GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

A 9-Part Webinar Series

YOUR AI CO-PILOT CAREER TOOLKIT

Smart Tools | Strategic Prompts | Real Results

"AI is your co-pilot. You are the driver."

Integrating AI-Powered Career Strategies with Ethical Best Practices

Presented to The Graduate Council

Megan O'Connor, SHRM-CP, CPRW - Career Coordinator

ROADMAP TO EXCELLENCE: THE USI GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER WEBINAR SERIES

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

PHASE 2
Mastering The Market and Advancement



PART 6-7: INTERVIEWING & NEGOTIATION
Master diverse interview formats and advocate for your worth using market data.



PART 8: GLOBAL DIFFERENTIATION
Stand out in the market through domestic and international professional experiences.



PART 9: THE SERIES FINALE
Leverage your new degree to secure internal promotions and own your next chapter.



PART 5: STRATEGIC NETWORKING
Build professional relationships that open doors beyond traditional job boards



PART 3-4: DIGITAL PRESENCE & SEARCH STRATEGY
Optimize your LinkedIn brand and adopt data-driven, targeted job search strategies.



PART 1-2: CORE DOCUMENT CREATION
Build a comprehensive CV and translate experience into ATS-optimized resumes and cover letters

PHASE 1
Establishing Your Professional Brand

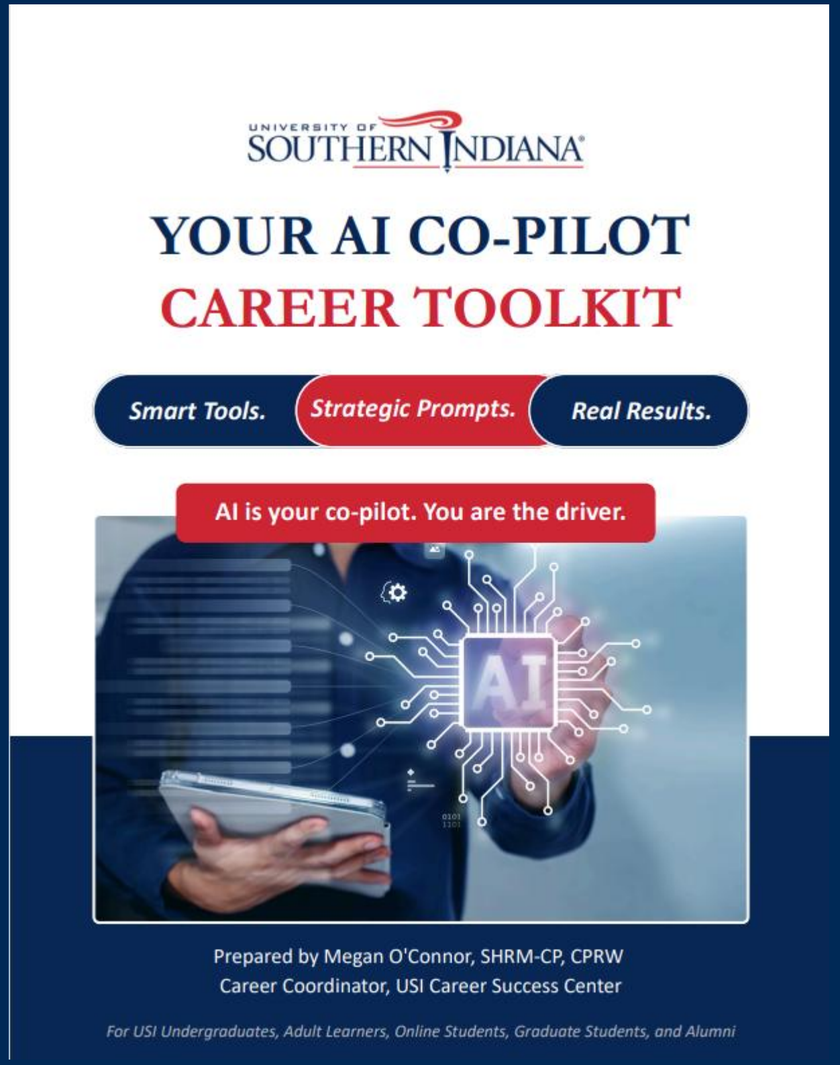


Your AI Co-Pilot Career Toolkit

Smart Tools. Strategic Prompts. Real Results.

- Prepared by Megan O'Connor, SHRM-CP, CPRW - Career Success Center, 2026
- A practical guide to navigating ATS systems, LinkedIn, interviews, and the job search using AI as your co-pilot
- Built for USI undergraduates, adult learners, graduate students, and alumni - wherever you are in your career journey

AI is your co-pilot. You are the driver.



PART 1 OF 9 - GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

CREATING AN IMPACTFUL CURRICULUM VITAE

Ivy League Best Practices for Academic & Research Career Success

CV
Latin: “Course of Life” - comprehensive academic record with no page limit

10
Essential sections in the Ivy League CV framework (Harvard, Princeton, Columbia, Yale, Cornell)

6
Ivy League institutions whose CV frameworks inform this module's best practices

AI Integration: Microsoft Copilot

- Strengthen action verbs for academic and research positions
- Align CV sections with specific faculty or research position descriptions
- Clarity check: Does a faculty search committee understand your research significance?

Key Content Covered:

✓ CV vs. resume distinctions: purpose, length, format, and audience
✓ 10-section Ivy League framework: Contact, Education, Research, Publications, Presentations, Teaching, Awards, Service, Memberships, References
✓ Formatting best practices: 11-12pt font, 1" margins, reverse chronological order
✓ Program-specific CV considerations for MSN, MSW, Education, MPA, MBA, and MHA
✓ 7 common CV mistakes to avoid (including wrong citation format for your field)
✓ Academic integrity guidelines: AI refines language; scholarly identity is yours.

Ethical AI Principle:

AI refines and strengthens academic language; your scholarly identity and authentic accomplishments are always your own.

PART 2 OF 9 - GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

BUILDING YOUR GRADUATE-LEVEL RESUME & COVER LETTER

AI-Powered Strategies for ATS Success

98% of Fortune 500 companies use ATS to filter resumes before a human review

6 sec average time recruiters spend on an initial resume scan

250+ applications received per job posting on average - ATS filters are the first gate

AI Integration: Microsoft Copilot

- Identify key skills and qualifications from the job posting
- Compare my resume to this job description - what keywords am I missing?
- Convert this bullet point to STAR-K format with quantified results.

Key Content Covered:

✓ 6-section ATS-optimized structure: Contact Header, Summary, Education, Core Competencies, Experience, Additional
✓ STAR-K bullet formula: Situation, Task, Action, Result + Keywords
✓ Program-specific keywords for 9 graduate programs (MBA, MHA, MSN, MSW, MPA, and more)
✓ Cover letter framework: Why you, why this role, why now
✓ 7 common graduate resume mistakes - including ATS-unfriendly formatting
✓ Golden Rule: Use AI to ANALYZE and IMPROVE - never let AI write from scratch.

Ethical AI Principle:

AI analyzes and improves your materials; students write their own authentic content – generic AI-generated resumes are detectable and costly.

PART 3 OF 9 - GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

LINKEDIN OPTIMIZATION

Building Your Professional Brand with SEO Strategy

1.1B+ LinkedIn members worldwide – the world's largest professional network

72% of recruiters use LinkedIn to source and evaluate candidates (Jobvite)

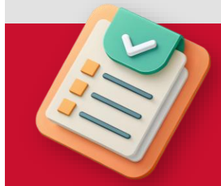
40x more visibility for All-Star status profiles in recruiter searches

AI Integration: Microsoft Copilot

- Analyze these job descriptions and list the top 20 most frequently mentioned skills
- What keywords do recruiters searching for [target role] typically use?
- Help me write an engaging LinkedIn About section incorporating these keywords: [list].

Key Content Covered:

✓ 7 essential profile elements: Photo, Banner, Headline (220 chars), About, Experience, Skills (50 max), Custom URL
✓ SEO headline formula: [Target Role] | [Expertise] | [Value] | [USI Program]
✓ About section structure: Hook + Story + Accomplishments + Call to Action (2,600 chars)
✓ Keyword density strategy: 3-5 repetitions naturally across profile sections
✓ LinkedIn algorithm: Engagement with comments and posts increases recruiter visibility
✓ 7 profile mistakes to avoid: default headline, no photo, empty About, default URL.



Ethical AI Principle:

AI helps identify keywords and themes for optimization; students craft their own professional narrative - authenticity is your competitive advantage.

PART 4 OF 9 - GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

STRATEGIC JOB SEARCH TECHNIQUES

Navigating the Hidden Job Market with AI Tools

85% of jobs filled through networking, referrals, and internal promotions - never posted

4-5x more likely to be hired as a referred candidate vs. cold applicant (Jobvite)

30% higher response rate when applying within 24-48 hours of a posting going live

AI Integration: Microsoft Copilot

- List all job title variations companies might use for [target role] across industries
- What entry-level and mid-level positions lead to [target role]?
- Identify top employers in [industry] in [location] - which are growing or hiring now?

Key Content Covered:

✓ 4-step strategic search: Define targets, build company list, research before applying, apply with referrals
✓ AI-powered job title discovery: expand search to 5-10 title variations per role
✓ Building your target company list: 20-30 employers tracked in a spreadsheet
✓ LinkedIn job alert setup: up to 20 alerts - one per title variation and target company
✓ Optimal timing: Monday-Wednesday, 6-10 AM, within 24-48 hours of posting
✓ Referral request template: researched, specific, and easy to say yes to.

Ethical AI Principle:

AI is a research accelerator for company intelligence and role identification - not a replacement for genuine relationship-building and networking.

PART 5 OF 9 - GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

Building Authentic Connections for Long-Term Career Success

54% of jobs filled through networking

70% of jobs never publicly advertised - filled through connections before they post

4-5x more likely to be hired as a referred candidate vs. cold applicant

AI Integration: Microsoft Copilot

- Tell me about [Person's Name] at [Company] - key achievements and recent work
- Help me write a personalized LinkedIn connection request to [Name] at [Company] under 300 characters
- Help me craft a compelling 30-second elevator pitch for networking in [industry]
- Write a thoughtful follow-up thank-you after my informational interview with [Name].

Key Content Covered:

✓ Reframing networking: building genuine relationships and exchanging value over time
✓ Where to build your network: USI Alumni Network, LinkedIn, professional associations, faculty
✓ Informational interview framework: 20-30 min conversation - not a job ask
✓ 30-second elevator pitch structure: Hook + Context + Value + Ask
✓ 7 networking mistakes to avoid - including only networking when you need something
✓ Response rate reality: 20-30% is healthy - send 10 requests to get 2-3 conversations.

Ethical AI Principle:

AI supports research and personalization; authentic relationship-building is inherently human and cannot be automated or outsourced.

PART 6 OF 9 - GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

INTERVIEW MASTERY

AI-Powered Preparation for Behavioral & Technical Interviews

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STAR — Situation, Task, Action, Result - the framework for all behavioral interview answers

8-10 — STAR stories recommended: versatile, adapted to multiple questions across interview types

4 Types — Phone Screen, Behavioral, Technical /Case, Panel - each requires distinct preparation

AI Integration: Microsoft Copilot

- Based on this job description, what are the 10 most likely behavioral interview questions?
- Rate my STAR answer 1-10 and tell me specifically how to improve it
- Act as a hiring manager for [role] at [company] - interview me with 5 behavioral questions
- Summarize [Company's] mission, recent news, culture, and 3 things I should mention.

Key Content Covered:

✓ 4 interview formats: Phone Screen (15-30 min), Behavioral (45-60 min), Technical (30-60 min), Panel (60-90 min)
✓ STAR method deep-dive: Situation (brief), Task (your role), Action (specific, use 'I'), Result (quantify)
✓ 8-story STAR bank: Leadership, Conflict, Problem Solving, Failure, Pressure, Collaboration, Initiative, Adaptability
✓ Before, During, After framework: research, energy, questions, thank-you within 24 hours
✓ Questions to ask: Role success at 90 days, real challenges, closing concern question
✓ Virtual interview mastery: technology, environment, camera presence, preparation.

Ethical AI Principle:

AI helps students practice and predict questions; the authentic stories, experiences, and responses must always be genuinely their own.

PART 7 OF 9 - GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

SALARY NEGOTIATION & OFFER EVALUATION

Maximizing Your Worth & Making Informed Career Decisions

$1M+ lifetime earnings at stake - employees who negotiate earn compounding advantage over 40 years

85% of Americans who counteroffered received some of what they asked for - most employers expect the ask

70% of hiring managers EXPECT candidates to negotiate - silence costs more than the ask

AI Integration: Microsoft Copilot

- What is the typical salary range for [Job Title] with [X years experience] in [Location]?
- I received an offer of $[amount] for [role] in [city] - is this competitive? What should I know?
- Role-play a salary negotiation with me - you are the hiring manager at [Company].

Key Content Covered:

✓ Total compensation framework: Base salary, signing bonus, 401(k) match, health, PTO, tuition, flexibility
✓ Set your 3 numbers: Floor (minimum acceptable), Target (market rate), Stretch (opening anchor)
✓ 4-step negotiation framework: Express enthusiasm, Provide rationale, Make the ask, Pause and listen
✓ Handling common scenarios: early salary questions, 'best offer,' no-negotiate policies, multiple offers
✓ Offer evaluation checklist: career growth, financial security, culture fit, manager, red flags
✓ Never give a range - ranges tell employers your floor. Give one specific, research-anchored number.

Ethical AI Principle:

AI provides market research data to inform negotiation strategy; confidence and credibility come from preparation, practice, and knowing your own value.

PART 8 OF 9 - GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

BEYOND YOUR BORDERS

How Expanded Experience Builds Your Competitive Edge

66% of interns more likely to receive a full-time job offer

#1 competency differentiating high-potential graduate candidates: adaptability

77% of MBA graduates report salary increases after roles leveraging cross-sector skills

AI Integration: Microsoft Copilot

- Research expanded experience programs in [field] aligned with my [program] at USI
- Evaluate this program's legitimacy, structure, and alignment with my career goals
- Identify experiences in my background that demonstrate adaptability for this role.

Key Content Covered:

✓ Reframing 'Beyond Borders': geographic, cross-sector, AND cultural - you do not have to leave the country
✓ 6 types of expanded experience: out-of-state internships, cross-sector volunteer leadership, rural/regional, international, remote, diverse population service
✓ SAR + Context resume framework (Yale SOM & Harvard OCS): name the unfamiliar setting explicitly
✓ Location formatting on resume: City, State | City, Country | Employer City + (Remote)
✓ Program-specific opportunities by field: MSW, MBA, MHA, MPA, MSN
✓ Collaboration with USI Center for International Programs.

Ethical AI Principle:

AI supports program research and resume framing; the transformative growth in adaptability and cross-cultural competency comes from the lived experience itself.

PART 9 OF 9 - GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

YOUR DEGREE, YOUR MOMENT

Leveraging Your Graduate Degree to Advance From Within

$1,840 median weekly earnings for master's holders vs. $1,543 for bachelor's (BLS, 2024)

~19% salary premium for a master's degree over a bachelor's in comparable roles (BLS, 2024)

$400K+ estimated lifetime earnings advantage for a master's degree over a bachelor's (Georgetown CEW)

AI Integration: Microsoft Copilot

- Help me write an advancement-ready 3-sentence summary of this project for a promotion conversation: [description]
- Help me identify metrics I should track and how to frame this as a quantified accomplishment: [project details]
- Act as my direct manager - I'm going to practice requesting a promotion from [current title] to [target title].

Key Content Covered:

- ✓ The internal promotion case: institutional knowledge + graduate credential = unmatched competitive advantage
- ✓ Building your internal value proposition: apply graduate frameworks explicitly, quantify contributions, seek visibility
- ✓ 6 strategic involvement pathways: cross-functional projects, process improvement, boards, training, strategy, succession
- ✓ Your internal portfolio: Contributions Log, Metrics Tracker, Recognition File, Graduate Studies Application Log
- ✓ Succession planning scripts for 1:1s, project debriefs, and development conversations
- ✓ 5-step advancement conversation framework: Open, Evidence, Degree Value, Forward Vision, The Ask.

Ethical AI Principle:

AI helps document, frame, and practice your contributions and advancement conversation; the career growth and organizational impact come from your intentional, sustained work.



QUESTION & DISCUSSION

Thank You For Your Partnership In Supporting Graduate Student Career Success

Megan O'Connor, SHRM-CP, CPRW - Career Coordinator

USI Career Success Center | Orr Center, Room 1051
(812) 464-1865 | usi.edu/career-success | Career Launch

PART 1 OF 9

CREATING AN IMPACTFUL CURRICULUM VITAE (CV)

Ivy League Best Practices for Academic & Research Career Success



Presented by USI Career Success Center

usi.edu/career-success

USI GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE WEBINAR SERIES

ROADMAP TO EXCELLENCE: THE USI GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER WEBINAR SERIES

PHASE 2

Mastering The Market and Advancement



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PHASE 1

Establishing Your Professional Brand

CV VS. RESUME: UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE

> "Every graduate student needs a curriculum vitae."
>
> - Harvard Mignone Center

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Latin: "Course of Life"

– Comprehensive academic record
– No page limit (2-10+ pages)
– Academic, research, medical positions
– Living document that grows
– Emphasizes scholarly achievements

Resume

French: "To Summarize"

– Concise, tailored summary
– 1-2 pages maximum
– Industry/corporate positions
– Customized for each application
– Emphasizes relevant skills

ESSENTIAL CV SECTIONS: IVY LEAGUE FRAMEWORK

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1. **Contact Information**
   Name, address, phone, email
2. **Education**
   Degrees, institution, dissertation
3. **Research Experience**
   Position, institution, PI, projects
4. **Publications**
   Peer-reviewed, books, manuscripts
5. **Presentations**
   Conferences, invited talks, posters
6. **Teaching Experience**
   Course, role, institution, dates
7. **Awards and Honors**
   Fellowships, grants, scholarships
8. **Service and Leadership**
   Committees, reviewing, org roles
9. **Professional Membership**
   Scholarly associations
10. **References**
    3-5 academic references



Pro Tip

Organize sections in decreasing order of importance to the specific position.

FORMATTING BEST PRACTICES

Based on Princeton Career Development Guidelines

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

DO

- Use 11pt or 12pt font with one-inch margins
- Maintain stylistic consistency throughout
- Use reverse chronological order within sections
- Begin descriptions with strong action verbs
- Include name and page numbers on each page

DON'T

- Include SSN, gender, race, or religion
- Include marital status or photos
- Use inconsistent formatting across sections
- Use fancy fonts or graphics
- Create dense text blocks without white space



Your CV formatting should make it easy for search committees to quickly assess your qualifications.

CV Example

SABINE ROSE

Department of History of Art and Architecture, Harvard University, Cambridge MA 02138
smrose@fas.harvard.edu | 617-555-5555 | she/her/hers

EDUCATION

Harvard University — Cambridge, MA
PhD, History of Art and Architecture — Expected May 2024
Dissertation: "'Ad litora tempus ultrices aptent:' Sollicitudin facilisis vestibulum morbi ultrices sociis"
Committee: Joseph F. Klein, Ian Kazmarzek, and Sarah Liebowitz

The Bard Graduate Center — New York, NY
MA, Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture — May 2017
Qualifying Paper: "Conubia tempus quisque turpis nisl. Potenti ipsum tellus habitant"
Advisor: Jonas Benowitz

The University of Chicago — Chicago, IL
BA, Art History, with honors; minor in French Language and Literature — Jun 2014
Thesis: "Sapien elit ligula eleifend nulla pellentesque aliquam dolor hac varius lectus"
Advisor: Abram Alter

Université de Paris — Paris, France
The University of Chicago, Paris Academic Year Program — Sep 2012 – Jun 2013
Courses in Art History, History, Archaeology, and French Literature

RESEARCH EXPERTISE

Medieval reuse of late antique material culture
Writing tablets in the development of the codex
Monastic, episcopal, and family *memoria*
Touch and tactility in Christocentric devotion
Roman models for the art of Abrahamic faith traditions
Doubles and mirror images
Material histories of ivory

PUBLICATIONS

Catalogue of the Integre Eligendi Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, ed. Melinda Temple et al. Editorial contributions and essays, in preparation.

"Massa maecenas suspendisse? Lectus luctus tincidunt curabitur nascetur quisque netus magna quis dui." Article, under review.

"Senectus Bibendum: Vulputate consequat duis sapien mauris cum vestibulum." In *ARDS. Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Sculpture*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2026. Invited essay, in progress.

*Eros est fames facilisis in fermentum ultr*icies dignissim, eds. Sabine Rose, et. al. Es hat mehrere Zutaten, die seine einzigartige formel schaffen in München. Passau: Wilhelm Kreuger, 2025. Monograph, in press.
- Independently authored chapters: "Aenean tristique interdum," "Vivamus lacus egestas," and "Aenean donec lacinia sociis."

FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

Harvard University, Dissertation Completion Fellowship — 2023 – 2024
Samuel H. Kress Foundation, Institutional Fellowship, Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, München — 2021 – 2023
Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, Doctoral Candidate Research Grant — 2020 – 2021
Dumbarton Oaks Fellowship Stipend, partial support for doctoral grant at Harvard University — 2017 – 2021
Samuel H. Kress Foundation, Language School Fellowship at Middlebury College's Deutsche Schule — 2018
The Bard Graduate Center, Fellowship for research and living expenses — 2015 – 2017

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SELECTED AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

La Société Internationale des Médiévistes de Paris, Graduate Student Prize — 2023
International Center of Medieval Art, Graduate Student Essay Prize, First Place — 2021
Medieval Academy of America/CARA summer scholarship for Latin at the University of Notre Dame — 2021
Jens Aubrey Westengard Fund scholarship for summer research and language study in Germany — 2019
Dumbarton Oaks, Bliss Symposium Award — 2018
Clive Wainwright Award for an outstanding MA Qualifying Paper and contribution to the field — 2017
The Bard Graduate Center Travel and Research Fund conference grant — 2017

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

"Elementum integer turpis varius taciti aenean dapibus," International conference co-organized with Agnes Rhone. The Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, München, Germany. (October 24, 2023)
- Independent presentation: "Eros est fames facilisis."

PRESENTATIONS

"Rutrum convallis cursus commodo nullam purus blandit." Presented at "Testing the Limits: Absence, Presence, and the Bounds of the Medieval and Early Modern Image." Eikones, Center for the Theory and History of the Image, University of Basel, Switzerland. (March 12, 2024)

"Quam montes quam in: Congue libero, platea volutpat!" Presented at the College Art Association, Chicago. Panel: Sollicitudin cursus id elementum faucibus: Sociosqu velit montes rhoncus. (February 15, 2024)

"Primis diam curabitur himenaeos tincidunt platea in taciti cubilia ridiculus turpis: Ut mus purus tortor quisque nulla primis pharetra." Presented at the 20th Annual Symposium of la Société Internationale des Médiévistes de Paris. Panel: The Shape of History. (July 8, 2024)
- Graduate Student Prize recipient.

"Etiam molestie est sociis gravida: Taciti cubilia feugiat." Presented at the 13th Annual Bern Research Camp for the Applied Arts, University of Bern and the Abegg-Stiftung, Switzerland. (May 16–18, 2023)

"Orci euismod scelerisque interdum cursus porta volutpat." Presented at the Nachwuchs-Workshop, Neue Tendenzen der Italienforschung zu Mittelalter und Renaissance, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence, Italy. Panel: Antiken - und Vergangenheitsbewaltigung (December 3, 2022)

"Proin aptent, ipsum non aenean elit quam ipsum scelerisque ac in." Presented at the International Medieval Congress, Leeds. Panel: Music and Liturgy in the Early Middle Ages. (July 4, 2022)

"Quisque platea, sodales volutpat lacinia arcu pharetra sit duis libero commodo." Workshop presented online for the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte, München, Germany. (January 19, 2021)

"'Dictum ligula in sociis vel condimentum vulputate urna venenatis euismod lacinia." Presented at the Anneliese Maier Prize Workshop, Part I, Düsseldorf, Germany. Sponsored by the Humboldt Stiftung. (Postponed due to COVID-19)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Skidmore College, professor of record: Agnes Rhone — Saratoga Springs, NY
Invited Lecturer, "Porro Percipitur Sit Ne" (online) — Sep 2023
Invited Lecturer, "Commodo Integre cum Ea" (online) — Sep 2022

The University of Southern California, instructor of record: Maya Cabral — Los Angeles, CA
Invited Lecturer, "Duo ex Labore Reprimique" (online) — Apr 2021

Harvard University, Department of History of Art and Architecture — Cambridge, MA
Teaching Fellow, "Methods Tutorial," (sole instructor) — Spring 2019
- Designed and taught a required course for 3rd year undergraduate majors

Identifying information has been changed. Titles have been anonymized with lorem ipsum.

CVs Continued

Teaching Fellow, "Pro te Timeam Expetenda," (professor of record: Roman Camare) Fall 2018
- Led 2 sections of approximately 15 students for an undergraduate general education course

MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Morgan Library and Harvard University Cambridge, MA; New York, NY
Graduate Researcher Jan – Sep 2023
- Bibliography projects associated with the exhibition *Ei Pro Omnium Vivendo Accusata: Duo et Tantas Fierent, autem Appetere Necessitatibus, 800–1500* (2024)

Department of Medieval Art and The Cloisters New York, NY
Graduate Intern Sep 2015 – May 2019
- Research and gallery-related projects for the permanent collection of medieval art, including provenance research, preparing data for print and online publications, and developing label copy
- Editorial projects associated with the exhibitions *Et Audiam Dissentiet eam: In per Integre Praesent Petentium* (The Bard Graduate Center; 2017) and P*ercipitur Honestatis te Vel* (2018)

The Art Institute of Chicago Chicago, IL
Intern, Department of Prints and Drawings Sep 2014 – Feb 2015
- Curated a rotation of 15th and 16th century Northern European prints in the Allerton galleries
- Object-based research for the exhibitions I*ntegre Eligendi* (2015) and *Ad Odio Ullamcorper* (2016)
- Handled and transported works on paper and parchment for student and research appointments

Sacred Space International Chicago, IL
Jeff Metcalf Fellow Jun – Sep 2013
- Researched, designed, and guided a series of ten architectural tours of religious spaces in Chicago
- Interviewed Chicago religious leaders about their faith traditions and communities
- Contributed written content towards educational materials as well as the organization's website and blog
- Managed the library, archival material, and digital image collection on architecture and world religions

PUBLISHING EXPERIENCE

The Bard Graduate Center New York, NY
Editorial Fellow, West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History & Material Culture Jan – Dec 2017
- Contributed to all aspects of the editorial process during the first 2 years of the journal's publication, including permissions research, marketing research, fact checking, and article preparation
- Monitored upcoming publications and exhibitions in the field of decorative arts, design, and material culture for potential print and online reviews
- Managed content for the website of *Cultural Histories of the Material World*, a book series published by the University of Michigan Press

DIGITAL HUMANITIES

University of Chicago Department of Art History Chicago, IL
Visual Resources Intern, Visual Resources Center Sep 2010 – Jul 2015
- Cataloged, digitized, and archived the Department's extensive image collection
- Trained interns in cataloging, archiving, and the use of digitization and imaging hardware and software

DePaul University, Digital Library Services Chicago, IL
Digital Projects Cataloging Assistant, Image Collection Jul 2014 – Jul 2015
- Collaborated on digitization projects for the Department of the History of Art and Special Collections

University of Chicago, Humanities Division Chicago, IL
Research Assistant, Montaigne Studies – Interdisciplinary forum May – Oct 2014
- Collaborated with Visual Resources and Humanities Computing specialists to develop an international web forum, database, and digital images to support research on the early publication history of Montaigne

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LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Hortulus: The Online Graduate Journal of Medieval Studies
Reader and Peer Reviewer 2016 – Present

Das Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte Munich, Germany
Moderator Nov 2023
- Facilitated Morgan S. Lieuben's workshop "Tincidunt fames praesent nulla," as part of the ongoing series "Current Research"

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst Munich, Germany
Guide Dec 2020, 2021
- Designed and guided a popular seasonal tour of the historic Nativity collection of the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, introducing international fellows to the history of Christian ritual and Bavarian culture

Harvard University, *Department of History of Art and Architecture* Cambridge, MA
Invited Speaker, Grant writing workshop Mar 2019
Co-coordinator, Art in the Making 2018 – 2019
- Secured institutional and financial sponsorship for an annual materials and techniques workshop for graduate students in the Department of History of Art and Architecture
- Worked with artists and arts education specialists to develop hands-on curricula for the annual themes "Ceramics" and "Letter Press Printing"

LANGUAGES

German and French (advanced proficiency); Italian (beginning knowledge); Latin and Spanish (reading)

COMPUTER SKILLS

Adobe Photoshop, ARTstor, Blackboard, Canvas, Citi, CONTENTdm, FilemakerPro, Harvard Slack, LUNA, Mimsy, MS Office Suite and Teams, Scrivener, Skype, Silverfast, TMS, WordPress, Yellowdig, Zoom, Zotero

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

College Art Association, The International Center of Medieval Art, International Council of Museums, The Medieval Academy of America

REFERENCES

Joseph F. Klein
Bruno Schpatt Professor of German Art and Culture
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138
617.495.1234
jfklein@fas.harvard.edu

Jonas Benowitz
Associate Professor
The Bard Graduate Center
New York, NY 10024
212.567.8901
benowitz@bgc.bard.edu

Sarah Liebowitz
Professor
Institut für Klassische Archäologie
Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
80333 München, Germany
+49 (0) 89 / 123 45678
liebowitz@ka.fak12.uni-muenchen.de

Scholars whose work relates to art, music, etc often have experience with museum exibitions, performances, etc. Sabine includes several categories outlining a variety of relevant professional experiences using descriptive category headings.

Just after Education, Sabine includes a Research Expertise section with concise and tailored key words and phrases to describe her scholarship. She might have chosen to use Research and Teaching Interests if she were applying for a faculty position, but she was applying to a postdoc in this case.

Identifying information has been changed. Titles have been anonymized with lorem ipsum.

Cover Letter for CV

Cover Letter Guidelines

Your Name
Department, Harvard University
City, State Zip Code

Month Day, Year

Contact Name
Title (if known)
Department, Univ./Institution Name
City, State Zip Code

Inquire with your department administrator whether you can use the departmental letterhead. If so, remove your personal contact information at the top of the letter.

Street addresses are not typically included, since most communication is purely electronic, but it's still a good idea to include the academic department and university/institution's name.

Note that in an e-mail message, you would omit both your and the addressee's contact information, as well as the date. Simply start with the salutation.

If you include the cover letter as an attachment, use proper letter format, as shown here.

Dear Professor/Dr. Last Name: (or if not known: "Dear Members of the Search Committee:")

Opening paragraph: Clearly state why you are writing. If applying for a specific job, indicate the position title and department. If you were referred to the position from someone within the institution, or by someone the addressee knows, mention that as well. Give a brief introduction of yourself and your status, e.g. "I am completing my PhD in [department or field] with an expected degree [or defense] in [Month, Year]. You could also include the title of your dissertation or the topic of your research and the name of your advisor.

Middle paragraphs: You should have several paragraphs that elaborate on how your research and other experiences in graduate school have prepared you for the job as it is described. Typically, these include a paragraph about your dissertation/current research, one about your future research plans, and one or two about your teaching experience/interests/approach/courses you could offer.

Disciplines differ on the length and level of detail required for cover letters, so be sure to get feedback from others in your department. Junior faculty members who have recently been on the market themselves are often the best people to ask. For example, the amount of detail you provide about your teaching depends on the position, the type of institution, and the norms in your field.

Tailoring: Think about how your interest in both the *job* and the *institution* developed—in order to stand out from the potentially long list of applicants, you will need to make a coherent argument for why it was a logical decision on your part to apply for the position, and why it would be a logical decision on their part to hire you. What kind of contribution will you make to their existing department? How will you fit in? Make sure you are writing for your target audience. For instance, for a liberal arts college you may use more space addressing your teaching experience than you would for a large research university. For a school outside a major metropolitan area, you may also want to indicate why you are interested in living in that area. You might include this information as a paragraph and/or you could tailor the letter throughout.

Closing paragraph: You might indicate that your CV and other supporting documentation are enclosed, or mention that letters from your referees are forthcoming. Indicate your willingness to provide additional information and express interest in speaking with the addressee further in an interview. Thank them for their time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(scanned signature—optional but a nice touch)

Name (typed)

Phone number and email address

Identifying information has been changed. 20

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Max Umbutu
Harvard University
17 Oxford Street | Cambridge, MA 02138
mumbutu@fas.harvard.edu | 999-123-4567

November 29, 20XX

Dear Faculty Search Committee:

I am writing to apply for the tenure-track faculty appointment at Princeton University in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering through the Quantum and Semiconductor Materials search. I am completing my Ph.D. in the Department of Physics at Harvard University, where I have been designing and synthesizing new thin film materials with atomic-scale precision using molecular beam epitaxy (MBE).

Atomic-scale construction of a crystalline lattice can be used to design new classes of materials, as well as to control the manifold electronic, magnetic, and functional phases inherent in a family of materials. In my doctoral work, I engineered superconducting compounds by leveraging atomically-precise synthesis to create layered nickelate compounds. My discovery, which unveiled superconductivity through dimensional layering without chemical doping, unlocked the nickelates as a true new family of superconductors. Furthermore, it showcased the role of atomically-precise synthesis as a powerful knob to traverse the phase diagrams of quantum materials and stabilize new materials which cannot be made with bulk synthetic methods. I described this discovery in *Nature Materials*, with six additional related manuscripts.

My research program at Princeton will harness atomically-precise materials design and synthesis to explore and exploit the myriad phenomena that arise when electrons collectively engage. Aside from superconductivity, these phenomena include topological orders, magnetic orders and frustration, ferroelectricity, and excitonic pairing. Such behaviors evolve in lower dimensions and can even emerge at atomic interfaces, stressing the need for lattice control at the atomic-scale. Meanwhile, anion content and bonding is another critical determinant of materials properties. To this end, my program will unite atomic construction of the cation scaffolding with chemical tuning of the anion matrix, leading to exquisite tunability of correlated phases and unprecedented access to new classes of quantum materials beyond the canonical transition metal oxides. Finally, I will integrate synergistic characterization techniques that give us deep insight into how electronic behaviors correlate with atomic structure, closing the "materials-by-design" loop and accelerating the discovery of new materials.

My approach is transferrable beyond my immediate research efforts in quantum materials, such that I am uniquely poised to leverage the versatility of combinatorial materials synthesis to thematically expand. For example, a focus on functional materials could involve perfecting traditional materials for novel quantum circuitries, developing dielectrics for electro-optic devices, or anion-tuning toward stable photovoltaics. My research program, interdisciplinary by design, aligns well with the priorities of Princeton's Engineering Strategic Plan. The world-class user facilities will provide a strong technical and communal environment to support my scientific vision, and I look forward to finding collaborative avenues in the Princeton community.

In addition to my intellectual interests, outreach, teaching, and mentoring have been central to my practice of science. Having consistently worked within my institutions to develop educational and support resources for underserved populations, I am drawn to Princeton's commitment to strengthening representation *and* conditions for underrepresented groups to thrive. As my Ph.D. group's first student, I took on leadership roles in establishing and managing the group, mentoring new graduate students, designing undergraduate projects, and establishing collaborative networks. I look forward to leading a diverse research group, to effectively mentoring students with a variety of goals and backgrounds, and to creating vibrant, inclusive learning environments at Princeton.

Please do not hesitate to reach out for any additional information – I hope to hear from you in due course.

Sincerely,

Max Umbutu (they/them)

Identifying information has been changed.

As a physical scientist, Max kept their cover letter to one page. Often, in quantitative and computational sciences, the letter can be even shorter… just a few short paragraphs. Note that Max uses a lot of field-specific jargon, knowing that their audience of physicists at Princeton would be very familiar with this level of jargon. While Max did not address courses they could teach, they did emphasize their commitment to fostering inclusivity in their teaching and mentoring.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC CV CONSIDERATIONS

MSN / HEALTHCARE

Clinical rotations, certifications, patient care hours, healthcare competencies

MSW / SOCIAL WORK

Field placements, populations served, intervention methods, licensure progress

EDUCATION / MSE

Student teaching, grade levels, curriculum development, educational technology

MPA / CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Policy analysis, program evaluation, government experience, engagement

MBA / MHA

Leadership projects, quantitative results, case competitions, certifications

ALL PROGRAMS

Graduate coursework, research projects, professional development, volunteer work

Key Insight

Review CVs from professionals in your target field to understand discipline-specific expectations.

AI-POWERED CV ENHANCEMENT

Using Copilot to Refine Your Academic CV

Core Principle

Use AI to REFINE and STRENGTHEN — never let AI write your CV content from scratch.

Prompt 1: Strengthen Action Verbs

“Review this CV description and suggest stronger action verbs appropriate for academic positions: [YOUR TEXT]”

Prompt 2: Position Alignment

“Compare my CV sections to this faculty position description. What experiences should I emphasize?"

Prompt 3: Clarity Check

“Review this research description for clarity. Would a faculty search committee understand the significance?"

Academic Integrity

Always verify AI suggestions against discipline standards. Your authentic voice remains the foundation.

7 COMMON CV MISTAKES TO AVOID

1. Using resume format - let your CV grow
2. Inconsistent formatting signals carelessness
3. Wrong citation format for your discipline
4. Too many works “in preparation”
5. Missing page numbers in header/footer
6. Not tailoring sections for each application
7. Outdated contact information



Pro Tip

Have a mentor review your CV before submission

RESOURCES & YOUR ACTION PLAN

USI CAREER SUCCESS CENTER

Orr Center, Room 1051

(812) 464-1865

usi.edu/career-success

Ivy League CV Resources

- Harvard GSAS CV Guide (careerservices.fas.harvard.edu)
- Princeton CV Writing Guide (careerdevelopment.princeton.edu)
- Columbia GSAS Career Design Lab (gsas.columbia.edu)
- Yale Office of Career Strategy (ocs.yale.edu)
- Cornell Graduate School (gradschool.cornell.edu)

Your 7-Day Pre Negotiation Plan

Day 1-2 — Inventory all academic experiences

Day 3 — Review 3-5 sample CVs from your field

Day 4-5 — Draft CV using Ivy League framework

Day 6 — Get feedback from advisor or mentor

Day 7 — Schedule Career Success Center review

Coming Up Next: PART 2

Building Your Graduate Level Resume and Cover Letter
AI-Powered Strategies for ATS Success

Questions? Email careersuccess@usi.edu | Thank you for attending!

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

CAREER LAUNCH

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- Questions? Email us at career.center@usi.edu or give us a call to schedule an appointment (812) 464-1865!



USI®

PART 2 OF 9

BUILDING YOUR GRADUATE-LEVEL RESUME & COVER LETTER

AI-Powered Strategies for ATS Success



Presented by USI Career Success Center

usi.edu/career-success

USI GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER EXCELLENCE SERIES

ROADMAP TO EXCELLENCE: THE USI GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER WEBINAR SERIES

PHASE 2

Mastering The Market and Advancement



PART 6-7: INTERVIEWING & NEGOTIATION

Master diverse interview formats and advocate for your worth using market data.



PART 8: GLOBAL DIFFERENTIATION

Stand out in the market through domestic and international professional experiences.



PART 9: THE SERIES FINALE

Leverage your new degree to secure internal promotions and own your next chapter.



PART 5: STRATEGIC NETWORKING

Build professional relationships that open doors beyond traditional job boards



PART 3-4: DIGITAL PRESENCE & SEARCH STRATEGY

Optimize your LinkedIn brand and adopt data-driven, targeted job search strategies.



PART 1-2: CORE DOCUMENT CREATION

Build a comprehensive CV and translate experience into ATS-optimized resumes and cover letters

PHASE 1

Establishing Your Professional Brand

WHY YOUR GRADUATE RESUME MATTERS

98% of Fortune 500 companies use ATS to filter resumes

6sec average time recruiters spend on initial resume review

250+ average applications received per job posting



Graduate-level Expectations

Employers expect strategic thinking, research capabilities, and advanced competencies.

> "The #1 mistake is letting AI turn your unique application into a generic one."
>
> - Jeremy Schifeling

Source: Jobscan State of the Job Search Report | thejobinsiders.com

GRADUATE RESUME STRUCTURE

1. **Contact Header**
   Name, Phone, Email, LinkedIn, City/State
2. **Professional Summary**
   3-4 lines: degree, specialization, key skills, goal
3. **Education**
   Graduate degree first, GPA if 3.5+, thesis/capstone
4. **Core Competencies**
   8-12 keywords matching job description
5. **Professional Experience**
   Reverse chronological, 3-5 STAR bullets per role
6. **Additional Section**
   Certifications, Publications, Leadership, Languages

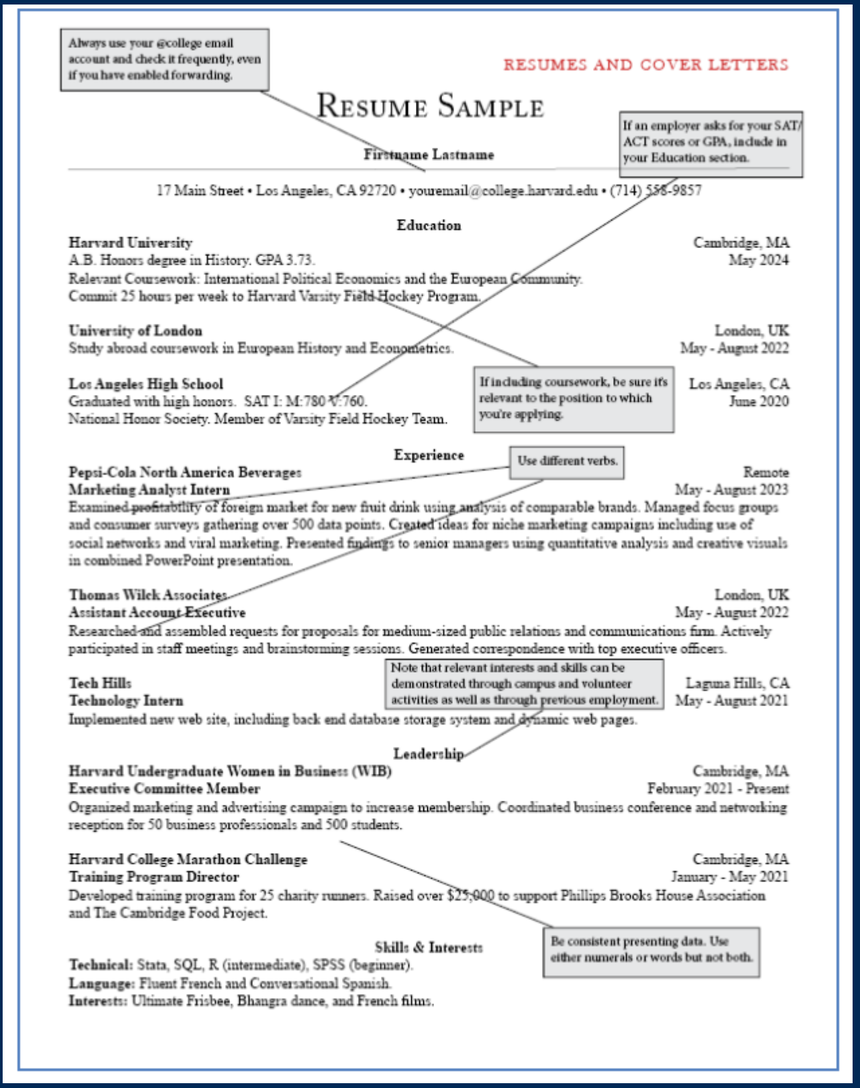
ATS-friendly Rules (Jobscan, 2025)

- ✓ Single-column layout
- ✓ Standard fonts (Arial, Calibri)
- ✓ .docx format preferred
- ✓ 10-12pt font size
- ✓ 1-2 pages maximum
- ✗ No tables or graphics
- ✗ No headers/footers

Jobscan

25% of ATS systems miss content in headers/footers

Resume Example



RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

Resume Sample

Always use your @college email account and check it frequently, even if you have enabled forwarding.

If an employer asks for your SAT/ACT scores or GPA, include in your Education section.

Firstname Lastname

17 Main Street • Los Angeles, CA 92720 • youremail@college.harvard.edu • (714) 556-9857

Education

Harvard University — Cambridge, MA
A.B. Honors degree in History. GPA 3.73. — May 2024
Relevant Coursework: International Political Economics and the European Community.
Commit 25 hours per week to Harvard Varsity Field Hockey Program.

University of London — London, UK
Study abroad coursework in European History and Econometrics. — May - August 2022

Los Angeles High School — Los Angeles, CA
Graduated with high honors. SAT I: M:780 V:760. — June 2020
National Honor Society. Member of Varsity Field Hockey Team.

If including coursework, be sure it's relevant to the position to which you're applying.

Experience

Use different verbs.

Pepsi-Cola North America Beverages — Remote
Marketing Analyst Intern — May - August 2023
Examined profitability of foreign market for new fruit drink using analysis of comparable brands. Managed focus groups and consumer surveys gathering over 500 data points. Created ideas for niche marketing campaigns including use of social networks and viral marketing. Presented findings to senior managers using quantitative analysis and creative visuals in combined PowerPoint presentation.

Thomas Wilck Associates — London, UK
Assistant Account Executive — May - August 2022
Researched and assembled requests for proposals for medium-sized public relations and communications firm. Actively participated in staff meetings and brainstorming sessions. Generated correspondence with top executive officers.

Note that relevant interests and skills can be demonstrated through campus and volunteer activities as well as through previous employment.

Tech Hills — Laguna Hills, CA
Technology Intern — May - August 2021
Implemented new web site, including back end database storage system and dynamic web pages.

Leadership

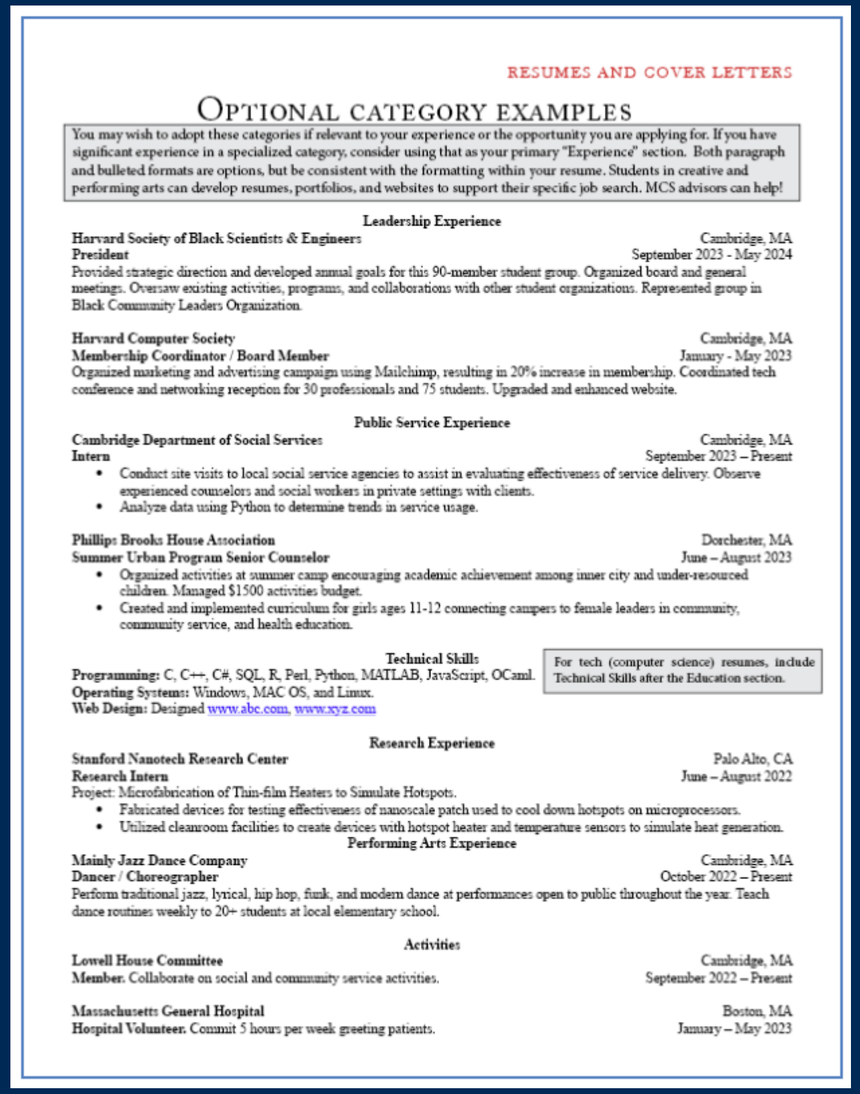
Harvard Undergraduate Women in Business (WIB) — Cambridge, MA
Executive Committee Member — February 2021 - Present
Organized marketing and advertising campaign to increase membership. Coordinated business conference and networking reception for 50 business professionals and 500 students.

Harvard College Marathon Challenge — Cambridge, MA
Training Program Director — January - May 2021
Developed training program for 25 charity runners. Raised over $25,000 to support Phillips Brooks House Association and The Cambridge Food Project.

Be consistent presenting data. Use either numerals or words but not both.

Skills & Interests

Technical: Stata, SQL, R (intermediate), SPSS (beginner).
Language: Fluent French and Conversational Spanish.
Interests: Ultimate Frisbee, Bhangra dance, and French films.



RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

Optional Category Examples

You may wish to adopt these categories if relevant to your experience or the opportunity you are applying for. If you have significant experience in a specialized category, consider using that as your primary "Experience" section. Both paragraph and bulleted formats are options, but be consistent with the formatting within your resume. Students in creative and performing arts can develop resumes, portfolios, and websites to support their specific job search. MCS advisors can help!

Leadership Experience

Harvard Society of Black Scientists & Engineers — Cambridge, MA
President — September 2023 - May 2024
Provided strategic direction and developed annual goals for this 90-member student group. Organized board and general meetings. Oversaw existing activities, programs, and collaborations with other student organizations. Represented group in Black Community Leaders Organization.

Harvard Computer Society — Cambridge, MA
Membership Coordinator / Board Member — January - May 2023
Organized marketing and advertising campaign using Mailchimp, resulting in 20% increase in membership. Coordinated tech conference and networking reception for 30 professionals and 75 students. Upgraded and enhanced website.

Public Service Experience

Cambridge Department of Social Services — Cambridge, MA
Intern — September 2023 – Present
- Conduct site visits to local social service agencies to assist in evaluating effectiveness of service delivery. Observe experienced counselors and social workers in private settings with clients.
- Analyze data using Python to determine trends in service usage.

Phillips Brooks House Association — Dorchester, MA
Summer Urban Program Senior Counselor — June – August 2023
- Organized activities at summer camp encouraging academic achievement among inner city and under-resourced children. Managed $1500 activities budget.
- Created and implemented curriculum for girls ages 11-12 connecting campers to female leaders in community, community service, and health education.

Technical Skills

For tech (computer science) resumes, include Technical Skills after the Education section.

Programming: C, C++, C#, SQL, R, Perl, Python, MATLAB, JavaScript, OCaml.
Operating Systems: Windows, MAC OS, and Linux.
Web Design: Designed www.abc.com, www.xyz.com

Research Experience

Stanford Nanotech Research Center — Palo Alto, CA
Research Intern — June – August 2022
Project: Microfabrication of Thin-film Heaters to Simulate Hotspots.
- Fabricated devices for testing effectiveness of nanoscale patch used to cool down hotspots on microprocessors.
- Utilized cleanroom facilities to create devices with hotspot heater and temperature sensors to simulate heat generation.

Performing Arts Experience

Mainly Jazz Dance Company — Cambridge, MA
Dancer / Choreographer — October 2022 – Present
Perform traditional jazz, lyrical, hip hop, funk, and modern dance at performances open to public throughout the year. Teach dance routines weekly to 20+ students at local elementary school.

Activities

Lowell House Committee — Cambridge, MA
Member. Collaborate on social and community service activities. — September 2022 – Present

Massachusetts General Hospital — Boston, MA
Hospital Volunteer. Commit 5 hours per week greeting patients. — January – May 2023

Cover Letters: Why You, Why This Role, Why Now

Cover Letter Example

Date of Letter

Use complete title and address. (optional section if you need to save space)

Contact Name
Contact Title
Company Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____:

Address to a particular person if possible and remember to use a colon.

Opening paragraph: Clearly state why you're writing, name the position or type of work you're exploring and, where applicable, how you heard about the position or organization. A summary statement may work well here by including three reasons you think you would be a good fit for the opportunity.

Make the addressee want to read your resume. Be brief, but specific.

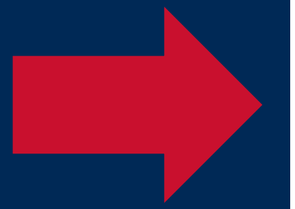
Middle paragraph(s): Explain why you are interested in this employer and your reasons for desiring this type of work. If you've had relevant school or work experience, be sure to point it out with one or two key examples; but do not reiterate your entire resume. Emphasize skills or abilities that relate to the job. Be sure to do this in a confident manner and remember that the reader will view your letter as an example of your writing skills.

Remind the reader of what you can do for the organization.

Closing paragraph: Reiterate your interest in the position, and your enthusiasm for using your skills to contribute to the work of the organization. Thank the reader for their consideration of your application, and end by stating that you look forward to the opportunity to further discuss the position.

Sincerely,

Your name typed



September 1, 2025

Morgan Smith
Director of Communications Jumpstart
308 Congress Street, 6th Floor Boston, MA 02110

Dear Morgan Smith:

I am a senior at Harvard College studying History and Literature. I am writing to apply for the Marketing and Communications position at Jumpstart posted in Harvard's Crimson Careers database. I'm very excited about the field of education, and would welcome the opportunity to bring my strong communication skills, creativity, and marketing experience to your growing team.

Jumpstart's commitment to early education for every child is of particular interest to me and relates to my passion for youth development. This past summer, I worked as a senior counselor in the Summer Urban Program, which is dedicated to preventing summer learning loss for children in the Boston and Cambridge area. I designed and taught fun, interactive classes to a group of 10 fifth graders, and planned and led local field trips and workshops daily with a junior counselor. Throughout the summer, I consistently strived to create math, science, and reading lessons and activities that were engaging and tailored to my students' needs.

Additionally, in my role as the Director of Marketing for the Social Innovation Collaborative, I led our team in creating a social media strategy to drive our member recruitment efforts and promote our programs and events on platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. With so many competing events on campus each day, I had to continually be creative in my approach to developing and delivering content that would be compelling and effective. As a result of my efforts, our group experienced a 20% increase in our membership base and a 15% increase in our social media engagement. I'm excited at the prospect of bringing the skills I developed through this experience to the Marketing and Communications role at Jumpstart.

Thank you for your consideration. I very much look forward to the opportunity to speak with you in person about my interest in this position.

Sincerely,

Alex Crimson

AI-POWERED RESUME OPTIMIZATION

Golden Rule:

Use AI to ANALYZE and IMPROVE — never let AI write your resume from scratch (Schifeling, n.d.)

COPILOT PROMPT 1

Extract Keywords

“What are the key skills and qualifications in this job posting?”

COPILOT PROMPT 2

Gap Analysis

“Compare my resume to this job description. What keywords am I missing?”

COPILOT PROMPT 3

STAR Conversion

"Help me convert this bullet into STAR format with results"

Warning

DO NOT let AI write bullets wholesale or use overused phrases like “leverage” or “synergy”

Recommended Tool

Jobscan.co - Scan resume against job descriptions. Aim for 75%+ match.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC KEYWORDS

MBA

Strategic Planning, P&L Management, ROI Analysis, Cross-Functional Leadership

MSW

Trauma-Informed Care, Case Management, Crisis Intervention, Cultural Competency

Education

Curriculum Development, Differentiated Instruction, Assessment Design, Student Outcomes

MHA

Healthcare Administration, HIPAA Compliance, Quality Improvement, Revenue Cycle

MPA

Policy Analysis, Stakeholder Engagement, Program Evaluation, Grant Management

Strategic Comm

Integrated Communications, Reputation Management, Crisis Communication, Brand Strategy

MSN

Evidence-Based Practice, Patient Outcomes, Clinical Leadership, Care Coordination

Criminal Justice

Criminal Justice Reform, Restorative Justice, Data-Driven Policing, Reentry

Sport Management

Revenue Generation, Fan Engagement, Sponsorship Activation, Athletic Compliance



Pro Tip

Research 5-10 job postings in your target field to extract common keywords using Copilot

THE STAR-K FORMULA FOR BULLETS

Recruiters use STAR method questions to predict on-the-job performance—research shows this approach is 55% predictive of success (Hansen, as cited in LinkedIn Talent Solutions, n.d.).

Weak Example

"Responsible for managing social media accounts."

Task-based, no results, no keywords

Strong Example

"Increased LinkedIn engagement 47% by developing data-driven content strategy (social media, analytics)."

Action verb, quantified result, keywords

Prepare 3–5 stories by jotting down notes or creating a bulleted outline using the STAR method (MIT Career Advising & Professional Development, 2023).

Powered Verbs by Category

Leadership
Directed, Championed, Orchestrated

Analysis
Assessed, Evaluated, Investigated

Innovation
Pioneered, Transformed, Redesigned

Quantify with: percentages, dollar amounts, time saved, people impacted

7 COMMON GRADUATE RESUME MISTAKES

1. **Generic Resumes**
   Using one version for all applications
2. **ATS-Unfriendly Formatting**
   Tables, graphics, unusual fonts
3. **Task-Based Bullet**
   Listing responsibilities instead of achievements
4. **AI-Generated Content**
   Detectable, generic, lacking authenticity
5. **Missing Keywords**
   Not matching job description language
6. **Buried Education**
   Education should be prominent for students
7. **Objective Statements**
   Outdated; use Professional Summary



Remember!

Research projects, assistantships, and capstone work ARE professional experience!

USI Career Success Center can review your resume — schedule via Career Launch

RESOURCES & YOUR ACTION PLAN

USI CAREER SUCCESS CENTER

Orr Center, Room 1051	(812) 464-1865	usi.edu/career-success	Appointments via Career Launch

Expert Resources

- Harvard Mignone Center Resume Guide
- Princeton Career Development
- The Job Insiders (thejobinsiders.com)
- Jobscan.co (ATS Scanner)

USI Partner Programs

Ascend Indiana | Parker Dewey | Alumni Mentor Network

Your 7-Day Action Plan

Day 1-2 — Audit current resume against this framework

Day 3-4 — Use Copilot to extract keywords from 5 job postings

Day 5-6 — Rewrite bullets using STAR-K formula

Day 7 — Schedule Career Success Center appointment

Coming Up Next: PART 3

LinkedIn Optimization for Graduate Students
Building Your Professional Brand with SEO Strategy

Questions? Email careersuccess@usi.edu | Thank you for attending!

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

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PART 3 OF 9

LINKEDIN OPTIMIZATION

Building Your Professional Brand with SEO Strategy



Presented by USI Career Success Center

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ROADMAP TO EXCELLENCE: THE USI GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER WEBINAR SERIES

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PHASE 2
Mastering The Market and Advancement



PART 6-7: INTERVIEWING & NEGOTIATION
Master diverse interview formats and advocate for your worth using market data.



PART 8: GLOBAL DIFFERENTIATION
Stand out in the market through domestic and international professional experiences.



PART 9: THE SERIES FINALE
Leverage your new degree to secure internal promotions and own your next chapter.



PART 5: STRATEGIC NETWORKING
Build professional relationships that open doors beyond traditional job boards



PART 3-4: DIGITAL PRESENCE & SEARCH STRATEGY
Optimize your LinkedIn brand and adopt data-driven, targeted job search strategies.



PART 1-2: CORE DOCUMENT CREATION
Build a comprehensive CV and translate experience into ATS-optimized resumes and cover letters

PHASE 1
Establishing Your Professional Brand

YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

1. **IDENTITY**
   Who you are and what you stand for professionally
2. **EXPERTISE**
   What you know and what you can do
3. **VISIBILITY**
   Who knows about it and how easily they can find you



Brand Audit
Try It Right Now

Google your name. What comes up on the first page? That is your brand today. Is it what you want a recruiter to find?

"Your brand is what people say about you when you're not in the room."

LinkedIn is where your brand lives online. Everything we build in this module is about making sure your profile tells the right story.

Your Brand Lives In:

What you say about yourself, what others say about you, and what people find when they search your name

The Goal

A clear, consistent professional presence so the right opportunities and the right people can find you



Your brand exists whether you manage it or not. Make it intentional.

WHY LINKEDIN MATTERS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

1.1B members worldwide on LinkedIn

72% of recruiters use LinkedIn to find candidates

71% higher interview rate with optimized profile

40x more likely to be found with complete profile

Key Insight

LinkedIn is a SEARCH ENGINE. Recruiters search for candidates using keywords — your profile needs SEO optimization.



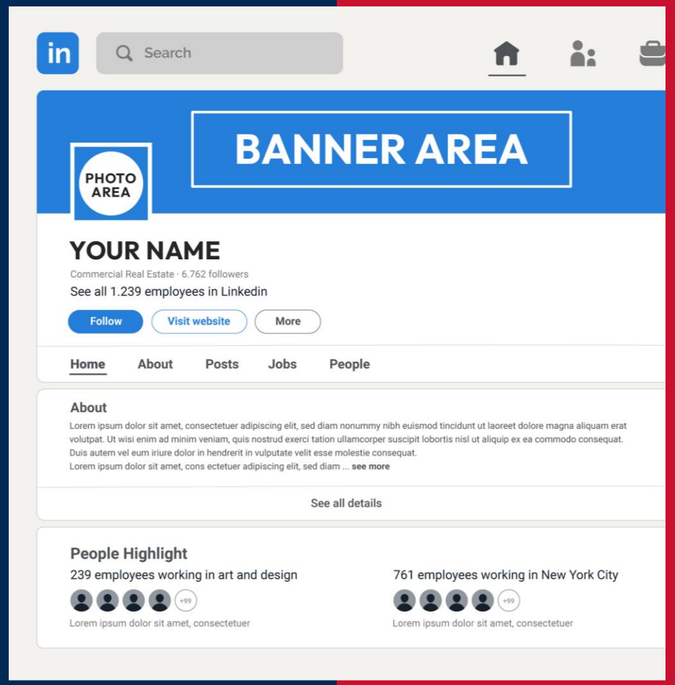
How Recruiters Search:

- "Healthcare administrator" + "HIPAA" + "Indiana"
- "MBA" + "strategic planning" + "P&L"
- "Social worker" + "trauma-informed" + "case management"

Sources: LinkedIn Economic Graph, Jobvite Recruiter Nation Survey

7 ESSENTIAL PROFILE ELEMENTS

1. **PROFESSIONAL PHOTO**
   Headshot, neutral background, professional attire
2. **BANNER IMAGE**
   Industry-relevant or USI branded (1584 x 396px)
3. **SEO HEADLINE**
   220 characters with target keywords (not job title)
4. **ABOUT SECTION**
   2,600 characters - your professional story + keywords
5. **EXPERIENCE**
   Mirror resume with expanded STAR bullets
6. **SKILLS (50 MAX)**
   Add all relevant skills, pin top 3 for visibility
7. **CUSTOM URL**
   linkedin.com/in/yourname (add to resume)



All-Star Status:

Complete all profile sections to achieve LinkedIn's **All-Star** status — the highest of three profile levels (Beginner, Intermediate, and All-Star). All-Star profiles are 40x more likely to receive opportunities and receive greater content visibility in search results.

Profiles with photos receive 21x more views and 36x more messages

LINKEDIN PROFILE VIDEO TUTORIALS

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

1 USI GRADUATE WORKSHOP
Creating an Effective LinkedIn Profile | Dr. Dixon

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN
Profile strategy, branding , & recruiter insights

WATCH AT:
youtu.be/YV8ESwZ31NY

2 RENÉ DELESCEN TUTORIAL
Complete LinkedIn Profile Walkthrough

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN
Every section filled in live, on-screen, from photo to custom URL

WATCH AT:
https://youtu.be/bZ2xiTvVhpM?si=ImbfMnVTm3dJKMnS

Watch Dr. Dixon's workshop first for strategy, then follow René's tutorial to complete every section of your profile start to finish!





🎓 **Pro Tip — Digital Diploma:** When you receive your USI digital diploma, upload it directly to your LinkedIn profile under Licenses & Certifications. It signals credential verification to recruiters and makes your profile stand out.

Profiles with photos receive 21x more views and 36x more messages

THE SEO HEADLINE FORMULA

Headline Formula (220 Characters Max)

[Target Role] | [Key Expertise] | [Value Proposition] | [USI Program]



Default Headline

"Graduate Student at University of Southern Indiana"

No keywords, no value, won't appear in recruiter searches

Optimized Headline

"Healthcare Administrator | Revenue Cycle & HIPAA Compliance | Improving Operational Efficiency | MHA Candidate, USI"

Keyword-rich, searchable, demonstrates value

Program-Specific Examples:

MBA

"Strategic Business Leader | P&L Management & Cross-Functional Teams | Driving Growth | MBA Candidate, USI"

MSW

"Clinical Social Worker | Trauma-Informed Care & Crisis Intervention | Empowering Communities | MSW Candidate, USI"

Copilot Prompt

"Based on these 5 job descriptions, what keywords should I include in my LinkedIn headline to be found by recruiters?"

Your headline appears in search results, connection requests, and comments you make

SEO KEYWORD EXTRACTION WITH COPILOT

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1. **COLLECT**
   Find 5-10 job postings for your target role and copy the full descriptions
2. **ANALYZE**
   Paste into Copilot and ask for the most frequently used keywords
3. **INTEGRATE**
   Add top keywords to headline, about, experience, and skills sections for SEO optimization



Copilot Prompts For Keyword Extraction

"Analyze these job descriptions and list the top 20 most frequently mentioned skills and qualifications"

"What keywords do recruiters searching for [target role] typically use?"

"Compare my LinkedIn profile to these job descriptions - what keywords am I missing?"

High Impact Placements

Headline (most important), About section first 300 chars, Job titles, Skills section

Keyword Density Tip

Repeat important keywords 3-5 times naturally across your profile for better search ranking

LinkedIn's algorithm weighs headline keywords most heavily in search results

WRITING YOUR ABOUT SECTION

The About Section Structure (2,600 Characters)

Opening Hook (First 300 chars)
This appears before “see more” - make it count! Include target role and top keywords.

Your Story
Why you chose this field, what drives you, your unique perspective.

Key Achievements
2-3 notable accomplishments with metrics. Weave in keywords naturally.

Call to Action
What you're looking for, how to connect with you.

Example Opening (MHA Student)

“Healthcare administrator passionate about improving patient outcomes through operational excellence. Currently pursuing my MHA at USI with focus on revenue cycle management, HIPAA compliance, and quality improvement initiatives. With 5+ years in clinical operations, I bring a unique perspective to healthcare administration...”

Keywords: healthcare administrator, patient outcomes, MHA, revenue cycle, HIPAA, quality improvement

Writing Tips

- ✓ Write in first person (“I” not “they”)
- ✓ Break into short paragraphs
- ✓ Include industry-specific keywords
- ✓ Add personality - this isn’t a resume



Copilot Prompt

“Help me write an engaging LinkedIn About section that incorporates these keywords: [list]. Make it conversational and include a hook in the first 300 characters.”

Only 300 characters show before "see more" - front-load your keywords and value proposition

7 LINKEDIN PROFILE MISTAKES TO AVOID

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1. **Default Headline**
   “Student at USI” has zero search value
2. **No Photo or Unprofessional Photo**
   Profiles without photos get 21x fewer views
3. **Empty About Section**
   Missing prime keyword real estate
4. **Copy-Paste Resume**
   LinkedIn allows more space - use it for storytelling
5. **Ignoring Skill Section**
   You can add 50 skills - use them all strategically
6. **Not Engaging**
   Algorithm rewards comments, posts, and connections
7. **Default URL**
   linkedin.com/in/random-numbers looks unprofessional



Engagement Tip

Comment thoughtfully on 3-5 posts per week in your field. This increases your visibility to recruiters.

Schedule a LinkedIn profile review with the Career Success Center

RESOURCES & YOUR ACTION PLAN

USI CAREER SUCCESS CENTER

Orr Center, Room 1051	(812) 464-1865	usi.edu/career-success	LinkedIn Reviews via Career Launch

Expert Resources

- The Job Insiders (thejobinsiders.com)
- LinkedIn Economic Graph Research
- Apollo.io (company research)
- Creating an Effective LinkedIn Profile: USI Graduate Student Workshop | Dr. Dixon
- Create a PROFESSIONAL LinkedIn Profile (2026) | René Delescen

LinkedIn Learning (Free for USI)

- Access via myUSI portal
- Courses on profile optimization, networking

Your 7-Day Action Plan

Day 1-2 — Extract keywords from 5 target job postings using Copilot

Day 3-4 — Rewrite headline using SEO formula + update photo

Day 5-6 — Write About section + add 50 skills + customize URL

Day 7 — Send 5 personalized connection requests

Coming Up Next: PART 4

Strategic Job Search Techniques
Navigating the Hidden Job Market with AI Tools

Questions? Email careersuccess@usi.edu | Thank you for attending!

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

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STRATEGIC JOB SEARCH TECHNIQUES

Navigating the Hidden Job Market with AI Tools



Presented by USI Career Success Center

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ROADMAP TO EXCELLENCE: THE USI GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER WEBINAR SERIES

PHASE 2

Mastering The Market and Advancement



PART 6-7: INTERVIEWING & NEGOTIATION

Master diverse interview formats and advocate for your worth using market data.



PART 8: GLOBAL DIFFERENTIATION

Stand out in the market through domestic and international professional experiences.



PART 9: THE SERIES FINALE

Leverage your new degree to secure internal promotions and own your next chapter.



PART 5: STRATEGIC NETWORKING

Build professional relationships that open doors beyond traditional job boards



PART 3-4: DIGITAL PRESENCE & SEARCH STRATEGY

Optimize your LinkedIn brand and adopt data-driven, targeted job search strategies.



PART 1-2: CORE DOCUMENT CREATION

Build a comprehensive CV and translate experience into ATS-optimized resumes and cover letters

PHASE 1

Establishing Your Professional Brand

THE JOB SEARCH REALITY CHECK

250+ Applications	Average applications needed to receive 4-6 interviews
70%	of jobs are filled through the “hidden job market”
4-5x More Likely	Referred candidates are to be hired than cold applicants
40% Faster	Referred candidates are hired compared to job board applicants



The Hidden Job Market

Yes- this is REAL! Jobs filled through networking, referrals, and internal promotions **BEFORE** they're ever posted publicly.

Today's Strategy

Stop competing with 250+ applicants. Learn to find opportunities **BEFORE** they're posted and get referred by insiders.

Sources: Jobvite Recruiter Nation Survey, LinkedIn Talent Solutions

THE 4-STEP STRATEGIC JOB SEARCH

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1 Define Target

Identify 3-5 target job titles using AI to discover variations you might miss

Use Copilot to find related job titles

2 Build List

Create a list of 20-30 target companies aligned with your values and goals

Research industry leaders + hidden gems

3 Research

Deep dive into each company's culture, challenges, and growth areas

Find insiders on LinkedIn to connect

4 Apply Smart

Tailor applications, time submissions strategically, seek referrals first

Quality over quantity approach



Key Mindset Shift

You're not looking for ANY job — you're targeting specific opportunities at specific companies where you can add value and grow.

Strategic job seekers report 3x higher satisfaction with their eventual role

AI-POWERED COMPANY DISCOVERY

Why This Matters

Most job seekers only apply to companies they already know. AI can uncover dozens of employer matches you've never considered.

Copilot Prompt 1: Find Target Companies

"I'm interested in [target role] in [city/industry]. What types of companies or organizations hire for this role? Give me 10–15 specific employers in this area."

Copilot Prompt 2: Dig Deeper

"Which companies in [location/industry] hire [target role]? Which are growing or hiring now?"

Example: HR Professional in Evansville, IN

You Might Search: "HR Manager Evansville Indiana"

AI-Identified Employers: Toyota Manufacturing Indiana, Old National Bank, Deaconess Health System, GAGE Marketing Group, USI, SWIRCA & More, Alcoa Warrick Operations



Action

Build a list of 15–20 target companies using AI. Follow each one on LinkedIn and set up company-specific job alerts on LinkedIn and Indeed. Then follow each company on LinkedIn for instant job alert coverage.

AI can surface 3–5x more relevant employers than manual searching alone

AI-POWERED JOB TITLE DISCOVERY

Why This Matters

The same role can have 10+ different titles across companies. If you only search for one title, you're missing opportunities.

Copilot Prompt 1: Title Variations

"I'm interested in [target role]. What are all the different job titles companies might use for similar positions? Include variations across industries."

Copilot Prompt 2: Career Paths

"What entry-level and mid-level positions lead to [target role]? What adjacent roles might also be a good fit for someone with my background in [field]?"

Example: Healthcare Administration Titles

You Might Search: "Healthcare Administrator"

Also Search These Variations: Health Services Manager, Clinical Operations Manager, Practice Manager, Medical Office Administrator, Healthcare Operations Coordinator, Patient Services Director



Action

Create a list of 5-10 job title variations for your target role. Set up job alerts for ALL of them on LinkedIn, Indeed, and Career Launch.

Expanding your title search can increase relevant opportunities by 3-5x

BUILDING YOUR TARGET COMPANY LIST

Where to Find Target Companies



Industry Leaders
"Best Places to Work" lists, Fortune 500, industry publications

Growing Companies
Inc. 5000, local business journals, LinkedIn news

Hidden Gems
LinkedIn company pages, Glassdoor, alumni network employers

Local/Regional
Chamber of Commerce, economic development sites, USI employer partners

Copilot Research Prompt

"What are the top companies in [industry] in [location]? Include both large employers and growing mid-size companies. What are their recent news, growth areas, and company culture highlights?"

Company Selection Criteria

- ✓ Mission/values alignment
- ✓ Growth trajectory
- ✓ Development opportunities
- ✓ Culture fit (Glassdoor reviews)
- ✓ Location/remote options

Steppingblocks



Goal: 20-30 Companies

Track in spreadsheet: Company, Website, Key contacts, Job alerts set, Notes

Follow your target companies on LinkedIn to see job postings first

OPTIMAL APPLICATION TIMING

8x Higher Response Rate

When you apply within 24-48 hours of a job posting

Best Days of Apply

Mon - Wed

Hiring managers review applications early in the week. Thursday/Friday applications often sit until Monday.

Best Time of Day

06 - 10 am

Your application appears at the top of the recruiter's inbox when they start their day.

Speed Matters

24 - 48 hrs

Many positions receive 50%+ of applications in the first 48 hours. Late applications get buried.



Pro Tip

Set up instant job alerts on LinkedIn, Indeed, and Career Launch. When you get an alert for a great match, drop everything and apply within 24 hours with a tailored resume.

Source: TalentWorks Application Timing Study

SET UP LINKEDIN JOB ALERTS

Never Miss an Opportunity

Set up instant alerts so every matching role lands in your inbox the moment it posts

STEP 1: SEARCH

Jobs Tab

Click Jobs at the top of LinkedIn. Search your target role, location, and filter by job type and date posted.

STEP 2: ACTIVATE

Set Alert

Toggle “Set Alert” at top of results. Choose Daily for active searches or Weekly to stay open.

STEP 3: MAXIMIZE

20 Alerts

LinkedIn allows up to 20 active alerts. Create one per job title variation AND one per target company page for full coverage.



Pro Tip

Create a separate alert for each job title variation (e.g. “HR Manager” AND “Human Resources Manager”). You can have up to 20 active alerts — use them all. Manage alerts anytime under Jobs > Preferences > Job Alerts.

🎓 **Step-by-step video tutorial by Oliver Schinkten:** linkedin.com/learning/linkedin-quick-tips-24566373/set-up-job-alerts *(free with a LinkedIn account)*



Source: LinkedIn Help Center, linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/a1420165

GETTING REFERRALS THAT WORK

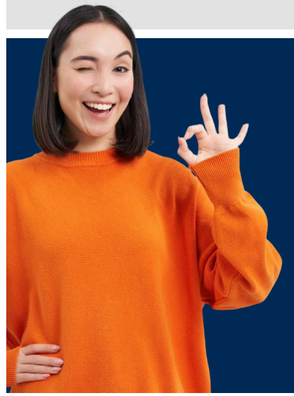
4-5x More likely to be hired with a referral

55% Faster hiring process for referred candidates

46% Of hires at top companies come from referrals

Referral Request Template

“Hi [Name], I noticed you work at [Company] and I'm very interested in the [Position] role. I've researched the company extensively and believe my experience in [relevant skill] would be valuable. Would you be open to a brief call to learn about your experience there? If you feel comfortable, I'd be grateful for a referral. Either way, I appreciate any insights you can share.”



DO

- Research the person and company first
- Be specific about the role you want
- Make it easy for them to say yes
- Follow up with a thank you regardless

DON’T

- Ask strangers to refer you cold
- Send generic copy-paste messages
- Pressure or make them uncomfortable
- Forget to update them on your progress



USI Alumni Mentor Network connects you with alumni at target companies — activate in Career Launch

RESOURCES & YOUR ACTION PLAN

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Career Launch: Job postings + Alumni Network

Indiana Partners

- Ascend Indiana - Job matching for Indiana talent
- Parker Dewey - Paid micro-internships
- Indiana INTERNnet - Internship database

Job Search Tools

- LinkedIn Jobs + Company Research
- Glassdoor - Reviews + Salary data
- Apollo.io - Company + Contact research

Stepping blocks

Your 7-Day Action Plan

Day 1-2 — Use Copilot to generate 5-10 job title variations

Day 3-4 — Build target company list (20-30 companies)

Day 5-6 — Set up job alerts + identify 5 insider contacts

Day 7 — Send first referral request using template

Coming Up Next: PART 5

Professional Networking
Building Authentic Connections for Long-Term Career Success

Questions? Email careersuccess@usi.edu | Thank you for attending!

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

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PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

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PHASE 1
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THE POWER OF PROFESSIONAL CONNECTIONS

85% commonly cited estimates suggest up to 85% of jobs are filled through networking

70% of jobs are never publicly advertised

4-5x Referred candidates are 4-5x more likely to be hired

54% of professionals found their current job through connections

Network is not

Asking strangers for jobs, collecting business cards, or being transactional

Network is

Building genuine relationships, offering value first, creating mutual benefit over time

> "Your network is your net worth."
>
> - Porter Gale, former VP of Marketing at Virgin America

Sources: LinkedIn, HubSpot Career Research, CNBC Workplace Survey

BUILDING YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

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Inner Circle

Close mentors, advisors, trusted colleagues who actively support your career

5-10 People

Professional Network

Industry peers, former colleagues, classmates you stay in regular contact with

50-150 People

Extend Network

LinkedIn connections, conference contacts, acquaintances in your field

500+ People

USI Resources

- Alumni Mentor Network (Career Launch)
- Professors and faculty advisors
- Guest speakers in your program
- Career fairs and employer events
- USI Mentor Match - usi.edu/alumni/mentor-match

Professional Organization

- SHRM, ACHE, NASW, ASPA chapters
- Industry conferences and events
- Local business organizations
- Volunteer opportunities

Digital Networking

- LinkedIn (strategic connections)
- Industry Slack/Discord communities
- Virtual conferences and webinars
- Professional Twitter/X communities

Quality Over Quantity

100 meaningful connections are more valuable than 1,000 random LinkedIn contacts. Focus on building real relationships.

The average person is connected to 250+ people — leverage your existing network first

THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Definition: A 20–30-minute conversation where YOU ask questions to learn about someone's career path, industry insights, and advice — NOT to ask for a job.

Request Template

"Hi [Name], I'm a graduate student in [program] at USI exploring careers in [field]. I found your profile inspiring, especially your work at [company/ project]. Would you have 20 minutes for a brief call to share your career insights? I'd be grateful for any advice."

Success Tips

✓ Be specific about why you chose them
✓ Keep to your time limit (respect their time)
✓ Send a thank you within 24 hours
✓ Ask: "Who else should I talk to?"

Questions To Ask



"How did you get started in this field?"
"What does a typical day look like in your role?"
"What skills are most important for success?"
"What do you wish you knew when starting out?"
"What challenges is the industry facing?"
"What professional organizations do you recommend?"
"What advice would you give someone in my position?"
"Who else would you suggest I speak with?"

Never Ask For A Job

in an informational interview. The moment you ask, the dynamic changes. Focus on learning — jobs often come naturally from relationships you build.

Aim to conduct 2-3 informational interviews per month during your job search

LINKEDIN NETWORKING STRATEGIES

Personalized Connection Request (300 Char Limit)

"Hi [Name], I'm an MHA student at USI interested in healthcare operations. I noticed your work at [Company] and would love to connect and learn from your career path. Hope to stay in touch!"

Engagement Strategies

- Comment thoughtfully on posts (not just "Great post!")
- Share industry articles with your perspective
- Congratulate connections on achievements
- React to posts from target companies
- *Aim for 3-5 meaningful interactions daily*

Who To Connect With

- USI alumni in your field (search by school)
- Hiring managers at target companies
- Industry thought leaders
- Recruiters in your field
- Peers in your graduate program

After They Accept

- Send a thank you message within 24 hours
- Reference something specific from their profile
- Offer value: share a relevant article
- Ask one thoughtful question
- *Don't immediately ask for a job or favor*

Copilot Prompt

"Write a personalized LinkedIn connection request for [Name] who works as [Title] at [Company]. I'm interested in [reason]. Keep it under 300 characters."

Steppingblocks

Steppingblocks shows you real career outcomes for your major, so you know exactly where to aim. Then use LinkedIn to start connecting with people already working in those roles!

Personalized connection requests have a 300% higher acceptance rate than generic requests

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS & EVENTS

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Healthcare (MHA/MSN)

ACHE, MGMA, HFMA, AONE

Student memberships available

Business (MBA)

Local Chamber, Rotary, MBA associations

Industry-specific groups

Social Work/Public Admin

NASW, ASPA, local nonprofit networks

Government leadership programs

Before The Event

– Review attendee/speaker list
– Identify 3-5 people to meet
– Prepare your 30-second intro
– Prepare 2-3 conversation starters
– Bring business cards

During The Event

– Arrive early (less crowded)
– Approach people standing alone
– Ask open-ended questions
– Listen more than you talk
– Take notes on your phone

After The Event

– Connect on LinkedIn within 24 hrs
– Reference specific conversation
– Send follow-up email if promised
– Add contacts to your tracker
– Schedule next touchpoint

30-SECOND INTRO: “Hi, I'm [Name], an MHA student at USI focusing on [specialty]. I'm currently working on [project/practicum] and I'm interested in [area]. What brings you here today?”

Most professional associations offer discounted student memberships — ask about rates

MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS OVER TIME

The Fortune Is In The Follow-up

80% of networking value comes from nurturing relationships over time, not the initial meeting.

Staying In Touch

- Share relevant articles they'd find useful
- Congratulate on promotions/ achievements
- Comment on their LinkedIn posts
- Send holiday or birthday greetings
- Introduce them to others in your network

Touch base every 2-3 months minimum

Value You Can Over

- Industry news or research they missed
- Introductions to your connections
- Skills/perspective from your program
- Event or webinar recommendations
- Genuine appreciation and support

Give before you ask

Tracking Your Network

- Create a simple spreadsheet:
- Name, Company, How you met
- Last contact date
- Key details (interests, family, etc.)
- Next follow-up date

Set calendar reminders

The Fortune Is In The Follow-up

"Hi [Name], I saw [article/news about their company/industry] and thought of you. Hope things are going well at [Company]. I wanted to share that [brief update about you]. Would love to catch up sometime!"

Schedule 30 minutes weekly to maintain your network — it pays dividends throughout your career

RESOURCES & YOUR ACTION PLAN

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Alumni Mentor Network via Career Launch

Networking Events
- USI Career Fairs (Fall & Spring)
- Graduate networking mixers
- Employer information sessions

Local Organizations
- Southwest Indiana Chamber
- Young Professionals Network
- Field-specific associations

Your 7-Day Action Plan

Day 1-2 — Activate USI Alumni Mentor Network in Career Launch

Day 3-4 — Send 5 personalized LinkedIn connection requests

Day 5-6 — Request 1 informational interview using template

Day 7 — Create your network tracking spreadsheet

Coming Up Next: PART 6 — INTERVIEW MASTERY
AI-Powered Preparation for Behavioral & Technical Interviews

Questions? Email careersuccess@usi.edu | Thank you for attending the complete series!

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

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INTERVIEW MASTERY

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THE MODERN INTERVIEW LANDSCAPE

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Phone Screen

15-30 min with Human Resources

Basic qualifications, salary expectations, availability

Behavioural

45-60 min with hiring manager

Past experiences predict future performance

Technical/Case

30-60 min skills assessment

Problem-solving, technical knowledge

Panel

60-90 min with multiple interviewers

Multiple perspectives, team fit assessment

73% of interviewers use behavioral interviews

69.6% of hiring decisions made in first 90 seconds

47% of interviews fail due to a lack of preparation by the candidate



Key Insight

Interviews are predictable. The same questions are asked repeatedly. Preparation is the single biggest differentiator between candidates who get offers and those who don't.

Sources: LinkedIn Talent Solutions, SHRM Interview Research

THE STAR METHOD FOR BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWS

S **Situation**
Set the context. When? Where? What was happening?

T **Task**
Your specific responsibility. What were YOU asked to do?

A **Action**
What YOU did. Be specific. Use “I” not “we”.

R **Result**
Measurable outcome. Quantify when possible.

Question

“Tell me about a time you had to manage a difficult project under a tight deadline.”

Timing Tip

Keep answers to 90-120 seconds.
Practice with a timer!

Star Response Example

S: “During my practicum at Regional Hospital, our team was tasked with implementing a new patient scheduling system in just 3 weeks.”

T: “I was responsible for training 25 staff members while maintaining daily operations.”

A: “I created a phased training schedule, developed quick-reference guides, and held daily 15-minute check-ins to address questions.”

R: “We completed implementation 2 days early with 100% staff competency and reduced scheduling errors by 35%.”

Prepare 8-10 STAR stories that can be adapted to multiple questions

AI-POWERED INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Predict Question

"Based on this job description, what are the 10 most likely behavioral interview questions I'll be asked? Include questions about [key requirements from posting]."

Company Research

"Tell me about [Company]: their mission, recent news, challenges in their industry, and what someone interviewing there should know."

Practice Feedback

"Here's my STAR answer to [question]. Rate it on a scale of 1-10 and tell me specifically how to improve it. Is it too long? Missing details?"

24 Hours Before

- ✓ Research company news (last 30 days)
- ✓ Review job description keywords
- ✓ Prepare 8-10 STAR stories
- ✓ Write 3-5 questions to ask
- ✓ LinkedIn stalk your interviewers

Day of Interview

- ✓ Review your STAR stories
- ✓ Check company news one more time
- ✓ Arrive 10-15 min early
- ✓ Bring copies of resume
- ✓ Bring notepad for questions

Virtual Interview Tips

- ✓ Test tech 30 min before
- ✓ Professional background
- ✓ Eye contact = look at camera
- ✓ Good lighting on your face
- ✓ Notes visible but off-screen

Schedule mock interviews through Career Launch — practice makes permanent!

TOP BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS BY FIELD

Healthcare (MHA/MSN)

“Describe a time you handled a difficult patient/family situation”
“How have you improved a process or workflow?”
“Tell me about managing competing priorities”

Business (MBA)

“Tell me about a time you led a team through change”
“Describe a difficult decision with incomplete data”
“How did you handle a conflict with a colleague?”

Social Work (MSW)

“Describe your approach to working with resistant clients”
“How do you practice self-care to prevent burnout?”
“Tell me about an ethical dilemma you faced”

Public Admin (MPA)

“How have you engaged stakeholders with competing interests?”
“Describe a policy you helped implement”
“Tell me about managing with limited resources”

Education (MSE)

“How do you differentiate instruction for diverse learners?”
“Describe a time you worked with a struggling student”
“How do you handle parent concerns?”

Criminal Justice (MACJ)

“Describe a situation where you balanced policy with individual circumstances”
“How do you build trust with skeptical communities?”
“Tell me about an ethical dilemma you resolved”

Sociology (MASOC)

“How have you translated research findings into actionable recommendations?”
“Describe a project where you engaged a diverse or underserved community”
“How do you approach data collection with vulnerable populations?”

Sport Management (MSSM)

“Tell me about managing a large-scale event under pressure”
“How have you worked with sponsors, donors, or community partners?”
“Describe a time you drove revenue, attendance, or fan engagement”

English (MAE)

"Describe a time you communicated complex ideas to a non-expert audience"
"Tell me about a research or writing project you led from start to finish"
"How have you adapted your communication style for different contexts?"

Copilot Tip

“Act as an interviewer for a [job title] position. Ask me behavioral questions one at a time and give feedback.

HANDLING DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

"Tell me about yourself"

Use the Present-Past-Future formula:

- **Present:** Current role/program
- **Past:** Relevant Background
- **Future:** Why this role

Keep to 90-120 second's max

"What's Your Greatest Weakness?"

Name a REAL weakness, then show growth:

- **Identify:** Genuine area for growth
- **Action:** Steps you're taking
- **Progress:** Results so far

Never say "perfectionist" or "work too hard"

"Salary Expectations"

Research first, then use a range:

- **Research:** Glassdoor, Payscale, LinkedIn
- **Range:** "Based on my research..."
- **Flexibility:** "I'm open to discussing"

Know your minimum before negotiating

Techniques For Any Difficult Question

PAUSE: Take 2-3 seconds to think — silence is okay
CLARIFY: "Could you tell me more about what you're looking for?"
BRIDGE: Redirect to a strength when appropriate

Illegal Questions

You don't have to answer questions about age, religion, marital status, children, disability, or national origin.

REDIRECT: "I'm not sure how that relates to the role, but I'd be happy to discuss my qualifications..."

Preparation eliminates 90% of interview anxiety

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR INTERVIEWER

47% of candidates are rejected for not knowing enough about the company. Your questions show you've done your homework.

Power Closing Question

"Based on our conversation today, do you have any concerns about my qualifications that I could address?"

This gives you a chance to overcome objections before leaving.



Don't Ask

Salary/benefits in first interview (wait for offer), anything easily found on website, "What does your company do?", vacation time, or questions that sound like you're already planning to leave

About The Role

"What does success look like in this position in the first 90 days?"
"What are the biggest challenges someone in this role will face?"
"How would you describe the team I'd be working with?"

About Growth

"What professional development opportunities are available?"
"How have others in this role progressed within the organization?"
"What skills are most important to develop here?"

About Culture

"How would you describe the work environment here?"
"What do you enjoy most about working here?"
"How does the organization support work-life balance?"

Prepare 5+ questions — some will be answered during the interview

RESOURCES & YOUR ACTION PLAN

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Mock Interviews via Career Launch

Practice Tools
- Big Interview (free via Career Launch)
- Interview Warmup by Google (free)
- Microsoft Copilot for practice feedback

Company Research
- Glassdoor - Interview questions + reviews
- LinkedIn - Interviewer backgrounds
- Company news via Google Alerts

Your 7-Day Action Plan

Day 1-2 — Write your "Tell me about yourself" answer (90-120 sec)

Day 3-4 — Develop 8-10 STAR stories for common questions

Day 5-6 — Practice with Copilot or Big Interview (record yourself)

Day 7 — Schedule mock interview via Career Launch

Coming Up Next: PART 7

SALARY NEGOTIATION AND OFFER EVALUATION

Maximizing Your Worth & Making Informed Career Decisions

Questions? Email careersuccess@usi.edu | Thank you for attending!

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

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SALARY NEGOTIATION AND OFFER EVALUATION

Maximizing Your Worth & Making Informed Career Decisions



Presented by USI Career Success Center

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Build a comprehensive CV and translate experience into ATS-optimized resumes and cover letters

PHASE 1
Establishing Your Professional Brand

THE COST OF NOT NEGOTIATING

$1M+ Lifetime earnings lost by not negotiating your first salary

> “You don't get what you deserve. You get what you negotiate.”
>
> - Chester Karrass

55% don’t negotiate

70% employers expect it

85% who ask get more

Gender Gap

Women negotiate 4x less often than men

The Compound Effect

$5,000 less now = less in every raise, bonus, and retirement contribution

KNOW YOUR MARKET VALUE

GLASSDOOR	LinkedIn	payscale	BLS
Company-specific data	Role & location ranges	Experience adjustments	Official data

FLOOR	TARGET	STRETCH
$___	$___	$___
Minimum you'll accept	What you're aiming for	Ambitious but defensible

Copilot Prompt

"What is the typical salary range for a [Job Title] with [X years] in [Location]?"

Steppingblocks → **See where USI graduates landed!**

Professional Associations: ACHE | NASW | SHRM | AACN

Cross-Reference Rule: Check 3-4 sources before negotiating

TOTAL COMPENSATION FRAMEWORK

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Critical

Base salary is just one component. Evaluate the TOTAL package.

Base Salary
Fixed annual compensation

Signing Bonus
One-time (negotiable!)

Annual Bonus
Ask about typical %

Retirement
401(k) match %, vesting

Health Benefit
Premiums, HSA, coverage

PTO
Vacation, sick, holidays

Education
Tuition, professional dev

Flexibility
Remote, hours, schedule

Relocation
Moving, housing, travel

Which Offer Is Worth More?

OFFER A

$78,000

No 401k • Basic insurance

VS

OFFER B

$70,000

6% match • $5k tuition

B may be worth MORE!

THE 4-STEP NEGOTIATION FRAMEWORK

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1 Express Enthusiasm

"I'm excited..."

2 Provide Rationale

"Based on research..."

3 Make The Ask

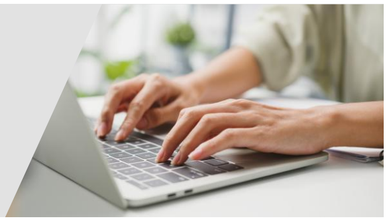
"I was hoping for $X..."

4 Pause & Listen

Silence is powerful

Script Template

"Thank you for this offer—I'm genuinely excited about joining [Company]. Based on my research of market rates and my [qualification], I was hoping we could discuss a base salary of $[Target].



Never give a number first
..if you can avoid it

Wait for written offer
..then negotiate

Ask for 24-48 hours
..to review any offer

Focus on value
..not personal needs

HANDLING COMMON SCENARIOS

“What are your salary expectations?”	“This is our best offer”	“We don’t negotiate salaries”	You have multiple offers
DEFLECT	**PIVOT**	**ALTERNATIVE**	**LEVERAGE (honestly)**
“I'm flexible. Could you share the budgeted range?”	“Is there flexibility on signing bonus, PTO, or earlier review date?”	“Could we establish a 6-month review with potential adjustment?”	“I have another offer but you're my first choice. Can we close the gap?”



Practice with Copilot

“Act as a hiring manager. Give me realistic pushback on my salary negotiation.”

EVALUATING THE COMPLETE OFFER

Decision Framework

Career Growth
Will this develop skills for my 5-year goal?

Financial Security
Does total compensation meet my needs?

Culture Fit
Does the environment align with my values?

Manager Relationship
Do I trust my future supervisor?

Gut Check
Am I excited or settling?

Red Flags to Watch

Pressure to decide immediately
Legitimate employers give you time

Won't put promises in writing
Verbal commitments aren't binding

High turnover in role
Ask why the position is open

Vague answers about growth
Good employers have clear paths

Glassdoor reviews don't match
Trust patterns, not outliers

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Available Services

- Offer evaluation appointments
- Negotiation practice sessions
- Book via Career Launch

Salary Research Tool

- Glassdoor
- LinkedIn
- Steppingblocks
- PayScale
- Bureau of Labor Statistic (BLS.gov)

Your 7-Day Pre Negotiation Plan

Day 1-2 — Research salary data from 4+ sources

Day 3-4 — Identify FLOOR, TARGET, STRETCH numbers

Day 5-6 — Write your negotiation script & Practice with Copilot or friend

Day 7 — Schedule Career Center appointment

Coming Up Next: PART 8 — BEYOND YOUR BORDERS
How Expanded Experience Builds Your Competitive Edge

Questions? Email careersuccess@usi.edu | Thank you for attending!

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

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REFRAMING "BEYOND BORDERS"

"Beyond Borders"

means any experience that took you outside your professional, geographic, or cultural comfort zone.

Geographic

Out-of-state internships, regional practicums, international programs, remote work for distant employers.

Cross-sector

Healthcare → nonprofit, corporate → government, for-profit → education, volunteer to professional bridge.

Cultural

Serving diverse populations, multilingual environments, cross-cultural collaboration, underserved communities.



You don't have to leave the country to build a globally competitive edge.

THE DATA: WHY EXPANDED EXPERIENCE MATTERS

66%

of interns are more likely to receive a full-time job offer.

NACE, 2024

Top 5

skill employers seek is adaptability - developed through cross-context experience.

Yale OCS, 2023

77%

of MBA graduates report salary increases after roles leveraging cross-sector skills.

GMAC, 2021

> Students who complete experiential learning activities show significantly higher career satisfaction and starting salary outcomes compared to peers without comparable experiences."
>
> *National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). (2024). NACE Experiential Education Survey.*

Source: NACE (2024) Experiential Education Survey | Yale Office of Career Strategy (2023) | GMAC (2024) Corporate Recruiters Survey

TYPES OF EXPANDED EXPERIENCE

Expect questions that dig into your ACTUAL experience!

01

Out-of-State Internships & Practicums

Any fieldwork, clinical rotation, or internship completed in a different state or region. Especially valuable for healthcare, social work, and education students.

LOCAL ACCESS

02

Cross-Sector Volunteer Leadership

Leading or coordinating volunteer programs across sectors - healthcare professional volunteering in nonprofit, business student serving on a community board.

LOCAL ACCESS

03

Regional & Rural Experience

Serving underserved or underrepresented geographic communities. Rural health practicums, Appalachian outreach, tribal community partnerships.

LOCAL ACCESS

04

International Programs & Global Work

Study abroad, international research collaborations, global virtual internships, humanitarian fieldwork. Demonstrates cross-cultural competency.

GLOBAL ACCESS

RESUME & CV BEST PRACTICES

Documenting Expanded Experience - Yale SOM & Harvard OCS Frameworks

Listing Location

- Always list City, State explicitly - never assume the reader knows your organization's location (Yale SOM Resume Guide, 2022).
- For international experience: City, Country.
- For remote roles serving distant employers: list employer's HQ city, then note 'Remote' in parentheses.

Format:

Organization Name | City, State | Month Year – Month Year.

Sar Bullet Framework

Situation → Action → Result

S Context: cross-cultural, cross-sector, or cross-geographic setting.

A Specific transferable action YOU took in that unfamiliar environment.

R Quantified or qualified result - impact on people, programs, or outcomes.

Transferable Skills to Highlight:

Adaptability • Cross-cultural Communication • Resourcefulness • Problem-Solving • Initiative

Sources: Yale SOM Career Development Office (2022). Resume writing guide. https://som.yale.edu/students/careers | Harvard Office of Career Services. (n.d.). Resume & cover letter guide. https://ocs.fas.harvard.edu

RESUME BULLETS: BEFORE & AFTER

Applying the SAR Framework to Expanded Experience

Healthcare / MSN Student

BEFORE:
Completed clinical rotation in rural Indiana.

AFTER:
Delivered primary care to 45+ underserved patients weekly during 300-hour rural clinical rotation in Sullivan County, IN - applying trauma-informed assessment in a resource-limited environment with no attending physician on-site.

MBA Student - Cross-Sector Volunteer

BEFORE:
Volunteered with Boys & Girls Club.

AFTER:
Designed and facilitated 6-session financial literacy curriculum for 28 adolescents at Boys & Girls Club of Evansville, adapting corporate training methodology to community nonprofit context; 94% of participants demonstrated improved savings behavior (pre/post survey).

MSW Student - Out-of-State Practicum

BEFORE:
Completed internship in Chicago.

AFTER:
Managed caseload of 18 at-risk youth at Chicago Department of Family Services (Chicago, IL), navigating multi-agency systems and cross-cultural family dynamics in an urban setting distinct from prior professional experience.

SAR Framework adapted from Yale SOM Career Development Office (2022) and Harvard OCS Resume Guide (n.d.)

INTERVIEW FRAMEWORK: STAR + EXPANDED CONTEXT

S | Situation

Set the cross-context stage: "While completing my practicum in rural Sullivan County, where the nearest hospital was 45 minutes away..."

T | Task

Name the specific challenge that required adaptation: "I was responsible for conducting initial mental health assessments with no supervising clinician present on-site."

A | Action

Describe YOUR specific actions - emphasize adaptability, resourcefulness, cross-cultural skill: "I developed a remote consultation protocol with the supervising psychiatrist and created a crisis resource card for patients."

R | Result

Quantify or qualify impact: "Zero escalation incidents across 300+ patient contacts; protocol later adopted by the practicum site as standard practice."

Out-of-State Internships & Practicums:

"Tell me about a time you adapted to an unfamiliar environment." / "Describe working with a population different from your own." / "Give an example of resourcefulness under constraint."

BUILDING EXPANDED EXPERIENCE NOW

Accessible pathways for every USI graduate student

Cross-Context Practicums

Request placements in underserved, rural, or culturally distinct communities. Talk to your program director - many have relationships with sites outside the Tri-State area.

USI Community Partnerships

Boys & Girls Club of Evansville, YWCA, Southwest Indiana Workforce Board actively seek graduate-level volunteers and project leaders. Contact the Career Success Center for introductions.

Virtual & Remote Internships

Remote internships with employers in other states count as geographic expanded experience.
Platforms: Career Launch, Parker Dewey (remote only), LinkedIn Remote Jobs. Filter by 'remote' and ‘graduate level.’

International Programs

USI's Office of Study Abroad & International Programs offers faculty-led trips, exchange programs, and global research partnerships. FAFSA aid can apply. usi.edu/global

Copilot Prompt

“I am a [program] graduate student at USI in Evansville, Indiana. Suggest 5 ways I can build expanded cross-context experience before graduation, including remote and local options.”

THE ROI OF EXPANDED EXPERIENCE

What the Research Tells Employers - and What It Tells You

> Adaptability is the #1 competency differentiating high-potential graduate candidates from the rest of the applicant pool - and it is developed through experience in unfamiliar contexts, not through coursework."
>
> *Yale School of the Environment, Career Development Program (2023)*

Starting Salary

85%

Higher job offer rate for students with structured experiential learning.

NACE, 2024

Career Advancement

3x

Faster promotions for employees who demonstrate adaptability in hiring.

Yale OCS, 2023

Network Expansion

Cross-sector

Relationships built through expanded experience open doors within and beyond your industry.

Harvard OCS

Sources: NACE (2024) Experiential Education Survey | Yale School of the Environment Career Development Program (2023) | Yale Office of Career Strategy (2023) | Harvard Office of Career Services (n.d.)

RESOURCES & YOUR ACTION PLAN

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- Schedule via Career Launch (myUSI)

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- LinkedIn Learning (Free via myUSI)
- Career Launch - filter by Remote/National
- Parker Dewey - micro-internships
- usi.edu/global - Study Abroad
- USI Community Partnership Programs

YOUR 7-DAY ACTION PLAN

Day 1-2
Identify 1 expanded experience from your background. Draft 1 SAR bullet.

Day 3
Add location to all resume experience entries (City, State format).

Day 4
Research 1 pathway from Slide 8. Schedule an appointment with CSC.

Day 5-7
Practice your STAR + Expanded Context story aloud. Time it: 90 seconds.

Coming Up Next: PART 9

Your Degree, Your Moment
Leveraging Your Degree to Advance From Within

Questions? Email careersuccess@usi.edu | Thank you for attending!

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

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YOUR DEGREE, YOUR MOMENT

Leveraging Your Graduate Degree to Advance From Within



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THE GRADUATE DEGREE ADVANTAGE: WHAT THE DATA SAYS

The financial & career case for your investment - across all master's programs

$1,840

median weekly earnings for master's degree holders vs. $1,543 for bachelor's.

BLS, 2024

~19%

median salary premium for master's degree over bachelor's in comparable roles.

BLS, 2024

2.2%

unemployment rate for master's degree holders - among the lowest of any education level.

BLS, 2024

$400K+

median weekly earnings for master's degree holders vs. $1,543 for bachelor's.

Georgetown CEW, 2021

INTERNAL ADVANCEMENT vs. EXTERNAL JOB SEARCH

External Search:
Avg. 3-6 months + onboarding ramp time.

Internal Promotion:
Immediate contributions + institutional knowledge retained

Employer Perspective:
Cost of replacing one employee = 50-200% of annual salary (SHRM, 2024).

***Note:** MBA programs provide the most robust outcomes data. BLS master's degree data reflects all graduate-level programs.*

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024). Education pays. https://www.bls.gov/emp/education-pays-handout.pdf | Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. (2021). The College Payoff. https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/collegepayoff2021/ | Society for Human Resource Management. (2024). https://www.shrm.org

BUILDING YOUR INTERNAL VALUE PROPOSITION

Making your graduate degree visible before the promotion conversation

The advancement conversation doesn't start in your manager's office - it starts months earlier, in how you show up every day.

Apply Graduate Frameworks Explicitly

Use the language and methods from your graduate curriculum at work. Name the approach when you apply it - it makes your degree visible in your contributions, not just on your resume.

Quantify Contributions Consistently

Track metrics continuously: cost savings, revenue generated, efficiency gains, people led, projects completed, satisfaction scores. You need numbers when the conversation comes.

Volunteer for High-Visibility Projects

Raise your hand for cross-functional initiatives, process improvement teams, and leadership presentations. Visibility is a prerequisite for advancement.

Mentor & Develop Others

Graduate-level professionals who actively develop colleagues demonstrate leadership readiness - and create advocates. Ask your manager for formal mentoring or coaching assignments.

STRATEGIC INVOLVEMENT PATHWAYS

Where to invest your energy for maximum advancement leverage

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1 Cross-Functional Projects

Join initiatives that cross department boundaries. Demonstrates systems thinking and organizational awareness - hallmarks of graduate-level leadership.

HIGH

2 Process Improvement Initiatives

Lead or participate in quality, efficiency, or redesign projects. Produces quantifiable results that anchor your advancement conversation.

HIGH

3 External Professional Boards

Serve on community boards, professional associations (SHRM, ANA, NASW, AMA), or advisory panels. Signals leadership maturity and external credibility.

MED-HIGH

4 Internal Training & Development

Facilitate training sessions, onboarding programs, or lunch-and-learns applying graduate-level curriculum. A visible leadership development role.

MED

5 Innovation & Strategy Committees

Join strategic planning or innovation teams where graduate-level thinking in your field directly applies - clinical strategy, program design, organizational development.

HIGH

6 Succession Planning Conversations

Ask to be included in development planning discussions. This signals ambition professionally and positions you for formal advancement tracks.

VERY HIGH

DOCUMENTING YOUR PROOF

Documenting Expanded Experience - Yale SOM & Harvard OCS Frameworks

Your Internal Portfolio

(Update Monthly)

1. **Contributions Log:**
   Every significant project: scope, your role, measurable outcome.
2. **Metrics Tracker:**
   Running list of quantifiable wins: $, %, hours, headcount, scores.
3. **Recognition File:**
   Screenshots of praise emails, awards, LinkedIn endorsements, performance notes.
4. **Graduate Studies Application Log:**
   Specific instances where you applied a curriculum framework, clinical approach, or research method at work.
5. **Professional Development:**
   Courses, certifications, conference presentations, publications since your degree.

Sample Contributions Log Entry

Project:	Patient Intake Redesign, Q2-Q3 2025
My Role:	Project Lead (cross-dept team of 6)
Grad Framework:	Trauma-informed care model & process mapping
Outcome:	Reduced patient wait time 22%; satisfaction scores up 18 points
Recognition:	Director of Patient Services cited at All-Staff, Sept 2025
Skills Demonstrated:	Clinical leadership, change management, data analysis, cross-team collaboration

Copilot Prompt: *"Help me write an advancement-ready summary of this project in 3 sentences."*

SUCCESSION PLANNING CONVERSATIONS

How to position yourself - professionally & proactively

Poor succession planning costs S&P 1500 companies an estimated $1 trillion per year in lost productivity.
Fernández-Aráoz, Nagel, & Green. Harvard Business Review. (2021). The High Cost of Poor Succession Planning.

In a 1:1 or Performance Review

"I've been thinking about my professional development and where I can add the most value here. I'd love to understand your vision for this department over the next 18-24 months - and how I might contribute to that trajectory as I complete my graduate degree."

Why It Works: Opens development conversation without pressure. Signals ambition tied to organizational vision.

In a Project Debrief

"This project reinforced some approaches I've been developing in my graduate program around [framework/method]. I'd be interested in being involved in future strategic initiatives in this space - even in an advisory capacity."

Why It Works: Ties graduate degree value to concrete work. Positions you for next high-visibility opportunity.

Requesting Development Conversation

"I'd really value 20 minutes with you to understand what leadership readiness looks like from your perspective - specifically what I should be building toward over the next year."

Why It Works: Explicitly asks manager to invest in your growth. Creates accountability for both parties.

Source: Fernández-Aráoz, C., Nagel, G., & Green, C. (2021). The high cost of poor succession planning. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2021/05/the-high-cost-of-poor-succession-planning

PREPARING YOUR ADVANCEMENT CONVERSATION

Evidence-based, forward-facing, & professionally framed

1	Open	Acknowledge the relationship and your investment in the organization. *"I've been deeply committed to [org name] for [X] years, and my graduate degree is directly tied to my intention to grow here."*
2	Evidence	Present 3 documented contributions with metrics from your portfolio. *"In Q2, I led [project], which resulted in [outcome]. In Q3, I [action], producing [result]."*
3	Degree Value	Name specific ways your graduate training has increased your organizational contribution. *"My graduate curriculum in [area] directly informed how I approached [specific work], which produced [outcome]."*
4	Forward Vision	A powerful reframe: present not just what you've done, but what you'll accomplish in the role. *"In [target title], my focus will be [specific contribution]. Here's my 90-day vision..."*
5	Ask	Make a specific, clear request with timing. *"I'd like to move into [title] by [date]. What would need to be in place for that to happen?"*

Harvard Office of Career Services (n.d.). Negotiation & career advancement resources. https://ocs.fas.harvard.edu

NEGOTIATING SALARY & TITLE

Evidence-based negotiation for graduate-level advancement

Market Data

- BLS Occupational Outlook: salary ranges by occupation & region
- Steppingblocks (usi.steppingblocks.com): real salary & career outcomes from USI graduates with your degree
- LinkedIn Salary Insights by title, geography, experience
- Present as: 'The market range for this role is X-Y. My contributions and graduate credential place me at Y.'

Your Documented Value

- Cite 3 specific metrics from your portfolio
- Name the graduate frameworks you've applied that produced results
- Reference external recognition or awards
- Reference peer comparables if known (carefully).

Future Value Framing

- Lead with what you'll accomplish at the new level
- Present your 90-day plan for the target role
- Frame salary as investment in future contribution
- Negotiate total compensation: title, bonus, PTO, flex.

Sample: *"Given the documented impact of my work and the market data for this role, I'm requesting a salary of $[X] and the title of [Y]. I'm committed to this organization and want to build the next chapter of my career here."*

THE ROI OF INTERNAL ADVANCEMENT

Why leveraging your graduate degree from within is a powerful long-term strategy

Advantages of Internal Advancement

- Institutional knowledge: you understand culture, systems, and context that new hires spend 6-12 months learning.
- Existing relationships: your internal network generates opportunities and advocates new hires can't access.
- Proven track record: your employer has already seen you perform - no onboarding uncertainty.
- Faster productivity ramp: you're contributing from Day 1 at the new level.
- No external search costs: no 3–6-month search timeline, no starting from scratch in a new culture.

What The Research Says

~19%

median salary premium for master's degree holders over bachelor's in comparable roles.

BLS, 2024

50-200%

of annual salary - the employer cost to replace one professional employee.

SHRM, 2024

$400K+

estimated lifetime earnings premium for a master's degree over a bachelor's degree.

Georgetown CEW, 2021

When an organization has seen you grow, internal advancement is often the most natural next step - for you and for them.

Sources: BLS (2024) Education Pays | SHRM (2024) | Georgetown CEW (2021) College Payoff | Harvard Business Review (2021)

SERIES FINALE: RESOURCES & YOUR ACTION PLAN

Part 9 of 9 - Congratulations on completing the USI Graduate Student Career Excellence Series!

You have completed all 9 modules. That investment in your professional growth sets you apart.

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- usi.edu/career-success
- career.center@usi.edu
- Schedule via Career Launch (myUSI)

COMPENSATION & CAREER TOOLS

- BLS Occupational Outlook: bls.gov/ooh
- Steppingblocks (USI outcomes): usi.steppingblocks.com
- Georgetown CEW: cew.georgetown.edu
- LinkedIn Salary Insights
- LinkedIn Learning (Free via myUSI)

YOUR 7-DAY GRADUATE ADVANCEMENT ACTION PLAN

Day 1 — Start Internal Portfolio: log 3 past contributions with metrics.

Day 2 — Identify 1 high-visibility project to volunteer for this month.

Day 3 — Schedule 1:1 with manager using Succession Planning Script #1.

Day 4 — Research market salary using BLS, Georgetown CEW, and LinkedIn Salary.

Day 5 — Draft your advancement conversation using the 5-step framework from Slide 7.

Day 6 — Connect with one colleague for a mentoring or development conversation.

Day 7 — Schedule a Career Success Center appointment for advancement prep.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA

CAREER LAUNCH

NEED CAREER SUPPORT??

- You can visit us in the Career Success Center (located in the Orr Center) or book an appointment on Career Launch!
- Questions? Email us at career.center@usi.edu or give us a call to schedule an appointment (812) 464-1865!



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