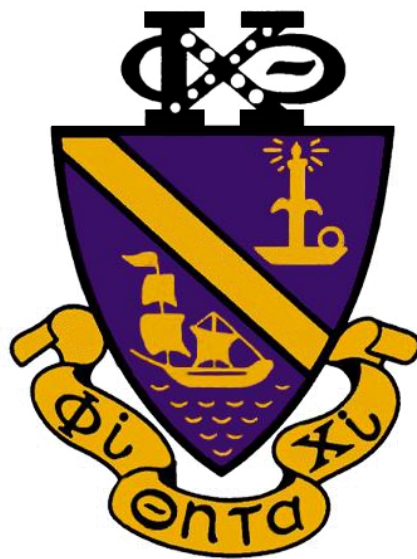


Early Career Development Guide



Phi Chi Theta

Fall 2022

Table of Contents

Building Your Resume	3
Resume Checklist	5
Behavioral Interview Guide.....	6
Mastering a Behavioral Interview.....	8
In-Person Career Fair	10
Networking Guide.....	11
Cover Letter Guide.....	14
General Professional Tips	18

Building Your Resume

Note: This section is pulled from Smeal's Business Career Center Website

Components of a Resume:

Contact Info, Education, Experience (Leadership, Work, Relevant, Involvement, etc.), Optional - Skills/Interests/Honor

General Resume Tips:

Include your GPA - You should always include your cumulative average (to the hundredth). If your cumulative average is below a 3.00, consider including your major GPA in addition to your cumulative GPA if it is over 3.00 (or if your major GPA is significantly higher). DO NOT round your GPA up.

List experiences in terms of “power” - Experiences DO NOT need to be listed in chronological order (most recent to oldest).

- Think about which experiences you most want to feature because they are either the most relevant or where you had the most success or biggest contribution.
- Discuss accomplishments instead of listing job duties.

When drafting your resume, keep the following in mind:

- DO NOT embellish experiences or your GPA- recruiters do typically ask for your unofficial transcript
- Check and recheck for spelling/grammar mistakes
- Keep your resume to one page
- You can include your address, but it isn't necessary. If you include, you should list your school address and can also include your home address. International students do not need to include their home country address
- Include an appropriate email address that you check frequently
- Keep your margins between .5 – 1.0”
- Communicate key skills in every bullet point wording
- Keep your formatting consistent (i.e. all dates along the right side of the resume)
- Use the same size font [10-12”] for everything but your name [16-18”]
- Be consistent with the type of font (i.e. all titles of positions in italics) and the way dates are written (abbreviate all months or spell all months out)
- Use Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial font
- DO NOT use a Microsoft or web-based resume template; they are challenging to edit. There is a downloadable Smeal resume format available on the Business Career Center website
- DO NOT use web-based systems like Google Docs to create your resume - use Microsoft Word
- DO NOT print your file from a web browser PDF viewer - this can skew the margins. Be sure to download your resume locally and print it from Adobe Reader
- Save your resume as a PDF with your name as the file title (i.e. Sally.SmithResume20XX)

Tips for Freshmen & Sophomores:

- Include high school experiences if they provide valuable skills to your resume, but only keep them on your resume until the end of sophomore year. These experiences should be removed first as you gain experience in college. Your high school institution should be the first item removed.
- List the Smeal College of Business if you are in Smeal. List Division of Undergraduate Studies if you are in DUS (change to Smeal once you are officially in the college).
- Work to build leadership experience and highlight progression, For example, denote if you were promoted from lifeguard to head lifeguard.

Bullet Point Tips:

Start with a strong action verb (supervised, trained, led, organized, etc.)

Sample Action Words:

Led a project:

- Chaired
- Coordinated
- Executed

Developed something:

- Built
- Created
- Designed

Made something efficient:

- Consolidated
- Decreased/Reduced
- Reconciled

Increased something:

- Capitalized
- Enhanced
- Maximized

Changed/improved something:

- Customized
- Influenced
- Modified

Managed a team:

- Delegated
- Motivated
- Collaborated

Researched something:

- Analyzed
- Assessed
- Evaluated

Supported customers:

- Consulted
- Informed
- Resolved

Use industry-specific keywords and quantify your accomplishments. Review each job posting to identify key language to highlight in your resume.

- What tasks did you perform?
- What were those tasks used to accomplish? What did you actually do?
- Why was this helpful or important?
- Who did it help?
- Were there any outcomes?

Resume Checklist

1. Smeal Format
 - (Education, Relevant Experience, Community Engagement, Interests/Skills/Honors)
exception: certain STEM majors require a different format
2. All black text
 - (standard, not necessarily a requirement)
3. Word doc
 - (resume should NOT be on Google Docs or other platforms)
4. One page
5. No periods at end of bullet points
6. Consistent text size and font
7. Past-tense verb use at beginning of bullets
8. Bullets demonstrate impact of experience fully
9. Name in large font
10. Bold experience titles
11. Attempt to fill whole line per bullet (fill blank space)
12. Format appears balanced (should be spaced out evenly)
13. If skills are mentioned, are they value-add
 - (ex: avoid “Microsoft Office” or “Teamwork” type of skills → skills should be technical such as “Tableau”)

Behavioral Interview Guide

Add 2+ bullets for all topics listed below plus any others you deem relevant. This guide serves as a way to brainstorm and review a bank of topics you can bring up in an interview. These bullets don't have to be extravagant examples, they can be as simple as a difficult course you took that you had to work a little harder at to receive an A, or working on a class project with horribly unmotivated peers. It's all about how you articulate those examples that will make you stand out from other interviewees. Revisit your behavioral guide prior to any interview to review potential topics you could discuss. Many Phi Chi Theta members have expressed that this is the most beneficial behavioral resource they've utilized – be intentional when filling it out.

Behavioral Interview Guide

A time you were challenged

-

A time you worked with a diverse team

-

Self-directed learning

-

Time management

-

A time you disagreed with a colleague/boss

-

Worked in a team and had to manage a conflict

-

Had to change a group's mind

-

Tell me about something not on your resume

-

Greatest accomplishment

-

What makes you different from other candidates?

-

A time you had to be analytical

-

A time you failed

-

Challenging decision

-

A time you had to have a difficult discussion with a team/manager

-

A time you let a team down

-

Adaptability example

-

Relaying bad news

-

A time you took a risk

-

Ethical dilemma

-

Questions to ask the interviewer:

-

List of Experiences to Potentially Talk About

Penn State:

High School:

Mastering a Behavioral Interview

WALKING INTO AN IN-PERSON INTERVIEW

1. Walk in with confidence and an upbeat attitude. A smile never hurts.
 - Unless stated otherwise, business professional attire should be worn, and you should carry a padfolio with your resume and written questions prepared for the interviewers
2. Shake the interviewer(s) hand and introduce yourself (just your name)
3. Offer the interviewer(s) a copy of your resume
4. Ask if they have a preference where you sit if it's a large room
5. Knock the interview out of the park using STAR method
6. Come with questions to ask the interviewers at the end
7. Thank them for their time and clarify next steps
8. Send a thank you email afterwards

S.T.A.R. METHOD

It is imperative to understand S.T.A.R. method, regardless of your major or background. This method ensures your answers are concise, and effectively answer the question the interviewer asks.

Situation: what is the relevant context

Task: what were the responsibilities/assignments/roles that the individual was faced with

Action: what direct actions did the individual take to create the overall outcome

Result: what was the overall outcome of this individual's actions. In other words, what does this example say about the individual?

Example (in a real interview this should be significantly more detailed):

Situation: I was the team captain of my high school soccer team and one of our best players got hurt.

Task: I was responsible for encouraging teammates to step up, focus during practice, and stay positive.

Action: I organized a fun event outside of practice to encourage teammates to grow their relationships with one another and also aid their development as players. Also collaborated with the head coach to come up with an alternative plan.

Result: While we lost in the first round of states, we ended up having a winning record and developing lifelong friendships that made us better leaders and individuals.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

- Go into the interview with 2-3 key topics you'd like to bring up to the interviewer. These topics should be malleable, meaning that the experience has enough depth to answer an array of different questions.
 - Ex: I want to talk about being on the executive board of my business fraternity. I will be ready to talk about experiences navigating a complex team, leading others, persuading others, emulating inclusivity, etc.
- Avoid use of spacer words such as “um”
 - *Tip:* Record yourself. Take note of your mannerisms.
- Formal language only!
 - Absolutely NO cursing or inappropriate references (even if you're being interviewed by other students!!)
 - *Tip:* if you're wearing a suit, act like it – keep it professional
- Mock Interviews
 - Conducting a mock interview with a friend or family member who has been through interviews before will help you build confidence and improve your responses
 - Practice, practice, practice!!!
 - Just like sports, the more you practice, the better you become
- Create your own Behavioral Interview Guide!!
 - Template provided in this document

In-Person Career Fair Tips

1. Before Career Fair - Prep

- Review and refine your resume to reflect your most updated and relevant experiences for the roles you're applying for. Use the Smeal Resume Template to standardize your formatting - this is what many Penn State recruiters are familiar with
- Update your LinkedIn to reflect your most updated resume - recruiters may look you up during the process
- Print several copies of your resume and bring a padfolio with you to the career fair

2. Approaching the Recruiter

- Shake his or her hand, introduce yourself, feel free to ask how they're doing, give them a copy of your resume, then share "a little bit about yourself" through your elevator pitch

3. Master Your Elevator Pitch

- Your elevator pitch is used to sell yourself to recruiters - this is a way to STAND OUT!
- Write out and memorize your elevator pitch prior to the career fair
- Recommended Format: Name, major, relevant experience, Penn State involvement, why you're interested in the company (NOTE: keep this concise!! Should be roughly 1 minute in length)

- Example:

My name is Katie, and I am a senior studying Supply Chain Management originally from Hershey, PA. This past summer I had an internship with Dell Technologies in Demand Planning which furthered my interest in the Supply Chain industry. At Penn State, I am involved in a professional business fraternity - Phi Chi Theta - where I have grown my business acumen and networked with other high-achieving, likeminded students. I am very interested in your company, PepsiCo, because of your emphasis on sustainability and work-life balance. I would love to hear more about your full-time opportunities.

4. Appearance

- Wear your name tag on your right side. When you shake recruiters' hands, your name tag will be on the same side you're shaking with, enabling the recruiter a better exposure to your name (which will help them remember you later on!)
- Wear a full suit unless told otherwise. Always better to be overdressed than underdressed when it comes to recruiting events

5. Ending the Conversation

- Be cognizant of their time - ask any questions you have, but don't drag the conversation out, shake their hand, thank them for their time, and ask if there are any next steps that should be taken on your end (ex: apply online)

Networking Guide

What is Networking?

In the sense of recruiting, networking is the process of engaging in professional conversations with people employed at a firm(s) you are applying to in order to display your interest in the position, gain advice for the interview, and give them a preliminary look into who you are as a candidate. These conversations can occur at career fairs, over email, over the phone, etc..

Importance of Networking:

Generally speaking, networking can be one of the most underrated factors in the recruiting process. Often times, you don't need to network to be successful. Some careers such as those in finance and consulting **require** you to network to even receive an interview. However, regardless of which career you wish to pursue, establishing a network of people at a whatever company you wish to apply to can only help you in receiving an internship or full-time job.

How to Network:

Networking can be a little scary because often it means that you have to take the initiative to talk to someone who may not have the time to chat. In reality, there will be times where someone either won't get back to you or even outright turn you down...but making sure to move past the adversity and staying motivated are the only ways to ensure success.

As stated earlier, networking opportunities can come in many forms, and no two person's stories are the same. The most common types of opportunities occur at a career fair as it essentially puts you in front of a recruiter to introduce yourself and display why you would be a good fit at his or her company. Those conversations can be very brief, and due to the sheer volume of people at career fairs, it can be hard to ensure that the recruiter remembers you. Make sure to follow the *In-Person Career Fair Tips* laid out in this guide to make sure you are prepared and can leave a lasting impression.

If you wish to take it a step further, it cannot hurt to follow up with the recruiter at the career fair over email to thank them for their time and, if you're feeling confident, ask them to jump on a call sometime in the future to further discuss the position / company.

For roles with more competitive recruiting processes, networking at a career fair may not be an option, so you may have to solely rely on sending emails to recruiters or people at the firm to jump on networking calls.

Preparing for the call:

- Research the person you are speaking with and his / her specific position and potential responsibilities
- Create potential questions to ask them about their position or their experience working for the firm
 - Think of this as a two-way street, the more thoughtful your questions are the more you can learn about the role and the more you can impress them with your interest in the position

- You can leverage their answers to not only help you out with recruiting, but also to make sure that you can see yourself making a career out of whatever you are applying to

Once you're on the call:

- Remain professional but keep it a friendly conversation
- Be proactive, now is not the time to be shy. Since they are taking the time out of their day to talk to you it is important that you are the one leading the conversation
- Try to spend about 2 to 3 minutes of “small talk” before you get into specifics of the company / industry to display the type of person you are. This can help the recruiter / professional determine if you are a cultural fit
 - A helpful strategy can be elaborating a little bit more on your answer to the “How are you?” question. Instead of just saying “I am doing good”, add a recent development in your life to provide a little color and keep the conversation going
 - For example: “I’m doing good, had a pretty hard week with exams, but happy to be moving into the weekend!”
- Make sure the conversation flows, you should be asking all the questions you prepared one after another, when the time is right, ask follow-up questions or comments.
- Be prepared for questions about yourself and potential questions about subjects mentioned in the conversation
- End the conversation on the high note and do not drag the conversation on, especially if you feel they are busy at the time
- Thank the professionals for their time on the phone and follow-up with an additional thank you email several hours later
- If the conversation goes well, ask if there are any others at the firm you can speak to
 - If done correctly, you can expand your network at the firm. This is a little risky from time to time, but the payoff can be high. Make sure you are using social awareness for this step to determine if you should or shouldn't ask to speak to others.

Writing a Networking Email:

In addition to setting up calls, networking emails are sent to keep in touch and thank professionals after meeting them

Some examples of email subjects include:

- First Last | PCT (or Phi Chi Theta)
 - For PCT alumni
 - Doesn't only have to be PCT in the subject line, it could also be any other organization that you and the person you are reaching out to are in
- First Last | PSU (or Penn State)
 - For non-PCT alumni
- First Last | PCT | Recommended by John Doe
 - If the person only speaks to individuals that are referred by someone else

Email etiquette:

- Use first names but be formal unless told otherwise
- Never send initial networking emails after 7 PM or early in the morning
- Thank professionals via email after meeting them
 - Could include thanking them for their time or setting up a phone call

Email Content:

- Introduce yourself with information such as your name, year, major, role in the org, career interest, etc.
- Indicate whether you have spoken with others at the firm or were recommended to speak with him/her
- Close the email by thanking them for their time or expressing interest in hearing back, without being too pushy

Examples:

Hi Matt,

My name is John LaProcido. I am a rising sophomore majoring in finance at Penn State. I am an analyst in the Nittany Lion Fund and recently joined Phi Chi Theta Business Fraternity. I currently have an interest in Investment Banking and am also interested in learning a little bit more about Goldman Sachs. If your schedule allows, I would love to get the chance to speak with you on the phone about your experiences in the industry.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Best,

John

Hi Sophia,

My name is Katie Cocco and I'm a junior at Penn State in the Schreyer Honor's College studying Supply Chain Management with a strong interest in consulting. Would you have availability to set up a 30 minute call in the next few weeks so I can hear more about your role at Deloitte, what type of projects you've worked on, and future internship/full time opportunities? I attached my resume to provide you with a better sense of my prior experience.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Katie

Cover Letter Tips

Note: The following section is pulled from Smeal's Business Career Center Website

What is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is meant to further acquaint the employer with your unique talents, experiences, and skills beyond just your resume. A good cover letter adds to your resume, taking your prior experiences and translating them into how you are qualified for the position and displaying why it will be to the employer's advantage to hire you.

General Tips:

- Address it by name and title of the individual with the power to hire you, if possible
 - Use 'Dear Hiring Manager' or 'Dear Hiring Committee' if name is unknown
- Adapt the letter to specific details of the job opportunity
 - DO NOT use the same letter for every posting
- Open with an idea that captures the attention of the employer
- Highlight points in your resume that uniquely qualify you for the position
- Focus on the needs of the prospective employer
- Use the job description to help identify what their needs are
- Display your knowledge of the company
 - Show you understand the company, the product, their needs, and the competition
- DO NOT send the same cover letter for every job; the employer will know it is a template
 - Adapt the letter to the specific condition of each position you are applying to
- Avoid jargon and trite language
- Pay attention to grammar, spelling, and neatness
 - Have multiple people review it and do not rely on spell check
- The cover letter should be as concise and targeted as possible and limited to one page

Cover Letter Template:

Your present address
City, State, ZIP
Date

Person's Name
Title
Company
Address

Dear Full Name (or Hiring Manager),

FIRST PARAGRAPH:

Attract the employer's interest by briefly touching on your specific interest in the company and/or position. If you have been referred by someone, here is where you mention it. You want to convince the reader that you are interested in them by specifically outlining why you want to work for them and how you would contribute to the organization.

MIDDLE PARAGRAPH:

Describe your interest in the position, in the field of work, or in the organization. If you have a related class, volunteer, student activity, or work experience, be sure to mention pertinent data or accomplishments to show that you have specific qualifications and/or skills for this specific position. Refer to key aspects of your resume which relate to the job or employer, but **DO NOT** restate the bullet points of your resume.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH:

Mention your interest in discussing the job in person (i.e., ask for an interview). Express appreciation for being considered and include a statement about your desire to have an interview.

Sincerely,

Your typed name

Cover Letter Examples:

Your Contact Information

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Date

Employer Contact Information

Name

Title

Company

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Full Name (If you don't know the name use: Hiring Manager, Hiring Committee),

I am a second-year Smeal College of Business student interested in interviewing for a Consultant internship position with The ABC Consulting Group. After speaking with campus recruiter Sam Brown, I believe that The ABC Consulting Group has the ideal culture of ... in which to pursue my goal of becoming a strategic business leader and thinker.

My professional experience and Penn State University education have prepared me to be successful at The ABC Consulting Group. As President of the Nittany Lion Consulting Group, I've had the opportunity to develop and deliver a selective Consultant Training Program (CTP). The CTP is a 12-week training program aimed at teaching students about the core consulting skills from actual consultants and recruiters. This position requires strong organization skills, advanced communication and networking abilities, and the ability to be an inspirational leader.

My previous internship at EY allowed me the opportunity to work with diverse teams, manage client relationships, and develop my communication skills. The most valuable lesson I learned at my internship was the importance of being flexible. During the XYZ project, I(tell a story about being flexible and the successful results of that story).

I firmly believe that I will be a good fit in The ABC Consulting Group's collaborative, entrepreneurial, and intellectual culture. I am excited at the prospect of working for The ABC Consulting Group upon graduation and have enclosed my resume for your review. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sue Jones

905 Woodlawn Drive
Clifton Park, NJ 07306

Date

Maria Porter, Account Executive
Eliot, Zizelman, & Rohn

5962 Martindale Road
Parsippany, NJ 08630

Dear Maria Porter,

I am currently a Junior at Penn State University majoring in Marketing in the Smeal College of Business. Through this letter I would like to express an interest in the account services internship with Eliot, Zizelman & Rohn. I value how Eliot, Zizelman & Rohn focuses on customer service and strives to go above and beyond their needs. Through my customer service experience, creativity, and drive to succeed I feel I have the potential to be a valuable employee.

I have enclosed a resume for your review which outlines my experience in the field of advertising and promotion. As an advertising salesperson for the *Daily Collegian*, I worked successfully with a variety of clients and with the media to design and arrange advertisements. My responsibilities in this position enhanced my skills in writing, design, promotion, marketing, and follow-through. I quickly learned to identify appropriate markets and to promote the *Daily Collegian* as an effective medium to reach those markets. Much of my success is due to my customer orientation, my skills in identifying client needs, and in marketing the services of my employer. I am a self-starter, persistent, and possess the ability to learn quickly. I feel these skills and experiences would be a strong addition to your firm and am excited about the prospect of putting them to work for you.

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my background and qualifications and how they can be of benefit to Eliot, Zizelman & Rohn. I would appreciate your consideration for an interview and look forward to hearing for you. If you have any questions in the meantime, please feel free to contact me at 555-555-5555 or abc123@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Mark Smith

General Professional Tips

1. **Great Questions to Ask at the End of an Interview**
ALWAYS COME WITH QUESTIONS!!
 - What is the average tenure of employees at_____?
 - How long does it typically take to move up/gain leadership at_____?
 - What are some attributes of your most successful interns/recent hires?
2. **Turn Your Nerves into Excitement**
 - It's all about mindset.
 - If you tell yourself, it's excitement rather than nerves your entire mindset will change and you will find yourself more confident
3. **Always Keep Your LinkedIn Updated**
 - Recruitment can happen on LinkedIn!
5. **How can I develop as a leader/intern/employee?**
 - Focus on your STRENGTHS, not your weaknesses!
 - Take time to understand what your core strengths are, and look for ways to develop them (ex: communication, time management, etc.)
 - Your strengths become your personal brand
 - Be good enough at the rest
6. **Stay Connected**
 - Add notes in your "Contacts" app
 - When you remember the names your mentor's kids, their college, or one of their interests, it is very impressive and can help strengthen your relationship
 - Reach out to at least one person in your network each month
 - Key: it doesn't just have to be about professional stuff!!
7. **Take Advantage of LinkedIn**
 - Utilize the job search tool
 - Connect with potential employers after career fairs
 - **Do not be afraid to message PSU Alumni on LinkedIn**
 - Refer to the email section of the networking guide before drafting your message
8. **Emails**
 - Proofread your emails before you send them!
 - Write out your email prior to adding the recipient's email – this will ensure you don't accidentally send the email prior to it being ready
9. **Time Zones**
 - Make sure you always clarify CT vs. ET time when setting up interviews!
10. **Work Boundaries**
 - Set your work/life boundaries before you start your career, not once you begin

11. GPA on Resume

- If your major GPA is higher than your overall GPA, you can list them separately on your resume!!

12. Optimizing Your PSU Network

- Have a solid relationship with at least one professor at Penn State (preferably in your disciplinary area)
- Recommendations are needed for many scholarships, some job applications, and can be required for grad school

13. Add an Outlook Email Signature!

- Adding a signature will help build your professional image, especially when networking with recruiters

- Example:

John LaProcido
The Pennsylvania State University
Smeal College of Business | Class of 2023
(123)456-7891, yourgmail@gmail.com

- Steps:

1. Go to settings on Outlook
2. Search “email signature”
3. Create a signature in the box
4. Adjust settings (ex: font, text size, always show, ect.)
5. Save, close out of settings, and test it out by drafting a new message!