

OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CONDUCT

Choosing and obtaining the most appropriate internship or job is a very important process. For this process to be successful, it is crucial that you adhere to certain professional and ethical principles. The principles outlined below are based on years of feedback from employers and are meant to ensure the most successful internship or job search for you. And remember, as a SIPA student and/or graduate, your behavior during your search affects not only you but future SIPA students as well!

Your Initial Contact

- Your initial contact with a potential employer or networking contact can be done through a cover letter, telephone, email, or a LinkedIn message. If you're responding to an advertisement, follow the directions outlined in the description.
- If you contact alumni or potential employers via letter, email, or LinkedIn, you should check your correspondence for spelling and grammar, and always address the person formally.

Your Appearance and Resume

- Dress professionally for employer information sessions and actual interviews for internships and jobs. Men should wear a dark suit, especially in the private sector. A jacket and slacks, however, may be appropriate for the nonprofit sector. Be sure that all aspects of your resume are truthful, accurate, and in a professional format.

Networking and Interviewing

- Respect the person/alumna/alumnus who volunteers to help you in the job search through networking activities. Always be on time and dress professionally.
- ***Networking meetings are never meant to ask for a job, but rather to ask for career and job hunting advice.*** Your contact may also provide you with names of other professionals who may be able to help you.
- You should be well prepared when you go to an informational interview or employment interview. Research the organization where you are interviewing and the position, where appropriate. Be sure to be honest about your background and skills in any type of interview. Promise only what you know you can deliver.
- Be clear about your intentions and expectations for the job in question. Do not interview for an internship or full-time position that you do not intend to seriously consider. By doing so, you are preventing other students from interviewing for that position.
- If you are prevented from keeping your interview appointment, inform the contact person at the company as early as possible. If the interview was coordinated through SIPA, contact the Office of Career Services. Inform the appropriate person(s) preferably two days before the scheduled interview.

- Always follow-up a networking meeting or interview with a thank you note by letter or email, preferably within two days of the event. And, when you have received a job, send a note of thanks to your networking contacts for their help in the process. Even if they might not have provided you with that specific job, their advice helped you become a successful interviewee.
- If an employer agrees to reimburse you for some expenses related to the recruitment process, be honest and fair, and only ask for legitimate expenses.

When You Get an Internship/Job Offer

- Do not wait too long before you give your answer to an employer who has offered you an internship or job. Be sure to find out what the employer feels is a good timeframe for a response. If you really have a problem deciding, you may ask for more time or ask the employer to clarify certain aspects of the position. Then, make a decision as soon as possible or within the time allotted.
- Never ask for an extension of time if you are not genuinely interested in the position.
- When you accept a job offer, you should have every intention of taking it. Accepting a job is a binding decision. ***It is unethical to accept a position that you do not intend to take.*** Also, by accepting a position you do not intend to take, you are preventing other students from interviewing for that opportunity and are also wasting the employer's time and money.
- It is considered good conduct to stop interviewing with other organizations when you have accepted an offer.
- Inform other organizations with which you have been interviewing as soon as possible after you have accepted an offer at another company.
- When you accept a position, please notify OCS and stop submitting resumes to employers. Otherwise, you are preventing your peers from interviewing for those internships or jobs. You may also risk ending the relationship between SIPA and the employer by presenting yourself as available for employment when, in fact, you are not.

**** Please be aware that any violation of these guidelines may result in the suspension of your OCS privileges.***

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