



Education that's transforming lives and communities

Grow Your Career – Resource Guide

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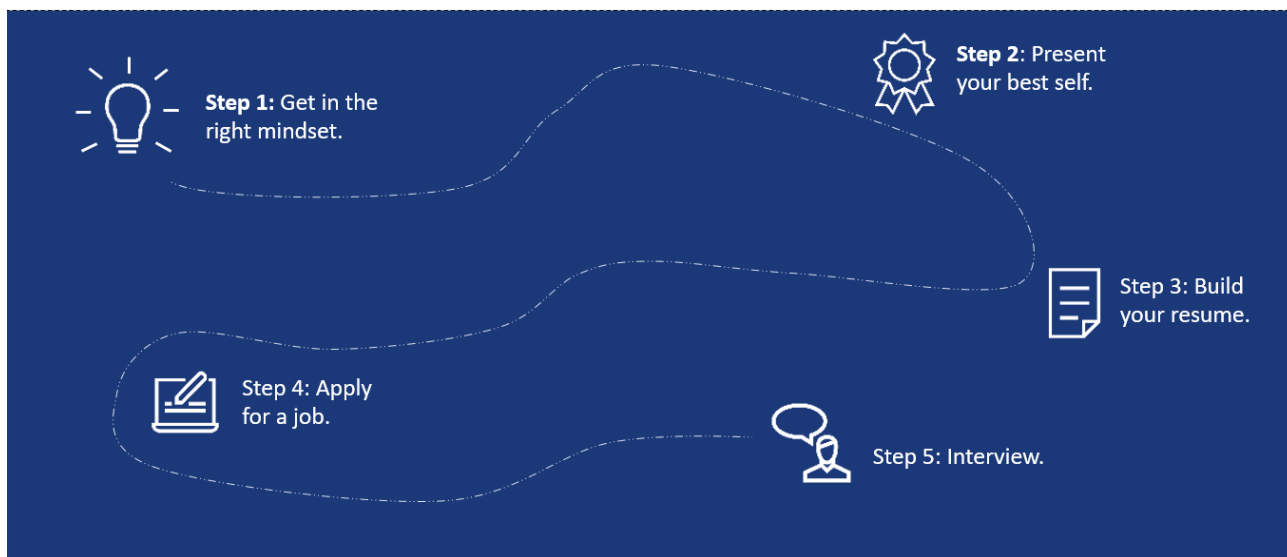
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Overview

Description

This **Grow Your Career** guide will serve as a resource to provide learners with the skills needed to feel confident and credible in the application and interview process. This guide is ideal for individuals looking to elevate their professional skills in order to grow their career.

Follow this learning map as you explore the resources in this guide.



Introduction

This resource guide will help you understand how to:

- Envision the career you want.
- Present your best self.
- Operate in a growth mindset.
- Build your resume using the most effective resources.
- Apply for a job.
- Interview effectively in any setting.

Step 1: Get in the right mindset

Picture the possibilities



Whenever we begin a new journey, whether we're just beginning our career or starting the next phase of our career, we should stop and ask ourselves a few questions to clarify where we are going. The first step in this process is to picture the possibilities.

As you think about your current or future career, write down your responses to the following questions on a piece of paper or a device, or see the note below for how to add text to this document:

What does a successful career look like to you? (such as, a certain level in the career, connections with others in the field and so on)

What is the driving force behind your professional goals? (such as, financial stability, family and so on)

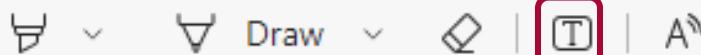
What type of mindset will help you to achieve your goals?

Note: Throughout this resource guide, there will be several journaling activities. Keep a document with all of your answers so that you can refer back to it as you continue on your career journey.

If you would like to record your answers directly into this guide, use the **comment** feature if you are viewing the document in **Adobe® Reader®** or the **type text** feature if you are viewing in a web browser.

To use the comment / type text features, simply click the button on the toolbar and then stamp the textbox onto your page to type.

 Comment





Getting into the right mindset to achieve your career goals

Now that you’ve considered some of your career goals, consider how to maintain a mindset that supports those goals. Having the right mindset is key in growing in your career. There are two types of mindsets: fixed and growth.



Fixed mindset	Growth mindset
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Believes that your basic qualities, intelligence and talent are fixed traits• Believes that talent creates success without effort• Focuses on outcome• Sees failure as final	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Believes that you can develop your abilities• Believes that hard work and dedication increase the chance of success• Focuses on process• Sees failure as an opportunity for growth

Shifting to a growth mindset

A growth mindset plays an integral role in your motivation and ability to follow through and achieve your goals.

Here are some tips for shifting to a growth mindset:

- ☐ Cultivate your sense of purpose.
- ☐ View challenges as opportunities.
- ☐ Replace the word “failing” with the word “learning.”
- ☐ Focus on effort rather than talent.
- ☐ Prioritize learning over other people’s approval.



Step 2: Present your best self

What do you want your brand to be?

As you prepare for the interview process, there are some important things to keep in mind to present your best self. Think through how you want others to see you and write down your responses to the following questions:

Note: Use the comments/text feature to fill in the boxes in the worksheet. See page 3 for instructions on how to use these features.

Your identity: What do you excel at and want to be known for? Are you actively building a positive reputation? Are you proud of the information people can find out about you online?	Goals and values: What are your short- and long-term goals? Do you have an action plan to meet your goals? Are you walking the walk — do you uphold your values and standards?

Qualities that set you apart: What qualities are you most proud of? How can you strengthen these qualities? What makes you different than someone with similar qualifications or skills?	Value you bring to others: How are you consistently adding value to the lives of others? What can you do to empower others?

Authentic brand statement: Is your statement clear, unique and true to who you are and want to be? How can you actively use and share your brand statement?



Attire examples

Remember to dress for the position you want. Be sure your clothing is clean and wrinkle-/tear-free. Here are some examples for types of clothing by formality:

Business formal	Business casual	Casual
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suit and tie• Tie• Business dress• Dress shoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sport coat, blazer• Sweater, blouse, collared shirt• Trousers, skirts, dresses• Dress shoes, boots	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Casual sweaters and blouses, collared and non-collared shirts• Casual trousers/khakis, jeans, skirts, dresses• Sneakers or tennis shoes, casual shoes, boots



Follow these dos and don'ts of professional etiquette to build relationships that will be rewarding in your career.

DO	DON'T
DO be genuinely interested in other people.	DON'T ask intrusive questions.
DO actively listen to others.	DON'T speak negatively about previous employers or other people.
DO be authentic.	DON'T be distracted by your phone.

Here are some tips for making a good first impression:

- Be on time.
- Listen actively.
- Be authentic.
- Update social media.
- Dress professionally.

Step 3: Build your resume

Resume-writing tips



One of the most important steps in preparing for your career is writing a resume that speaks to your experience, education and abilities. Here are some tips for writing a great resume:

- ☐ Use clear sections and make them stand out with bold type capital letters.
- ☐ Do not be afraid of white space, especially when it is early in your career.
- ☐ Keep the use of fancy graphics and illustrations to a minimum to give your resume a more professional appearance.
- ☐ Ensure correct spelling and punctuations and that your resume is easy to read. Ask a friend or teacher to review.
- ☐ Focus your resume on skills that align to the job description. Reiterate key words.
- ☐ Save the resume as a PDF and use that version when you apply.

If you have little or no work experience

If you have little or no work experience yet:

- ☐ Focus on your education.
- ☐ Describe your skills and behavior.
- ☐ Showcase volunteer work or academic projects. Highlight extracurricular activities, such as parent-teacher association, charity or non-profit experience.
- ☐ Include jobs such as babysitting or mowing lawns.

Resume resources

Here are some websites with tips and examples to help with resume writing.

[Teen Resume Guide](#)

[Creating Your Resume](#)

[Jobscan to Optimize your Resume](#)

When in doubt, check out [Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com). They have a robust resume-help section, in addition to their many other career resources. On the next few pages, you'll see two examples of what effective, entry-level resumes look like.



Junior Finance Clerk

Contact

75 Buke Grove
Tolle, CA 9000
970.105.6789
blaze@myinternetprovider.com

Education

VorDons Community College
Easton, KY
Business Finance student
Expected Graduation 2026
GPA 3.5

Key Skills

Emotional Intelligence
Leadership
Multitasking
Teamwork

Objective

Energetic business finance student with ecommerce work experience, extracurriculars and volunteer experience looking for a junior finance clerk position

Experience

September 2023 - Present
Personal Shopper • WunWheel
Fulfill online orders for customers and assist with transaction issues.
Lead the morning and night shift for the ecommerce department.
Train new employees to become exceptional personal shoppers.

August 2022 – December 2022
Home Aide • Partmoll Home
Assisted patients with eating meals
Cleaned patients' homes while cooking their meals
Provided consistent communication with patients to ensure comfortability

January 2021 – December 2024
Volunteer Food Bagger • Kranzfits Food Pantry
Packaged dry foods for children around the world
Fulfilled over 1,000 bagged meals

Customer Satisfaction

Received a five star rating from customer reviews at WunWheel

Leadership

Successfully trained a team to meet and exceed customer expectations



ARIANNA RUDZ

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

CONTACT

859-101-2345
arianna@myinternetprovider.com

SKILLS

Organization
Fundraising
Communication
Budgeting

EDUCATION

Easton University
2020-2024
BA in Communications

- Led study groups at the academic center
- Tennis team

Easton High School
2016-2020

- Student council treasurer
- Tennis team
- Photography club

PROFILE

Self-motivated college graduate with multiple extracurriculars and experience in communication and a passion for organization

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Study Group Leader [Easton University]
2021-2024

- Led study groups across multiple subject areas to help peers prepare for tests

Student Council Treasurer [Easton High School]
2018-2019

- Kept track of school funds for student activities, such as school dances and field trips
- Organized fundraisers for multiple events, raising \$5,000 total

Photography Club Fundraising Organizer [Easton High School]
2018

Organized a fundraiser to buy the materials for a film development darkroom at Easton High School



Resume building activity

List your relevant career information here so that it will be easy to pull from when creating a resume. Remember to focus on skills and experiences that align to the job description. Use the comments/text tools to fill in the boxes. See page 3 for instructions on how to use these tools.

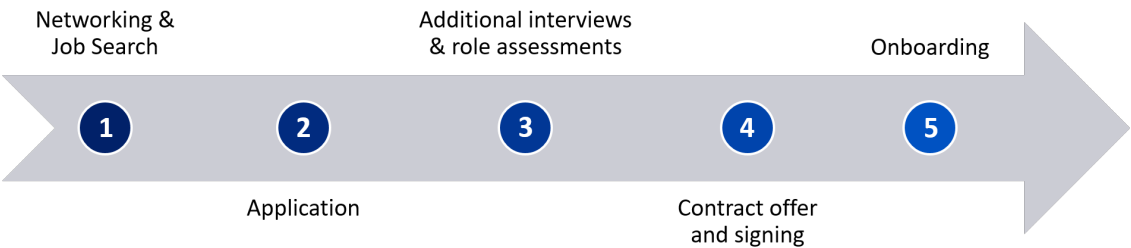
Resume information
Profile/objective
What are three words you would use to describe yourself that match the characteristics needed for the job you're applying for (for example, self-motivated, energetic, team player)?
Skills
What are the top four job skills you possess (technical skills like knowing how to use Adobe Photoshop® or soft skills like communication)?
Education
What educational details do you want to highlight (for example, extracurriculars, skills or awards)?
Experience
Job 1 description and skills acquired
Job 2 description and skills acquired
Job 3 description and skills acquired
Volunteer experience description and skills acquired



Step 4: Apply for a job

Application process

Once you’ve built a solid resume, you’re ready to network and identify jobs of interest. Below is the general application process:



Applying for a job

To search for a job at Bank of America, follow these steps:

1. Visit www.bankofamerica.com/careers.
2. Fill in the location of your job search (or leave it blank to see all locations).
3. Select **Search Jobs**.



Tips for conducting an informational interview as part of a job search

An informational interview lets you learn about the real-life experience of someone working in a field or company that interests you before you begin the application process. It's not a job interview, so focus on getting information.

Do your research:

- Establish goals for the interview. Are you seeking information about the industry, company and/or individual's personal skills and experiences?
- Determine who you want to interview based on your goals, research and/or networking.

Request the meeting:

- Call or send a professional email or private message via a social media platform to ask the person for time to meet.

Prepare questions for the interviewer:

- [Prepare thoughtful questions](#) to communicate your interest and help you learn more about the role/industry.
- Consider the following sample questions:
 - What is a typical day like in your job?
 - What do you like most/least about this career?
 - Is your job typical of others in this field?
 - What are employers looking for in this career (skills, education, experience)?
 - What's the best way to find out about jobs in this field?
 - What are the future trends for this field?
 - What do you like most about working at the company?
 - Why did you choose this company over its competitors?
 - What is the most challenging part of working for the company? In this industry?

Hold the meeting:

- Dress professionally. Arrive or join virtual meeting early. Turn off your cell phone so you can focus on the conversation. Bring or have copies of your resume.
- In general, it helps to talk about light topics first to break the ice and make both parties comfortable.

Follow up:

- Send a ["thank you" email](#) immediately following the interview. Express your appreciation for taking time to talk to you and providing information about their career and company.



Step 5: Interview

Types of interviews

A **screening** interview is generally what happens first, when you meet with a member of Human Resources or even a third-party recruiter to answer some preliminary questions. Screening interviews determine who is qualified to move on to the **next round of interviews with the hiring manager**. This next round of interviews asks more specific questions related to the position and is conducted by someone well-versed in the field.

There are many settings and modalities that interviews can happen in:

- Interviews can be in-person interview, over the phone or in a video conference.
- Interviews may be one-one-one with one hiring manager and one candidate or there can be a panel interview with multiple recruiters present.
- Less formal interviews sometimes happen at career fairs where companies hold events to bring in multiple candidates, and several recruiters are on-site to screen candidates.

Preparing for the interview

All of the steps in your learning journey have been preparing you for interviewing for a potential position. You can ensure your interview goes as well as possible by preparing in advance, following some best practices during the interview and following up in a meaningful way after the interview.

When you prepare for an interview:

- ☐ Think about the reasons why you want the job.
- ☐ Research the company and know why you want to work there.
- ☐ Practice answering (in the mirror or with a friend) the most common questions that will be asked in a job interview.
- ☐ Put your best foot forward by choosing interview day attire that is clean and wrinkle free.
- ☐ Eat a healthy meal before and bring water to your interview.

Virtual interviews

For virtual interviews:

- ☐ Download any necessary software applications for the interview 24 hours in advance.
- ☐ Treat a virtual interview as if you are in a face-to-face interview.
- ☐ Find a space to have the interview that is quiet and away from distractions.
- ☐ Check your background and remove clutter in your video space.
- ☐ Check that your audio and video settings work properly before the interview.
- ☐ Give yourself extra time to log in early and address any technical issues.
- ☐ Place a photo above your camera and focus on that one point throughout your interview.



STAR method

The STAR method is a structured way to keep you on track during a behavioral interview.





Here are some examples of how to answer an interview question using the STAR method.

Example 1

Note: The answer for the first example has some background information to help the interviewer understand the context of the situation before the STAR components are brought in.

Interview question	<p>Talk about a time when you had to assume a leadership role for a group or team.</p> <p>Background information / answer introduction: A year after I started with the bank, the financial center I worked for was getting ready for a peak day. Essentially, what that means is that we would be getting a lot of clients in since it was one of our busiest days. All of the bankers were fully booked and we did not have any availability for walk-ins. I was already nervous to start off my day considering that my manager was out of the office the whole day.</p>
Situation	<p>I got a phone call from my manager. Since it was early in the morning, on his off day, I was very surprised. He was calling to let me know that two associates called off for the day and he was going to need my help to make sure everything ran smoothly. At that point, I was so nervous that I wasn't sure what to do. I was feeling anxious and didn't feel as if I had the necessary leadership skills to operate on my own. I knew I would be wasting time if I complained and didn't do anything. That's why I had to push myself to be the team lead for the day to make sure everyone was taken care of.</p>
Task	<p>I started by calling every single appointment in the book to make sure I was prepared for their visit. Thanks to our amazing, digital capabilities, I was able to complete a lot of maintenance requests the clients needed over the phone by guiding the clients through our mobile app.</p>
Action	<p>Since we were short-staffed for the day, I reached out to our in-house partners so they could assist with the clients as well. I made sure to manage everyone's time effectively so we would be in compliance and stay on track with the appointments we had. I found success in communicating with my team on what needed to get done and when I needed help.</p>
Result	<p>Thanks to these capabilities and strategies, we found a lot of success that day and were able to meet all of our goals and expectations. When my manager came back the next day, we had positive survey reviews come in that morning, all of the paperwork was taken care of and there were no complaints. My manager was able to feel at ease and thanked me for my diligence.</p>



Example 2

Interview question	Talk about a time when you came up with a creative solution to a problem.
Situation	During my sophomore year of college, a local company went out of business and hundreds of people lost their jobs. I decided to see how I could help.
Task	I volunteered to lead an effort to start a local food pantry to help those who had been laid off. I started by creating a GoFundMe page and sending out social media posts telling people where they could donate non-perishable food items.
Action	When the social media posts weren't getting as much attention as I had hoped, I decided to change tactics. I contacted a local YouTube influencer and asked if she would be interested in promoting our cause in her videos.
Result	Once the influencer started promoting the food pantry, it really took off. It provided food for over 200 people over the course of several weeks. It was amazing to see how many people volunteered to help and donated food once they knew about the cause.

Example 3

Interview question	Talk about a time when you met a goal.
Situation	Last year, I worked for a clothing retailer, and we had a contest to see which employee could get the most credit card enrollments.
Task	I wanted to get more credit card enrollments than anyone else, so I started researching the benefits of opening a store credit card so I could share that information with the customers.
Action	I worked really hard to sell the benefits of the card to our customers, and I practiced my pitch in a friendly and helpful tone.
Result	In the end, I got the most approvals and the second most customer contacts for the credit card.



Behavioral interview questions

Using the STAR method, write down your responses to the following questions:

Describe a time you worked effectively under pressure.

Give an example of a goal you reached and how you achieved it.

Tell about a time when you helped improve something.

Describe a time when you made a mistake. How did you handle it? What did you learn?

Give an example of a time you disagreed with a teacher or classmate. How did you handle it?

Talk about a time when you had to assume a leadership role for a group or team.



Tips for behavioral interview questions

When answering questions during an interview:

- ☐ Remember growth mindset.
- ☐ Pause and think of an answer rather than not give any answer.
- ☐ Answer truthfully, representing, to the best of your ability, where you are currently in your career.
- ☐ Think outside of work experiences: volunteer work, school clubs, extracurricular activities and so on.
- ☐ Share lessons learned from mistakes you have made.
- ☐ Be prepared with multiple examples to share so that you don't repeat the same ones with each interviewer.

During the interview

During the interview, be mindful to:

- ☐ Turn your phone on silent.
- ☐ Pay attention to your body language.
- ☐ Smile and make eye contact, when possible.
- ☐ Stay confident and positive.
- ☐ Keep your answers concise and direct. Ask the interviewer if they would like more detail.
- ☐ Have one to two questions ready for the interviewer.
- ☐ Ask for next steps and contact information once the interview is over.
- ☐ If possible, shake hands and thank the interviewer for the meeting.

After the interview

After the interview:

- ☐ Send a follow-up email to express your interest and thank them for being considered.
- ☐ Do not harass the hiring manager or respond negatively in messages.
- ☐ Do not stop your job search process or quit your job.
- ☐ Continue your job search while you're waiting, and don't give up!

Interview resources

[Interview And Negotiate | CareerOneStop](#)
[Interviewing | Indeed.com](#)



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