never advertised publicly? If they are not advertised, how are they filled? Consider the flow of information within a company:

Funding—Department Manager—Human Resource Department—Company Personnel

At this point in the process, 80 percent of positions are filled from within the company. The remaining 20 percent are then advertised. Once the job opening hits the classifieds, your competition increases dramatically.

You can network in different ways:

Network with those you know. When a friend refers you to a potential employer, the initial contact becomes much easier. List the names of people you know: family, friends, acquaintances, neighbors, etc. Contact each person. Begin with some pleasant conversation, but be professional and get to the point. Here's an example of how to start the conversation:

"Hi! You might know that I've been pursuing a degree at SCF. I'll be graduating this semester. I am looking for a job in XYZ field."

The following questions may help gather information beneficial to you:

- * Do you know of a job opening in my field?
- * Do you know someone who might know of an opening?
- * Where does he/she work?
- * Could you call him/her on my behalf?
- * Would you share their phone number with me?
- * May I use your name when I follow up?

Network with companies. Identify 30 companies that you are interested in working for and may be able to hire you. Before you contact a company regarding employment, be sure you have researched the organization. See page five of this guide.

The purpose of your call is to get a face-to-face meeting with the department manager. If you talk in terms of "future job openings," it is difficult for a manager to turn you down because they don't have an opening for you today. The following key phrases can help you get your foot in the door:

- * Sally Smith recommended that I call to discuss future job openings within your company.
- * I understand that you are not currently hiring, but I wanted to discuss future openings and promise to only take 10 minutes.
- * Since we aren't discussing immediate openings, we can meet at any time that is convenient to you in the next two weeks. Are you available Thursday, March 8, at 2 p.m.?
- * I was hoping to introduce myself to you, since I have a particular interest in your company.
- * A meeting with me could save you time searching for a candidate when a position becomes available.

FINALLY, when you get the appointment, REMEMBER to:

- ✓ Dress appropriately.
- ✓ Be on time.
- ✓ Bring your resume.
- ✓ Ask what qualities or skills they look for in candidates. Explain how your education, skills and experience make you a good candidate for a future job opening.
- ✓ Share knowledge from your research, when appropriate.
- ✓ Express your appreciation for their time and most importantly—keep your 10-minute promise!

Networking at a job fair. A job fair is the only event that allows you an opportunity to meet face-to-face and speak with the human resources recruiter. A recruiter is often your first point of contact in obtaining employment. It is important that you make a good first impression with the recruiter. Here is a script for the job fair:

“Good Morning! My name is Sam Jones. I am a sophomore at State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota pursuing a degree in _____. As you can see on my resume, I just completed courses in _____, _____ and _____. Could you please share with me the types of positions within your organization that can utilize my education?”

Be prepared to ask questions:

Are there any positions available in the _____ department?

Can you tell me about the hiring process for your organization?

Do you have internship opportunities?

Listen carefully. The answers to your questions will begin to describe the right candidate for their company. This is your chance to show them how your skills, education, experience and personal qualities make you the right candidate.

SEVEN STEPS TO SUCCESS AT A JOB FAIR

IMAGE: Dress your best! Conservative colors and styles are recommended. Smile, introduce yourself and give a firm handshake.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: Be prepared with a good supply of resumes. You also may want to consider having your transcripts with you.

STRATEGIZE: When you enter the job fair, you will receive a program-listing of the participants and a map of their locations. Take time to review the map. Warm up by talking to a few organizations, then hit the employers that offer jobs you really want.

REMEMBER YOUR GOAL: Your goal is to learn about job opportunities and show how your education and experience make you the best candidate.

MAKE DECISIONS: Use this time to decide if you want to pursue this employer.

FOLLOW UP: Get a business card so you can follow up with a letter. Restate your qualifications and interest in the position.

REMEMBER TO SAY “THANK YOU!” Saying “Thank You” is polite and courteous.

CRC RESOURCES

CRC Library

The CRC Library has resources to help you prepare for employment. Books with sample resumes and cover letters for specific fields are available. Plus, you will find books and DVDs on interviewing and networking.

Resumes

Drop your resume off at the CRC.
We will proof it and return it to you within 48 hours.

Optimal Resume is a program available online
at scf.edu/CareerResourceCenter.

Interviews

The CRC staff can help you prepare for an interview. Refine your interviewing skills by recording a practice session using Optimal Resume.
scf.optimalresume.com

Job Search

To find part- or full-time job opportunities and internship possibilities, go to scf.edu/CareerResourceCenter and choose the Online Career Office.