Personal Statements
The most effective statements hook a reader right at the start. Admissions counselors only spend one to two minutes per essay, so invite them to linger on yours with a compelling introduction.

- **Think first.** Reflect on how best to tell your story and develop an outline before you start writing.
- **Tell a story.** Choose a turning point, important lesson, or self-discovery that corresponds to the essay question, demonstrates why you are applying to this particular program, and shows why you are a fit. Tailor statements to each graduate program.
- **Be you.** This is your opportunity to stand out from the crowd. Authenticity is the most effective differentiator.

If you’re stuck, ask yourself: Who is my audience? What is my goal? Remembering these things will help you stay true to your purpose.

### Sample Graduate School Timeline

Review this list of tasks as you move through the application process. Keep in mind that timelines always vary by individual.

If you’re thinking about medical school, visit the Tufts Pre-Health Advising site at uss.tufts.edu/hpa. (Advising appointments take place in Dowling 710.)

If you’re thinking about law school, visit the Apply to Graduate or Professional School section of the Career Center site for Pre-Law Advising info. (Advising appointments take place in Dowling 740.)

If you’re an alumna/us or grad student applying to grad or professional school, you’ll complete similar tasks but in a different time frame than the one shown here. Consult a career advisor for assistance in structuring your timeline.

### Available on the Career Center site:

**School-Specific Resources for ...**
- Medical Schools & Health-Related Programs
- Law School
- Business School
- Graduate Study in AS&E
- Ph.D. Programs

**Paying for Grad School**
- From school funding to loans and external scholarships/aid

**Advice from Alumni and Faculty**
- A cross-section of alumni and faculty discuss all aspects of the application process. Regardless of specific academic and professional focus, these individuals offer important general information.

### Personal Statement Assistance

**Tufts Career Center:** Request an appointment so one of our career advisors can review your statement. You may want to ask for the advisor’s email address and send your statement ahead of time.

**Academic Resource Center:** Writing consultants are available to meet 1-on-1 with students at any stage in the writing process, both for class assignments and graduate or professional school applications/statements.

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### Tufts Career Center

We will help you identify your career goals and gain the competencies, resources, contacts, and tools necessary to achieve them. Whether you are deciding on a major or career, looking for an internship or job, or considering graduate school, we can help.

### Mission

To foster transformational experiences that shape the professional, academic and personal development of Tufts students and alumni for lifelong impact.

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YOUR CAREER DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

The career development process is a lifelong journey. The earlier you begin to focus on your career development, the better prepared you will be to make decisions and pursue the opportunities available to you. Good news: There are a variety of things you can do now to prepare for your future! Every class and experience will build your competencies, focus your interests and inform your goals. From individual advising to career education tools and programs, the Career Center offers extensive resources to help you explore options and develop strategies for pursuing those goals.

Here are the basic elements of your career development journey:

Explore

Get to know yourself: What do you enjoy? What are your strengths? Begin to identify your competencies, transferable skills, interests, values and personality preferences. Gaining awareness of these core “satisfiers” will help you link to potential career fields. Start researching career possibilities and think about the connections between experiences and careers.

Action Steps:

- Visit Explore Careers & Majors on the Career Center site for info about competencies and career readiness, self-assessment tools, and more
- Begin to identify majors that fit your interests and competencies
- Review the list of organizations/clubs (via the Office of Campus Life) and join clubs that will help you develop your competencies and interests
- Gather information on different fields, industries and companies
- Take advantage of the Career Center’s educational workshops and programs
- Decide on a major and learn how your major(s)/minor(s) link to potential career paths

Build

Polish your resume and cover letter writing skills. Refine your career goals and strategy. Test career paths through career conversations (a.k.a. informational interviewing), shadowing, internships, and part-time and summer jobs, and determine potential career direction(s).

Action Steps:

- Create/revise/finalize resume and have one of our career fellows or career advisors review it
- Get help writing an effective cover letter and/or artist statement
- Learn to present your goals and competencies in networking conversations
- Conduct career conversations and/or shadow people working in fields that interest you
- Create a LinkedIn profile and join groups like the Tufts University Career Network and other professional groups
- Practice interview skills; set up a mock interview
- Explore opportunities to gain relevant work experience through an internship, job or fellowship
- If interested in graduate school, research schools, visit campuses, and take required standardized tests
- Attend events such as career fairs, industry nights, employer programs and alumni networking events

Launch

Make informed and meaningful career decisions. Remember that the choices you make today will not define your entire career path. Instead, focus on the experiences you would like to gain over the next couple of years.

Action Steps:

- Meet with a career advisor to help with your decision making or career planning
- Tailor your self-marketing materials (e.g., resume, cover letter) to individual employers and jobs
- Get help writing your personal statement if you are applying to graduate or professional schools
- Continue to strengthen your interviewing skills
- Apply to positions/schools; analyze offers from employers and grad schools; learn/practice negotiation basics
- If you have accepted a job, tell us about it through the Handshake First Destination Survey
- Reflect on your career journey through an internship/job/fellowship or grad program (remember: this is a life-long process!)

APPLY TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

Applying to grad school can be a daunting process, whether you’re you’re finishing your undergraduate degree, completing another degree program or working full-time. We encourage you to bring specific questions to a 1-on-1 appointment where a career advisor will discuss your goals and guide you in developing a course of action.

Evaluating Graduate Programs

A school’s reputation is an important factor, but it’s often overrated. The most important criteria involve how well the program matches your specific interests, abilities, academic background and finances. To make a program appear meets your needs, do the following:

Consult with faculty and students in your intended field.
- Talk to professors and read professional journals to find people who are researching and publishing in your area of interest. You could gain valuable info to differentiate yourself from others.
- Seek out those already in your chosen line of work. Ask how their grad school/program influenced their career development.

Evaluate the specific program.

The quality and reputation of a program and its professors is more important than the overall status of the institution. Stay focused on how a program will help you get to the next step of your career.

Use LinkedIn groups.

Find alumni and others with grad degrees similar to the one(s) you’re researching and learn from their advice.

Consider the financial aid package.

Ask about the duration of funding and the possibility of increased funding depending on your academic performance.

What You’ll Need to Apply

Pay careful attention to instructions, as different schools and programs have vastly different requirements.

Testing & Transcripts

Testing information (GRE, MCAT, LSAT, GMAT) is available in the Apply to Graduate or Professional School section of the Career Center site. Consult individual test sites if you need info regarding test fee assistance/reduction programs. Official transcripts are available free of charge from the Tufts Registrar’s Office (online, in person, or by mail). Plan ahead to ensure you will receive your documents by the appropriate deadlines.

Letters of Recommendation

- Choose people who know you well, e.g., professors, faculty advisors, work supervisors and others. Avoid the CEO trap. Unless the head of the company really knows you, this will work against you. Schools are more impressed by letters with specific examples that show your interests/abilities.
- Find enthusiastic recommenders. A lukewarm endorsement makes you a weaker candidate in a program’s eyes.
- Select people who know you in different ways. Three people saying about your research skills is less effective than three individuals who can highlight three different skills like research, leadership and writing.
- Give your recommenders plenty of time. Allow one to two months to write your letters. Check in with them after a couple of weeks or a month to ask if they need additional info. This also serves as a gentle reminder.
- Provide everything the recommender needs. Make sure each person has your resume, personal statement, and research info, if applicable. Don’t forget any forms, stamped/addressed envelopes, and other details specific to your target schools.
- Say thank you. This is good manners 101. Do it for that reason alone.

Is Grad School Right for You?

Typically 15% of Tufts seniors go directly to graduate or professional studies after graduation. Of those who do not go right away, 77% plan to pursue graduate work within the next three years.

The decision is highly individual; however, it could be a good fit if you are:
- Pursuing a specific occupation that requires an advanced degree such as medicine, law, university teaching
- Committed to a specific field of study and want to gain knowledge and expertise
- Aware of how an advanced degree will further your career goals

Before you make the decision, research what’s needed to succeed in the field you choose. In some cases, you may flourish with a bachelor’s degree. There are many career options for different Tufts majors.
Behavorial Interviewing

Behavioral interviewing is a popular interview framework because employers believe it will illustrate how you—as an employee—will function in a new organization. Employers will pose a problem or describe a scenario and ask how you would handle it. This style of interviewing allows you to demonstrate how you manage challenges, awkward situations, and stress.

To prepare for behavioral interviewing, you should develop stories from all your experiences: employment, internships, and extracurricular activities. These examples should show your strengths, achievements, work style, teamwork, initiative. When asked to describe a situation, choose an appropriate example and adapt to fit the question. The more stories you develop, the better equipped you are for behavioral interviewing.

If you’ve done your research on the position, organization, and industry, you’ll have a good sense of what is needed in an intern or entry-level candidate. Knowing this, you can create a list of stories that match those needs. For example, if you know the employer requires individuals to work in teams, be ready with stories of your teamwork.

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The STAR Method is a framework that will help you organize your stories to give the “big picture,” get you to the point, and make a positive impression. Emphasize your achievements and attitude, yet remember to include some evidence of struggles or turnarounds. Keep each story to 2–4 minutes, and when you conclude, you may want to invite questions from your interviewer to ensure that you accurately interpreted the question and provided helpful information.

Remember: Develop 6–8 stories from different experiences, e.g., an internship, part-time job, volunteer experience, activity, or class project, rather than drawing all your stories from one experience.

Sample Behavioral Interviewing Questions

- Describe a project or experience where you worked as part of a team.
- Discuss a situation where you resolved a conflict.
- Talk about your leadership skills.
- Tell about a time when you persuaded someone or successfully pitched an idea.
- Describe a time when you worked under stress and demonstrated your coping skills.
- Tell about a time when you provided a solution or improved something for an employer.
- Give me an example of a time when you set and then achieved a specific goal.
- Tell me about a difficult decision you’ve made in the past year.
- Describe the most creative project or presentation you’ve completed.
- Tell me about a time when you were part of a team, focus on your role.
- What was the situation?
- Briefly describe the background to give context to your example; be specific and succinct.
- What was the task?
- Identify what you set out to accomplish, giving the employer a sense of your thought process.
- What action did you take?
- Describe your actions. Which skills did you use?
- If you were part of a team, focus on your role.
- What was the result?
- What did you achieve or learn? What could be done differently to improve upon the outcome?

Career Center Resources for Exploring Competencies, Interests, Values, Transferable Skills, and Personality

Tools available on the Explore Skills & Interests page of the Career Center site:

- Skills Inventory
- What’s Your Skillset?
- O*Net Online Skills Search
- Interests Checklist
- Interests Questionnaire
- Career Interests Game
- Work Values Inventory
- Family & Culture Assessment
- Career Competencies Worksheets

IMPORTANCE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-assessment is the first step toward choosing a fulfilling career path. View the sections below and worksheets on the Career Center website to help you reflect.

Career Center Assessment Tools

Strong Interest Inventory — Online instrument that can help you identify specific areas of interest; it compares your interests with those of individuals in a variety of occupations.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) — Helps you identify your natural personality preferences and how they influence the way you make decisions, interact with people, gather information, and get energized. The MBTI does not measure aptitudes, but helps you better understand yourself, your motivations, strengths, and implications for career fields that you may find satisfying.

To access the Strong or MBTI, schedule a general 30-minute meeting with a career advisor. You’ll also meet with an advisor to discuss results from the Strong or MBTI.

Interests
What do you like to do in your spare time? Which courses and activities do you most enjoy? If you consider these things, you’ll often come up with common themes running through your personal narrative.

Values
Values play an integral role in career satisfaction. Do you prefer risk or stability? Variety or routine? Teamwork or autonomy? Finding work environments that align with your values is often just as important as the actual tasks involved in a job or internship.

Transferable Skills
As the name implies, transferable skills are those that can carry over to many environments, whether from home to school, school to work, or beyond. These broad-based skills, such as communication skills, problem-solving and taking initiative, are highly sought after by employers for their applicability across different settings.

Personality
Understanding your personality preferences is an important part of choosing a fulfilling career path. Personality can be defined as a combination of qualities that form an individual’s distinctive character, influencing how you see, experience and interact with the world. For instance, how and with whom do you prefer to spend your time? How do you approach new projects or activities? How do you make big decisions?

Additional Resources

Visit Prepare for an Interview on Career Center website for info about the following:

Preparing for phone and video interviews — Different types of interviews — Technical, consulting case questions
Many more sample interview questions | Appropriate interview attire
COMPETENCIES AND CAREER READINESS

Career readiness is the attainment and demonstration of competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition to the workplace. Think about the competencies that enable you to succeed. These can include broader areas such as global/intercultural fluency or leadership, but can also encompass what we and many employers refer to as transferable skills, such as the ability to work in a team. All competencies can be developed over time through a variety of experiences (community service, internships, student clubs, coursework) and apply to many career fields. Based on competencies developed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), the Tufts Career Center is committed to helping students develop/enhance the following competencies. Refer to the Competencies and Career Readiness page of the Career Center website for ways to develop each of these.

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

Oral/Written Communications
Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

Civic Engagement
Work with others to define, analyze, and form relationships that manifest such civic virtues as tolerance and respect.

Teamwork/Collaboration
Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure and can negotiate and manage conflict.

Digital Technology
Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

Global/Intercultural Fluency
Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individual differences.

Leadership
Leverage strengths of others to achieve common goals and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage emotions; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.

Professionalism/Work Ethic
Demonstrate effective work habits and personal accountability, e.g., working productively with others, practicing punctuality and time management, and understanding the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from mistakes.

Career Management
Identify and articulate one’s strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate/explore job options, understand and take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

The Day of the Interview
Get off to a good start
- Check your appearance and grooming; Bring extra copies of your resume in a portfolio.
- Arrange 10-15 minutes early so you don’t appear rushed or hassled.
- The interview begins at the moment you cross an employer’s threshold, sometimes earlier. (Candidates tell stories of meeting VIPs – unknowingly – in the parking lot!)
- Behave respectfully with everyone you meet, from administrative assistants to managers.
- The first 60 seconds create lasting impressions. Offer a firm handshake, greet the interviewer by name, and don’t be lulled by ‘small talk.’ You’re being evaluated from many angles, including informal conversation.
- Be aware of your non-verbal communication, especially your eye contact and physical posture.
- Display energy and enthusiasm in a way that fits your personal style. Be YOU.

Keep up the momentum
- When the recruiter begins discussing the organization or position, ask questions if you need clarification or want to know more. Be sure you have a clear understanding of the job, the requirements, and the challenges. Your questions should highlight your interest and knowledge of the organization and industry.
- The interviewer will ask about your qualifications as well as areas where they may have concerns. Be prepared to deal with aspects of your background that could be construed as negative (e.g., low GPA, few outside activities, no related work experience). Strategize with a career advisor about these things.
- Watch your grammar and enunciation.
- Never criticize a former employer. Never bring up salary or benefits in the first interview.

Conclude with confidence
- As you conclude, the recruiter is assessing your overall performance. Remain enthusiastic and courteous.
- If you’re unclear about next steps in the process, ask for clarification, e.g., “When do you expect to make a decision regarding this position?”
- Shake the recruiter’s hand, offer thanks for the opportunity to interview, and request a business card (so you have contact information for your thank you letter).

After the Interview
Jot down the pertinent facts you want to remember and make note of questions as preparation for future interviews. Within 24 hours, send a thank you email to those who interviewed you. Emphasize your interest in working for the organization and how you can contribute. Use this as an opportunity to briefly clarify or mention something you might have overlooked in the interview. When writing an email, be as formal as you would in a snail mail letter.

Did You Know?
Tufts students have access to thousands of online courses and training videos via LinkedIn Learning. After you log in, try searching “career development” for tools to help you strengthen your career competencies.
https://access.tufts.edu/linkedin-learning

Your Turn: Questions You Can Ask Employers
- What is the most significant challenge facing this organization? This department?
- What kinds of assignments might I expect initially?
- How is training provided for new employees?
- How much opportunity is there for _________?
- What is the most significant challenge facing this organization? This department?
- Who's our CEO?
- What's the last book you read?
- Describe your most creative costume.
- Tell me about your most awkward moment.
- Describe your most awkward moment.
- Explain your most awkward moment.
- What is the most important change you’ve seen in your industry?
- Tell me something you might have overlooked in the interview.
- When the recruiter begins discussing the organization or position, ask questions if you need clarification or want to know more. Be sure you have a clear understanding of the job, the requirements, and the challenges.
- What are the department's goals for this year?
- How much opportunity is there for _________?
- What is the most significant challenge facing this organization? This department?
- How often are performance reviews given?
- How would you describe this organization compared to its competitors?
- Which characteristics do achievers in this company share?

Expect the Unexpected
Who’s our CEO?
What’s the last book you read?
Describe your most creative costume.
Tell me about your most awkward moment.

Some recruiters have favorite questions. These inquiries are designed to observe your processing: the way you think, behave, and respond. Besides doing the research we’ve recommended (which would give you the CEO’s name), you cannot predict all these questions. Stop and think. Respond carefully. Use humor, if it comes naturally. Don’t just give the answer – give the reason for the answer.

Did You Know?
Tufts students have access to thousands of online courses and training videos via LinkedIn Learning. After you log in, try searching “career development” for tools to help you strengthen your career competencies.
https://access.tufts.edu/linkedin-learning
PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS

Interviewing is a skill. The more you practice, the better you’ll do! The Career Center offers mock interviews to help you strengthen your interviewing skills. Schedule an appointment via Handshake before you have an interview so you’ll have extra time to prepare.

Before the Interview
- Review your resume. Be prepared to discuss every bullet point, from internships and employment to courses and activities.
- Assess yourself and develop career objectives. Identify strengths and weaknesses, interests and skills. Employers are looking for transferable skills as well as candidates who have carefully considered their goals and can connect these goals to the position and organization.
- Research the employer. Learn its history as well as its current position and future prospects. Begin with the employer’s website and proceed to trade journals, professional organizations, and media coverage. Familiarize yourself with the employer’s mission, culture and challenges. Finally, find out the nature of the interview (one-on-one discussion with HR? multiple conversations with future co-workers?) before you go in.
- Speak with alumni who work at the organization or in the same industry (this is called informational interviewing or having a career conversation). You can identify these individuals through LinkedIn.
- Understand your fit with the organization. Why are you interested in the organization? This particular position? Why are you the best person for the job?
- Practice. Practice. Practice. Prepare responses to common interview questions and rehearse out loud with a trusted friend or with a Career Advisor in a mock interview to ensure a professional, articulate performance. Likewise, consider questions that you would like to ask the employer to convey your research, interest, and enthusiasm.
- Choose your interview outfit. Model it for a friend at least two days ahead. Business attire is appropriate for all interviews, unless you’ve been instructed differently.
- Do a trial run. If the interview is off campus, consider a test run to ensure you know how to get there and how long it could take. Don’t forget about train delays or traffic & parking (if applicable). Check the weather.

Sample Questions Asked by Employers

Getting to Know You
- Tell me about yourself.
- Why/how are you qualified for this position?
- What do you know about our organization? Our products? Services? Competition?
- Why do you want to work here?
- What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- Why should we hire you over another candidate?
- Of which three achievements are you most proud?
- Who are your role models? Why?
- What motivates you?
- Have you had difficulty getting along with a professor (supervisor, co-worker)? Explain.
- Do you prefer to work independently? With supervision?

Your Education
- How did you choose your college? Why did you choose your major?
- Which classes do you like best? Least? Why?
- Would you change anything about your education? In which campus activities do/did you participate?

Your Education, continued
- Do your grades accurately reflect your ability? Why or why not?
- Did you pay for any portion of your education?
- Describe the skills you’ve gained through your coursework and projects.

Your Experience
- What did you most/least enjoy about your last job or internship?
- Which skills do you enjoy using?
- Have you ever spoken before a group of people?
- Have you ever quit a job? Withdrawn from a course?
- How would a former supervisor describe you and your work?

Your Career Goals
- Describe your ideal job and work environment.
- What other types of positions are you considering?
- Where do you want to be in five years?
- Do you plan to go to graduate school?
- Would you be willing to relocate?

Develop Competencies and Transferable Skills

Beyond the competencies you will gain in any major at Tufts, employers value those that you develop outside the classroom. Consider participating in internships, volunteer service, and extracurricular activities.

Set Up Career Conversations (a.k.a. Informational Interviews)

These short conversations (self-initiated chats with people you find interesting) are a great way to explore majors. Talking with alumni, upperclassmen, faculty and others can help you determine which major might be a good fit for you. Visit the Networking section of this guide for more about the process, and view sample conversation questions on the next page.

Continue Exploring

In addition to conversations with fellow students, faculty, and Tufts alumni...
- Visit Explore Careers & Majors on the Career Center site for What Can I Do With This Major? which allows you to explore career options across a variety of majors. You’ll also find worksheets and other tools to help you reflect on your interests, personality, competencies and values and how they connect to possible majors and careers.
- Check out the websites of Tufts academic departments for info on majoring in that discipline, courses offered, and faculty.
- Get advice from your advising dean in Dowling Hall or your Student Success Advisor (SSA).
- Think about which competencies you would like to develop, or which classes your ideal major would include.

Major Myths

Myth: Only certain majors are practical when it comes to finding a job.
Reality: Employers are more interested in your competencies and experience than in any specific major. Liberal arts & engineering students gain a variety of transferable skills or “soft skills” that are highly valuable to employers.

Myth: If I want to go to law school or medical school, I have fewer choices for majors.
Reality: There is no required major for law school or medical school. Your ability to think analytically and communicate clearly will be important for law and medicine. In addition, Tufts has pre-law and pre-health advisors to discuss the requirements for law and medical schools.

Myth: Majoring in engineering will limit me to working only in engineering.
Reality: Engineering skills and expertise are more valuable than ever in a variety of fields. Tufts Engineering students have pursued careers in technical writing, finance, law, medicine and more.
The more you know about various career fields, employers and types of jobs within organizations, the easier it will be to find internships and jobs, or decide to apply to graduate school.

We encourage you to see a Career Advisor to discuss ways to research your career options. You can also gather plenty of information at the career fairs and career education and networking programs we hold throughout the year.

Explore Careers Through Networking

Experienced professionals can share advice about industries, organizations and required skills. They may be able to connect you with resources for potential internship and job opportunities.

As you conduct research and discover career paths that match your competencies and interests, the Tufts University Career Network and other Tufts groups on LinkedIn are valuable resources. If you aren’t sure how to begin this conversation or which questions to ask, visit the Networking section of this guide.

While you explore career fields through networking and the many resources described in this guide and online, ask yourself:

1. Can I see myself working in this particular career area?
2. Does it match with my interests as well as I had anticipated?
3. Will it afford me the lifestyle I seek?
4. Does it use my top competencies and match my top values and strengths?

Learn about Majors and Career Fields Through Career Conversations (a.k.a. Informational Interviews)

As you get started, keep these things in mind:

Have fun! You’re asking questions to gain an insider’s view of a major and/or career field. It’s a short discussion, not something that should intimidate you.

Ask your friends about their majors or the career fields they intend to pursue, and then ask them for names of other people who could help you. Get a variety of opinions so you can see many sides of the same story.

• Why did you choose your major?
• Why are you interested in this career field?
• What do you like/dislike about the major/career path?
• Which competencies have you strengthened through your major? How do they relate to your field of interest?
• What does your four-year schedule look like?
• What do you want to do after you graduate?
• Who are the most interesting professors and what were the most helpful classes you took?

Factors to Consider in Career Research

Education and skill requirements: What educational background or specific competencies does this career field typically require? Will you need a graduate degree to get a job?

Typical positions: Where does an entry-level or experienced employee fit within this field? How do responsibilities vary at different levels?

Day-to-day job operations: What does a typical day look like for an employee in this field? How do the roles of various team members differ?

Industry trends and developments: What is the future of this field? Trends? Is it expanding?

Personality traits/experiences valued by the field: Which traits are necessary for success? Are there experiences that many in this field share?

Salary information: What type of salary can you anticipate, given your education and experience level? What is the salary range for the field as you progress? Visit the Salary and Cost of Living page (Explore Careers and Majors section of the Career Center site) for tools to help you.

Hiring cycles and recruiting practices: When and how does the industry hire? Do employers recruit on campus? Some industries have unique recruiting practices, e.g., engineering, finance and consulting companies tend to recruit during the fall semester, while nonprofits tend to hire later in the spring. Carefully research the hiring timelines for your targeted field(s).

Geographic location: Are opportunities in your desired career field primarily located in specific areas of the country/world? Would you be happy living there?

Career Center Summer Internship Grants

The Career Center funds 40-50 undergraduate students each summer doing unpaid internships for a minimum of 300 hours. These funds offer students the opportunity to explore career fields and gain experience. Selected students will receive $4,000. Students must secure an internship prior to the grant application deadlines.

Visit the Internship Funding section of the Career Center site for complete information, including application details and deadlines, selection criteria, requirements for recipients, and more.

Career Fairs at Tufts and Beyond

More than 300 employers attend fall and spring career fairs each year. In addition, Tufts students participate in company-specific events throughout the year, both online and in various cities.

Received a Job Offer?

Congrats! Visit Find a Job on the Career Center site for factors to consider when evaluating offers and tips for negotiating salary and benefits.

Sample Questions About Majors & Career Fields

- Who are the most interesting professors and what were the most helpful classes you took?
- Why did you choose your major?
- Why are you interested in this career field?
- What do you like/dislike about the major/career path?
- Which competencies have you strengthened through your major? How do they relate to your field of interest?
- What does your four-year schedule look like?
- What do you want to do after you graduate?
- What does your four-year schedule look like?
- What do you want to do after you graduate?
- Who are the most interesting professors and what were the most helpful classes you took?
FIND INTERNSHIPS AND JOBS

Effective job and internship searches are comprised of many elements: self-assessment, research, exploration, and decision making. Whether you’re looking for an internship, part-time or full-time job, fellowship or gap year program, the Career Center is ready to assist you. Visit the Career Center site for job and internship search strategies and position listings for different career fields and geographic locations.

Sample Subscription Resources

handshake

Thousands of internships & jobs posted by employers interested in hiring Tufts students

GoinGlobal

Industry trends, job search information, and cultural advice for 40 countries

Visit the Career Center site for many more subscription resources, career field and city-specific search sites.

Checklist for Your Job or Internship Search

Engage in self-assessment: Use the tools and worksheets on our website to help you think about what you’re looking for in a job or internship. Talk to a Career Advisor for guidance.

Establish a timeline and specific goals for your search: Schedule your search into your week, much as you would a class or activity. Set SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) goals for yourself.

Learn about career paths and employers: Visit the Explore Careers and Majors section of the Career Center site for helpful career exploration tools and a look at where fellow Jumbos intern and work. Determine two or three potential career fields that are compatible with your interests, skills and values.

Network with people in your field(s) of interest: Talk to peers, friends, family, Tufts alumni, professors, supervisors, and others to continue learning about careers and employers. Visit the Networking section of our site for networking strategies.

Refine your application materials: Update your resume. Perfect your cover letters. Sharpen interviewing skills by practicing with a Career Advisor and trusted friends.

Search for internships or jobs and determine how well they meet with your criteria: Visit the Internship and Job sections of the Career Center site for resources like Handshake and many more websites for career fields that interest you. Keep your Handshake profile up-to-date to receive job/internship listings that match your interests, and consider making your profile public to allow employers to find you.

Tie your documents and apply to positions: Submit resumes and cover letters targeted to individual employers.

Follow up on applications and plan next steps: Create a spreadsheet or system to track your progress. List employers of interest, contacts, important dates, and next steps. Follow up with employers about a week or two after applying (unless they specifically prohibit follow-up). Ask about the status of your application, get info about the hiring timeline (unless those details are already online), or offer additional materials.

Read our Career eNews and follow our social channels: Scan eNews and look at our calendar to stay informed about upcoming career programs, employer events, and application deadlines. Follow us on Instagram (@tuftscareercenter), Twitter (@TuftsCareer), and Facebook (@Tufts Career Center) to learn about new jobs, internships, and resources.

USE RESOURCES ESPECIALLY FOR JUMBOS

Visit Explore Careers on the Career Center site for these and many more online career research tools, including industry-specific publications, professional associations, and job and internship listing sites.

Where Do Jumbos Go?

See Outcomes by Major on the Career Center site for the employment and grad school destinations of recent grads, organized by major. View the Tufts Internship Profiles (TIPS) to see where students have interned.

The organizations listed below are a small sample of the many places Tufts grads go. And while they represent larger & more widely known employers, Jumbos work in every type of organization: small startups, mid-size companies, large conglomerates, and the private, nonprofit, and public sectors.

| Careers A-Z | Websites in fields ranging from education, engineering, and entrepreneurship to marketing, math, museums, and more |
| What Can I Do With This Major? | Connect specific majors to career options and get strategies for building relevant experience |
| APSIA Guides | Info about 37 career paths in international affairs |
| GoinGlobal | Industry trends, job search information, and cultural advice for 40 countries. |
| Research Guides@Tufts | Extensive industry and company information, available through various databases, e.g., Reference USA, LexisNexis, Factiva, OneSource Global, EMIS |

Tufts Career Center  |  617-627-3299  |  go.tufts.edu/careercenter
YOUR COVER LETTER

- Focuses on competencies/experiences (especially accomplishments) that relate to the organization/position, without repeating everything from your resume
- Demonstrates enthusiasm, personality and knowledge of the organization/position; written in your own style
- Includes an opening paragraph (includes position name and how you learned of it); particularly if you have a personal referral — why you are interested in the career field/organization/position; a body paragraph or two (competencies that match the employer’s needs and experiences and how you acquired them; relevant personal traits); and a closing paragraph (when and how you’ll follow up and your contact info)

WRITE RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

Your resume is a summary (the big picture) of your competencies and experiences, both paid and unpaid. A cover letter, meanwhile, mentions specific aspects of your background that are relevant to a particular opportunity. You may have one or two versions of your resume, but you’ll have a customized cover letter for each position. Together, the documents are marketing tools that show how you meet an employer’s needs.

Your resume and cover letter are also examples of your writing skills and attention to detail, so treat them like important homework assignments! Have both documents reviewed by a career advisor or career fellow before sending to an employer.

EVALUATE YOUR RESUME

- Highlights paid/unpaid work, volunteering, and activities, along with organization name, location (city/state or city/country), dates and title/role
- Lists entries in reverse chronological order by section (current/most recent to oldest)
- Uses bulleted descriptions that begin with strong skill-based verbs (see Career Center website for a list) and not “Responsible for …”; uses present tense for ongoing work
- Presents info concisely and gives sufficient detail

Perfect resume bullets (and not all can be perfect!) contain 4 things:

- Verb
- Quantify
- Story
- Results

VERB | QUANTIFY | STORY | RESULTS

What you learned of it
Organization/position; written in your own style
Demonstrates enthusiasm, personality and knowledge of the organization/position

IMPORTANT TIP: When including accomplishments, make sure they are relevant to the job you are applying for. For example, if you are applying for a job in marketing and want to highlight your experience in social media, make sure to include specific metrics such as increase in followers or engagement rates.

EVALUATE THE COMPLETE APPLICATION

- Both documents are one page in length (experienced professionals and grad students may have a longer resume)
- Neat with consistent spacing and font usage (e.g., 10-12 point Times New Roman; margins 0.5 in. or greater)
- Uses bold, italics and caps sparingly
- Easy to read; eyes drawn to important information; free of grammatical, typographical, and spelling errors
- Uses language and keywords from the job description when appropriate
- Emphasizes your strengths and highlights what is unique about your competencies and experiences

Do you need an online portfolio?
If you’re considering a technical or creative field, it’s helpful to have a portfolio. This could be a blog, website, or video channel and may include a summary of experiences/skills, images of artwork, projects or design samples, audio/video, charts, schematics, and/or writing samples. Visit the Resume & Cover Letter section of our site for more info, plus tips/tools for creating a portfolio.

Sample Messages for Career Conversations & Networking

LinkedIn connection

Subject line: Tufts IR Major Seeking Career Advice
Dear Mr./Ms. [Last Name],

I’m a junior majoring in IR at Tufts and I found your name through the Tufts University Career Network on LinkedIn. From your profile, I see that you’ve worked at a variety of NGOs, most recently in Syria.

As I’ve focused my studies on the Middle East, including time spent studying abroad in Cairo, I’d like to return to the region after college. I’d love to hear about your experiences living and working there, as well as any advice you might have for me as I plan for an international job search.

I wonder if it might be possible to speak, at your convenience, on the phone or via Skype/FaceTime?

Thanks and Go Jumbos!
Your Name

Thank you

Subject line: Thank you from Tufts student
Dear Mr./Ms. [Last Name],

I learned a great deal about Simon & Schuster in our conversation yesterday and it affirmed my interest in pursuing a publishing career. I especially enjoyed hearing about your graduate studies in publishing at Columbia. Thank you for sharing your advice and experience with me.

I plan to contact [Name of Person] for information about her experience at [Company Name]. Thank you so much for this referral; I’m eager to learn more about the production side of the business. I’ll keep you updated on my progress.

I appreciate your assistance and your willingness to be part of last night’s event.
Best Regards,
Your Name

Referral

Subject line: Referral from [Name]
Dear Mr./Ms. [Last Name],

[Name], my Psychology professor, encouraged me to get in touch with you to learn more about your work at [Organization Name]. I’m interested in nonprofits, and in particular, those related to mental health counseling. I read your biography online and would like to learn more about your transition from client services to development. I would like to see a face-to-face phone call at your convenience. I know I would benefit from hearing about your experiences. Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,
Your Name

Networking Etiquette Tips

- Carefully craft your subject line. “Career question from Tufts senior,” “Referral from Professor Smith”
- Keep your messages brief and be sure to proofread. Don’t begin with “My name is …” Your recipient will see your name in the from line and in your closing signature.
- Say “thank you.”

No response? Strategize with a Career Advisor about follow-up.

Important Reminder:
These emails should serve as a guide and should not be used in “copy and paste” messages. You’ll find greater success with messages that are written in your voice and reflect efforts to tailor the correspondence to your reader.

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Key Profile Areas on LinkedIn

LinkedIn is your chance to make a strong first impression with networking contacts online. Your profile provides a snapshot of your qualifications and is often one of the first things that appears in a Google search for your name.

**Photo**

We recommend a headshot, i.e., a photo of you alone, wearing professional attire, rather than a cropped photo of yourself with others. Remember, it will be the first image that networking contacts have of you. If you don’t have a headshot, stop by the Career Center’s LinkedIn photo booth at the fall and spring Career Fairs.

**Headline**

This is the first thing other LinkedIn users will see, so make sure it is simple and engaging. Create a statement that speaks to your goals, interests, or professional skills, e.g. “Writer, digital editor, photographer,” “Junior majoring in International Relations seeking a summer internship.”

A short version of what you do and why — or what you would like to do and why. Connect with your reader by writing in the first person and always keep it professional. For example: I have a strong background in writing and editing, including experience as a reporter for The Tufts Daily and an intern for the Boston Globe newspaper. As a leader for Tufts Imaginet, the Tufts Marketing and Advertising Club, I’m developing practical skills that connect to my goal of pursuing a career in marketing or public relations.

**Summary**

Include employment, internships, and involvement with clubs or activities, regardless of whether they were paid experiences or not. LinkedIn provides headlines to help you organize your Experiences, e.g., Work Experience vs. Volunteer Experience. You may also add relevant info to the Accomplishments section, such as Honors & Awards, Courses, Projects and Languages.

You have the option of including key words representing skills you possess, and your connections may also endorse you as having specific skills. More importantly, LinkedIn allows you list brief recommendations from supervisors, professors, and others who can speak to your abilities.

You may also include Tufts, the degree you are seeking or have earned, and your declared major(s) and minor(s). If you are a current student, include your expected graduation year. Highlight academic honors and academic projects, such as a thesis or other course projects.

**Experience**

Include employment, internships, and involvement with clubs or activities, regardless of whether they were paid experiences or not. LinkedIn provides headlines to help you organize your Experiences, e.g., Work Experience vs. Volunteer Experience. You may also add relevant info to the Accomplishments section, such as Honors & Awards, Courses, Projects and Languages.

**Skills and Endorsements**

Include Tufts, the degree you are seeking or have earned, and your declared major(s) and minor(s). If you are a current student, include your expected graduation year. Highlight academic honors and academic projects, such as a thesis or other course projects.

**Education**

Include Tufts, the degree you are seeking or have earned, and your declared major(s) and minor(s). If you are a current student, include your expected graduation year. Highlight academic honors and academic projects, such as a thesis or other course projects.

**Forming Connections**

Once you’ve created a LinkedIn profile, start building your network with people you know and trust. Invite friends, relatives, work colleagues, and internship supervisors to link with you. Edit the generic LinkedIn invitation message and tailor it to each person.

**LinkedIn Groups**

Joining groups, like the Tufts University Career Network, is one of the best ways to find and reach out to potential networking contacts on LinkedIn. Even if you are not connected, you can still send several free messages per month to fellow members of the same group. See our message examples in the next section before reaching out to a contact. There are more than 175 Tufts groups with thousands of members on LinkedIn!

**Additional Resources**

Visit I Need to ... Network on the Career Center website for tips on the following:
- LinkedIn profile settings, including privacy & customized URLs
- Finding and adding contacts: Tufts alumni and others
- Requesting introductions and responding to link requests
- Joining and engaging with LinkedIn groups
- Setting your communication preferences

Visit the Career Center website for more resume samples representing different class years, majors and career plans, a list of resume action verbs, a sample reference sheet, and more tips for tailoring your document.
Goal Setting
Perhaps you want an internship. Or maybe you’re a senior feeling overwhelmed at the prospect of a job search. Getting an internship or a job is a BIG goal, involving many smaller goals. Make the process more manageable by breaking your goal into steps that are clear and measurable. Schedule a meeting with a Career Advisor to guide you through this process. Once you have a better sense of your competencies, interests and values, you’re ready to explore where you best fit in the workplace. Ask yourself, “Who has firsthand knowledge and experience to help me figure this out?” Make a list of people/primary sources.

Exchange of Information
During your conversations, you’ll be talking with busy people so make the most of their time. Prepare as if it were a presentation or exam. Design questions to get info about a job, company or industry that can’t be found online. Consider the details that will be helpful in your search and use open-ended questions:

▪ Which skills are most valuable in this field?
▪ What’s your ideal profile when hiring a new team member?
▪ Are there courses or activities that would help me prepare for this work?
▪ If you were in my position, with an interest in _________, which steps would you take today?
▪ Based on my interests, who else should I be talking to?

Be ready to answer questions about yourself and your interests, too!

Follow Up
How will you be remembered? Your first follow-up should be a thank you note, handwritten or email. In your follow-up, be as specific as possible; for example, citing particularly helpful advice from your contact or new decisions you’ve made as a result of the meeting. Keep accurate records and find reasons to stay in touch with your contacts. This helps them think of you when they learn of a possible opportunity or interesting lead. After the thank you note, future communication should be carefully timed and based on mutual career interests. A Career Advisor can help you with this and all aspects of your networking.

3 Steps to a Career Conversation
(also known as an informational interview)

1. Prepare
   • Learn about professional networks and companies
   • Know your target industry, job, company, or internship
   • Conduct research to understand hiring and interview processes
   • Prepare questions to ask about the company, industry, or position

2. Conduct the interview
   • Be professional and engaged
   • Ask open-ended questions to demonstrate interest and knowledge
   • Take notes and follow up with contacts

3. Follow up
   • Send a thank you note
   • Use what you learned to update your resume and cover letter
   • Prepare for future interviews or networking opportunities

LinkedIn for Students
Visit students.linkedin.com for the following:

- Tips for improving your LinkedIn profile
- Advice for using LinkedIn for your internship or job search
- Ways that your LinkedIn connections can help you prepare for interviews

LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network with more than 610 million users in more than 200 countries and territories. Log in at www.linkedin.com to create an account and follow the profile prompts to begin. Your profile is similar to your resume in that it is carefully and professionally written and includes information that is relevant to your career objectives and job/internship search.

Remember: LinkedIn is a supplement to and not a substitute for networking in person. The Career Center hosts many events/off campus to help students and alumni network with each other and employers, including: career fairs, Professional in Residence programs, industry nights and more!

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BUILD YOUR NETWORK AND USE LINKEDIN

Networking is a process of collecting useful information. In thinking about careers, it's a form of research into majors, career paths, internships, jobs, graduate school and more.

Speaking to people — family, friends, fellow students, professors and supervisors — helps you learn more about the world of work ~ and where you best fit. Networking can be serendipitous (e.g., chatting in line at a coffee shop) or strategic (e.g., planning a career conversation).

Elevator Scripts
Connecting with people you don’t know

Be ready for surprise opportunities by preparing an elevator script, a 30-second statement introducing yourself with a few key facts. Mention your major or majors you’re considering, and 1-2 things about your background that relate to potential career interests.

Career Conversations
Also known as informational interviews, they’re the most popular example of strategic networking

Informational interviews are conversations with people who can give you insider perspectives on jobs, employers, or industries. They allow you to brainstorm with knowledgeable individuals about your career interests, enlist expert guidance, share your goals, and position yourself as a potential candidate for the future.

Like all networking, informational interviewing is a form of research. Determine learning goals according to your stage of career development. First year students may focus on career exploration; seniors launching a job search may be more tightly focused on specific occupations or industries.

But what if I don’t have connections to influential people or those in leadership roles? Should I still try to network? Absolutely! Anyone can network; in fact, we do it all the time without realizing it! You don’t need to have a built-in network to succeed. Talk to a career advisor about LinkedIn and other ways to find contacts.

Before applying online, identify and reach out to employees whom you may know through Tufts or other sources.

Join the Tufts Online Community
... and connect with fellow Jumbos today!

The Online Community is a site for Tufts students and alumni offering free services designed to help you make the most of your Tufts connections.

Register today and you’ll be able to use the Directory to find alumni from all Tufts schools who have interesting career backgrounds. Talk to a career advisor about how you might reach out to individuals and request career conversations.

https://alumniandfriends.tufts.edu/join-our-community

Tufts University Career Network on LinkedIn
After establishing your LinkedIn profile, be sure to join the largest Tufts’ group — a great place for networking with Tufts alumni, requesting career advice & more!

80%
Available jobs that are not advertised
70% - 80%
Job seekers who find positions through referrals, a.k.a. networking

Before applying online, identify and reach out to employees whom you may know through Tufts or other sources.

Tufts University Career Network on LinkedIn

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Tufts University Career Network on LinkedIn
After establishing your LinkedIn profile, be sure to join the largest Tufts’ group — a great place for networking with Tufts alumni, requesting career advice & more!
# Cover Letter Worksheet

## Job Requirements
(Employee's top needs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## You
(How do I meet those needs?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</table>

In addition to the sample letters, we've included this worksheet to help you think about making a match between your skills/competencies, knowledge and experience and the needs of a potential employer. Talk with a career advisor about how you can strengthen your letters and leave a lasting impression on your reader.

**Why them?** What do I know about the employer?

**Why me?** Why am I a good match for the position/employer?

---

**NAME**
XXX Latin Way Hall • Tufts University, Medford, MA 02155 • phone number student@gmail.com

**EDUCATION**
Tufts University, Medford, MA
Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering, May XXXX
GPA: 3.53

**RELEVANT COURSES**
**Engineering:** Physical Chemistry of Polymers, Hazardous Waste Treatment Technology
Chemical and Biological Separations, Surface and Colloid Chemistry, Reactor Design, Intro to Material Science, Applied Numerical Methods, Intro Computer Science, Intro to Computing in Engineering, Data Structures, Process Dynamics and Controls

**Sciences:** Physical Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Biochemistry

**ENGINEERING EXPERIENCE**
Aramco Services Company
*Gas Separations Intern*, Cambridge, MA, May XXXX – Present
- Casted membranes for post processing and characterization
- Experimented with various hollow fiber dopes and conditions
- Functionalized membranes using cross-linking techniques
- Investigated mechanical and thermal properties of various polymers
- Conducted single gas tests for performance testing

Smart Polymers, Membranes and Separations Laboratory
*Undergraduate Research Assistant*, Tufts University, MA, January XXXX – May XXXX
- Manufactured polymer membranes and dyes for filtration tests
- Collected and modeled diffusion rate data on different dyes
- Synthesized zwitterionic copolymers for brackish water testing
- Characterized novel copolymer membranes using FTIR and TGA
- Tested frac wastewater flux and fouling resistance

**Bits Bytes & Bots**
*Instructor*, Anytown, NY, June – August XXXX - XXXX
- Taught multiple classes involving Robotics, Game Maker, and Scratch
- Guided 20-30 campers through their daily schedule
- Solved any issues that arose between students and with the camp's computers
- Created curriculum for other instructors to use in future classes

Marine Biotechnology Laboratory
*Intern*, University of Connecticut, Stamford, CT, June – August XXXX
- Cultivated and gathered seaweed plants in labs and rivers
- Investigated the fluorescence of ground seaweed
- Practiced the necessary skills and procedures of a biology lab

**SKILLS**
- Lab: Polymer synthesis, characterization, NMR, DSC, FTIR, TGA, DMA
- Computer: Visual Basic, C++, Python, HTML and CSS
- Language: Proficient Spanish

**ACTIVITIES**
American Institute of Chemical Engineers, *Secretary*, September XXXX – Present
Games & Things, *Co-founder and Treasurer*, September XXXX – Present
TEDx Tufts, June XXXX – Present
Dear Ms. Last Name,

The areas of renewable energy engineering and efficiency have always sparked my interest, so I was excited to see the opening for a [name of position] at [name of employer]. As a senior at Tufts University earning a BS in Electrical Engineering, I am confident that my electrical engineering background will provide a helpful perspective on the energy challenges you're facing. In particular, I look forward to working on the [name of project] referenced in your organization's latest blog post titled "Name of Article." I admire [company name's] commitment to tracking emissions and increasing efficiency at all stages of production, and I am eager to be a part of the team that continues to drive these emissions lower.

At Tufts, I have taken a number of relevant traditional and project-based classes. One such project was a research study involving room temperature plasma deposition for the creation of low cost solar cells. It was this research that led to my interest in energy sustainability from an electrical engineering perspective. Through my other coursework and projects, I have developed strong engineering and mathematical skills, including the use of powerful tools such as MATLAB. In addition, I have worked on several team projects that have strengthened my group-oriented skills, and I am well prepared to collaborate with interdisciplinary engineering teams.

Thank you for your considering me for the [job title] role. I can be reached at [email address] and [phone], and I look forward to learning more about this particular position and [name of employer] as a whole.

Sincerely,

Your Name
The following cover letter samples show a variety of approaches students have used to demonstrate their fit for particular opportunities.

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name,

I am following up on our email conversation about an Arts Administration Internship next spring at [Nonprofit Arts-Related Law Firm]. Thank you for your help in learning more about this opportunity. I especially appreciated hearing about how your experiences at Tufts led to your current career path. As a dancer and an aspiring lawyer, I feel strongly aligned with the mission of your organization, and I am eager to work with you.

I have developed the organizational and interpersonal skills that your internship requires, along with a foundation of legal knowledge that I acquired as an intern last summer. Working as a legal research intern at McCarter and English LLP in Boston, I managed a variety of tasks, from writing legal memoranda to reviewing documents. This experience offered valuable training and confirmed my passion for the law, an enthusiasm that I look forward to bringing to [name of organization].

Through dancing at the Boston Ballet School for fourteen years and studying with students from the Berklee College of Music, I am familiar with the Boston arts community. I continue to dance and promote the arts as vice president of a dance troupe at Tufts. Your internship matches well with these interests and would allow me to gain a behind-the-scenes view of arts administration, complementing my performance experience.

I believe my related administrative experience will also be an asset to [name of firm]. As a student assistant at the Tufts Career Center, I work on event planning projects that strengthen my ability to take initiative and prioritize tasks while interacting in a professional setting with students, parents, faculty, and employers.

It would be an honor to contribute to your mission. Thank you for reviewing my background. You may contact me at name.name@tufts.edu or 000-000-0000.

Sincerely,

Your Name

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**Please Note:** These letters were written by Tufts students. Keep in mind that the students customized content for specific positions, highlighting their most relevant skills, knowledge, and experience. These are not templates to be copied.
The following cover letter samples show a variety of approaches students have used to demonstrate their fit for particular opportunities.

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Your Name

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Thank you for your considering me for the [job title] role. I can be reached at [email address] and [phone], and I look forward to learning more about this particular position and [name of employer] as a whole.

Sincerely,

Your Name

---

Note: When using a creative design for your resume, remember not to overdo it with visuals, graphics, colors, and shading. Instead, let your website/online portfolio showcase your creative work and style. Should you need advice for a performance or production resume, an artist CV, and/or advice for careers in the creative/arts/entertainment sectors, schedule an arts advising appointment in Handshake.

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EDUCATION

TUFTS UNIVERSITY, MEDFORD, MA • 5/20XX
BA in English, School of Arts & Sciences
BFA in Studio Art, School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts
Minor: Film and Media Studies, GPA 3.8
Study Abroad: Tufts in Paris Program, Spring 20XX

RELEVANT COURSES

Creative Writing
Intermediate Journalism
Directing for Film

SKILLS

Adobe Creative Suite
Website Design
• HTML, CSS
• Wordpress
Film and Video Production
• Final Cut Pro
• Avid
Microsoft Office
Intermediate French

EXPERIENCE

DIGITAL MEDIA INTERN • TEEN VOGUE-NEW YORK, NY • SUMMER 20XX
Managed social media channels including Instagram and YouTube. Created and edited content for fashion career advice blog on website. Assisted on photo/video shoots and with post-production editing. Revised intern manual including hard copy materials and website content.

GRAPHIC DESIGN INTERN • JIMMY CHO - NEW YORK, NY • SUMMER 20XX
Assisted graphic designer with design projects for in-store and online advertising using Adobe creative suite. Maximized promotion of brand through social media channels. Developed and edited press releases as requested.

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Fashion and Arts Editor, Tufts Daily
Entertainment Board, TUSC-Tufts University Social Collective
Intramural Soccer
In addition to the sample letters, we’ve included this worksheet to help you think about making a match between your skills/competencies, knowledge and experience and the needs of a potential employer. Talk with a career advisor about how you can strengthen your letters and leave a lasting impression on your reader.

## Cover Letter Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Requirements</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Why them? Why do I know about the employer?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Requirements</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Employer’s top needs</strong></td>
<td><strong>You</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>How do I meet those needs?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Why me? Why am I a good match for the position/employer?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skills:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Knowledge:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Experience:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Skills:

### Knowledge:

### Experience:

---

### Why them? What do I know about the employer?

### Why me? Why am I a good match for the position/employer?
BUILD YOUR NETWORK AND USE LINKEDIN

Networking is a process of collecting useful information. In thinking about careers, it’s a form of research into majors, career paths, internships, jobs, graduate school and more.

Speaking to people — family, friends, fellow students, professors and supervisors — helps you learn more about the world of work and where you best fit. Networking can be serendipitous (e.g., chatting in line at a coffee shop) or strategic (e.g., planning a career conversation).

Elevator Scripts
Connecting with people you don’t know

Be ready for surprise opportunities by preparing an elevator script, a 30-second statement introducing yourself with a few key facts. Mention your major or majors you’re considering, and 1-2 things about your background that relate to potential career interests.

Career Conversations
Also known as informational interviews, they’re the most popular example of strategic networking

Informational interviews are conversations with people who can give you insider perspectives on jobs, employers, or industries. They allow you to brainstorm with knowledgeable individuals about your career interests, enlist expert guidance, share your goals, and position yourself as a potential candidate for the future.

Like all networking, informational interviewing is a form of research. Determine learning goals according to your stage of career development. First year students may focus on career exploration; seniors launching a job search may be more tightly focused on specific occupations or industries.

Join the Tufts Online Community
... and connect with fellow Jumbos today!

The Online Community is a site for Tufts students and alumni offering free services designed to help you make the most of your Tufts connections.

Register today and you’ll be able to use the Directory to find alumni from all Tufts schools who have interesting career backgrounds. Talk to a career advisor about how you might reach out to individuals and request career conversations.

https://alumniandfriends.tufts.edu/join-our-community
Goal Setting
Perhaps you want an internship. Or maybe you’re a senior feeling overwhelmed at the prospect of a job search. Getting an internship or a job is a BIG goal, involving many smaller goals. Make the process more manageable by breaking your goal into steps that are clear and measurable. Schedule a meeting with a Career Advisor to guide you through this process. Once you have a better sense of your competencies, interests and values, you’re ready to explore where you best fit in the workplace. Ask yourself, “Who has firsthand knowledge and experience to help me figure this out?” Make a list of people/primary sources.

Exchange of Information
During your conversations, you’ll be talking with busy people so make the most of their time. Prepare as if it were a presentation or exam. Design questions to get info about a job, company or industry that can’t be found online. Consider the details that will be helpful in your search and use open-ended questions:

▪ Which skills are most valuable in this field?
▪ What’s your ideal profile when hiring a new team member?
▪ Are there courses or activities that would help me prepare for this work?
▪ If you were in my position, with an interest in _________, which steps would you take today?
▪ Based on my interests, who else should I be talking to?

Be ready to answer questions about yourself and your interests, too!

Follow Up
How will you be remembered? Your first follow-up should be a thank you note, handwritten or email. In your follow-up, be as specific as possible; for example, citing particularly helpful advice from your contact or new decisions you’ve made as a result of the meeting. Keep accurate records and find reasons to stay in touch with your contacts. This helps them think of you when they learn of a possible opportunity or interesting lead. After the thank you note, future communication should be carefully timed and based on mutual career interests. A Career Advisor can help you with this and all aspects of your networking.

Join The Herd and Find Alumni Mentors
The Herd is our online community for alumni-student flash mentoring — one-time or short-term mentoring centered around tactical meetings that provide timely knowledge for students. Sign up today to start reaching out to alumni mentors who can provide insider tips for their industries. https://tufts.peoplegrove.com
See page 21 for sample outreach messages!

Learn About LinkedIn
LinkedIn is the world’s largest professional network with more than 610 million users in more than 200 countries and territories. Log in at www.linkedin.com to create an account and follow the profile prompts to begin. Your profile is similar to your resume in that it is carefully and professionally written and includes information that is relevant to your career objectives and job/internship search.

Remember: LinkedIn is a supplement to and not a substitute for networking in person. The Career Center hosts many events on/off campus to help students and alumni network with each other and employers, including: career fairs, Professional in Residence programs, industry nights and more!

LinkedIn for Students
Visit students.linkedin.com for the following:

Tips for improving your LinkedIn profile
Advice for using LinkedIn for your internship or job search
Ways that your LinkedIn connections can help you prepare for interviews

Remember: You’re not asking for a job! This is the surest way to sabotage a networking conversation because most people don’t have jobs to offer at any given point in time. (They DO have valuable info, advice, and a network of contacts.) Instead, ask open-ended questions. You’ll keep the conversation on a positive note, build rapport with your contact, and learn useful info that supports your career search.

3 Steps to a Career Conversation
(also known as an informational interview)
Key Profile Areas on LinkedIn

LinkedIn is your chance to make a strong first impression with networking contacts online. Your profile provides a snapshot of your qualifications and is often one of the first things that appears in a Google search for your name.

Photo

We recommend a headshot, i.e., a photo of you alone, wearing professional attire, rather than a cropped photo of yourself with others. Remember, it will be the first image that networking contacts have of you. If you don’t have a headshot, stop by the Career Center’s LinkedIn photo booth at the fall and spring Career Fairs.

Headline

This is the first thing other LinkedIn users will see, so make sure it is simple and engaging. Create a statement that speaks to your goals, interests, or professional skills, e.g. “Writer, digital editor, photographer,” “Junior majoring in International Relations seeking a summer internship.”

Summary

A short version of what you do and why – or what you would like to do and why. Connect with your reader by writing in the first person and always keep it professional. For example:

I have a strong background in writing and editing, including experience as a reporter for The Tufts Daily and an intern for the Boston Globe newspaper. As a leader for Tufts Imaginet, the Tufts Marketing and Advertising Club, I’m developing practical skills that connect to my goal of pursuing a career in marketing or public relations.

Experience

Include employment, internships, and involvement with clubs or activities, regardless of whether they were paid experiences or not. LinkedIn provides headlines to help you organize your Experiences, e.g., Work Experience vs. Volunteer Experience. You may also add relevant info to the Accomplishments section, such as Honors & Awards, Courses, Projects and Languages.

Skills and Endorsements

You have the option of including key words representing skills you possess, and your connections may also endorse you as having specific skills. More importantly, LinkedIn allows you list brief recommendations from supervisors, professors, and others who can speak to your abilities.

Education

Include Tufts, the degree you are seeking or have earned, and your declared major(s) and minor(s). If you are a current student, include your expected graduation year. Highlight academic honors and academic projects, such as a thesis or other course projects.

Additional Resources

Visit I Need to ... Network on the Career Center website for tips on the following:

- LinkedIn profile settings, including privacy & customized URLs
- Finding and adding contacts: Tufts alumni and others
- Requesting introductions and responding to link requests
- Joining and engaging with LinkedIn groups
- Setting your communication preferences

Visit the Career Center website for more resume samples representing different class years, majors and career plans, a list of resume action verbs, a sample reference sheet, and more tips for tailoring your document.

Taking It Further

Forming Connections

Once you’ve created a LinkedIn profile, start building your network with people you know and trust. Invite friends, relatives, work colleagues, and internship supervisors to link with you. Edit the generic LinkedIn invitation message and tailor it to each person.

LinkedIn Groups

Joining groups, like the Tufts University Career Network, is one of the best ways to find and reach out to potential networking contacts on LinkedIn. Even if you are not connected, you can still send several free messages per month to fellow members of the same group. See our message examples in the next section before reaching out to a contact. There are more than 175 Tufts groups with thousands of members on LinkedIn!
WRITE RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

Your resume is a summary (the big picture) of your competencies and experiences, both paid and unpaid. A cover letter, meanwhile, mentions specific aspects of your background that are relevant to a particular opportunity. You may have one or two versions of your resume for each position. Together, the documents are marketing tools that show how you meet an employer’s needs. Your resume and cover letter are also examples of your writing skills and attention to detail, so treat them like important homework assignments! Have both documents reviewed by a career advisor or career fellow before sending to an employer.

EVALUATE YOUR RESUME

- Highlights paid/unpaid work, volunteering, and activities, along with organization name, location (city/state or city/country), dates and title/role
- Lists entries in reverse chronological order by section (current/most recent to oldest)
- Uses bulleted descriptions that begin with strong skill-based verbs (see Career Center website for a list) and not “Responsible for …”, uses present tense for ongoing work
- Presents info concisely and gives sufficient detail

Perfect resume bullets (and not all can be perfect) contain 4 things:

- **Verb** | **Quantify** | **Story** | **Results**

  
  - **Verb**: “Taught class” for 20 incoming kindergartners. [with behavioral challenges]
  - **Quantify**: 20 incoming kindergartners
  - **Story**: [in detail]
  - **Results**: [by the end of the week everyone had successfully learned new coping and meditation techniques]

ASK YOURSELF: If you were leading an interview based on this resume and cover letter, which two questions might you ask? What other info would you like to have?

EVALUATE THE COMPLETE APPLICATION

- Both documents are one page in length (experienced professionals and grad students may have a longer resume)
- Neat with consistent spacing and font usage (e.g., 10 - 12 point Times New Roman); margins 0.5 in. or greater
- Uses bold, italics and caps sparingly
- Easy to read; eyes drawn to important information; free of grammatical, typographical, and spelling errors
- Uses language and keywords from the job description when appropriate
- Emphasizes your strengths and highlights what is unique about your competencies and experiences

Do you need an online portfolio?

If you’re considering a technical or creative field, it’s helpful to have a portfolio. This could be a blog, website, or online portfolio that matches the employer’s needs and experiences and how you acquired them; relevant personal traits; and a closing paragraph (when and how you’ll follow up and your contact info)

Sample Messages for Career Conversations & Networking

**LinkedIn connection**

**Subject line**: Tufts IR Major Seeking Career Advice
**Dear Mr./Ms. (Last Name),**

I’m a junior majoring in IR at Tufts and I found your name through the Tufts University Career Network on LinkedIn. From your profile, I see that you’ve worked at a variety of NGOs, most recently in Syria. As I’ve focused my studies on the Middle East, including time spent studying abroad in Cairo, I’d like to return to the region after college. I’d love to hear about your experiences living and working there, as well as any advice you might have for me as I plan for an international job search.

I wonder if it might be possible to speak, at your convenience, on the phone or via Skype/Face Time?

Thanks and Go Jumbos!

Your Name

**Thank you**

**Subject line**: Thank you from Tufts student
**Dear Mr./Ms. (Last Name),**

I learned a great deal about Simon & Schuster in our conversation yesterday and it affirmed my interest in pursuing a publishing career. I especially enjoyed hearing about your graduate studies in publishing at Columbia. Thank you for sharing your advice and experience with me.

I plan to contact (Name of Person) for information about her experience at [Company Name]. Thank you so much for this referral; I’m eager to learn more about the production side of the business. I’ll keep you updated on my progress.

I appreciate your assistance and your willingness to be part of last night’s event.

Best Regards,

Your Name

**Referral**

**Subject line**: Referral from [Name]
**Dear Mr./Ms. [Last Name],**

[Name], my Psychology professor, encouraged me to get in touch with you to learn more about your work at [Organization Name]. I’m interested in nonprofits, and in particular, those related to mental health counseling. I read your biography online and would like to learn more about your transition from client services to development.

Would it be possible to schedule a 20-minute phone call at your convenience? I know I would benefit from hearing about your experiences. Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Your Name

**Networking Etiquette Tips**

- **Carefully craft your subject line.** “Career question from Tufts senior,” “Referral from Professor Smith”
- **Keep your messages brief and be sure to proofread.** Don’t begin with “My name is …” Your recipient will see your name in the from line and in your closing signature.
- **Say “thank you.”**
- **No response?** Strategize with a Career Advisor about follow-up.

Important Reminder:

These emails should serve as a guide and should not be used in “copy and paste” messages. You’ll find greater success with messages that are written in your voice and reflect efforts to tailor the correspondence to your reader.
**FIND INTERNSHIPS AND JOBS**

Effective job and internship searches are comprised of many elements: self-assessment, research, exploration, and decision making. Whether you’re looking for an internship, part-time or full-time job, fellowship or gap year program, the Career Center is ready to assist you. Visit the Career Center site for job and internship search strategies and position listings for different career fields and geographic locations.

**Sample Subscription Resources**

Visit the Career Center site for many more subscription resources, career field and city-specific search sites.

**Checklist for Your Job or Internship Search**

Engage in self-assessment: Use the tools and worksheets on our website to help you think about what you’re looking for in a job or internship. Talk to a Career Advisor for guidance.

Establish a timeline and specific goals for your search: Schedule your search into your week, much as you would a class or activity. Set SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) goals for yourself.

Learn about career paths and employers: Visit the Explore Careers and Majors section of the Career Center site for helpful career exploration tools and a look at where fellow Jumbos intern and work. Determine two or three potential career fields that are compatible with your interests, skills and values.

Network with people in your field(s) of interest: Talk to peers, friends, family, Tufts alumni, professors, supervisors, and others to continue learning about careers and employers. Visit the Networking section of our site for networking strategies.

Refine your application materials: Update your resume. Perfect your cover letters. Sharpen interviewing skills by practicing with a Career Advisor and trusted friends.

Search for internships or jobs and determine how well they meet with your criteria: Visit the Internship and Job sections of the Career Center site for resources like Handshake and many more websites for career fields that interest you. Keep your Handshake profile up-to-date to receive job/internship listings that match your interests, and consider making your profile public to allow employers to find you.

Tailor your documents and apply to positions: Submit resumes and cover letters targeted to individual employers.

Follow up on applications and plan next steps: Create a spreadsheet or system to track your progress. List employers of interest, contacts, important dates, and next steps. Follow up with employers about a week or two after applying (unless they specifically prohibit follow-up). Ask about the status of your application, get info about the hiring timeline (unless those details are already online), or offer additional materials.

Read our Career eNews and follow our social channels: Scan eNews and look at our calendar to stay informed about upcoming career programs, employer events, and application deadlines. Follow us on Instagram (@tuftscareercenter), Twitter (@TuftsCareer), and Facebook (@Tufts Career Center) to learn about new jobs, internships, and resources.

**USE RESOURCES ESPECIALLY FOR JUMBOS**

Visit Explore Careers on the Career Center site for these and many more online career research tools, including industry-specific publications, professional associations, and job and internship listing sites.

**Where Do Jumbos Go?**

See Outcomes by Major on the Career Center site for the employment and grad school destinations of recent grads, organized by major. View the Tufts Internship Profiles (TIPS) to see where students have interned. The organizations listed below are a small sample of the many places Tufts grads go. And while they represent larger & more widely known employers, Jumbos work in every type of organization: small startups, mid-size companies, large conglomerates, and the private, nonprofit, and public sectors.

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**Arts and Museum**
- Boston Shakespeare Project
- Chicago Symphony Orchestra
- Christie’s Museum of Fine Arts

**Communications and Media**
- Bona Fide Productions
- CBS
- Digital Libi
- Hill Holliday
- SapiensNtiro

**Computer Science and Technology**
- Amazon
- Google
- HubSpot
- Microsoft
- REAL Software Systems

**Consumer Products and Business Services**
- Kraft Heinz
- Procter & Gamble
- Southwest Airlines
- Staples, Inc.
- Zappos

**Education**
- Breakthrough Collaborative City Year
- EF Education First Teach For America

**Engineering**
- Draper Laboratories
- GE Aviation
- MITRE Corporation
- Tesla
- Turner Construction

**Environmental**
- Environment America
- Denver Zoo
- Groundwork Somerville
- Nature Conservancy
- New England Aquarium

**Finance & Consulting**
- Analysis Group
- Citigroup
- Goldman Sachs
- J.P. Morgan
- Novantas

**Government/Law/Think Tank**
- Council on Foreign Relations
- Paul, Weiss
- Peace Corps
- U.S. House of Reps

**Healthcare/Biotech Research**
- athenahealth
- Boston Medical Center
- Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
- Pfizer

**International**
- HSBC (China)
- Fulbright (Austria)
- McKinsey Consulting (Turkey)
- PWG (India)
- Samsung (South Korea)

**Nonprofit/NGO**
- AmeriCorps
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Cultural Survival
- Food for All
- International Institute of New England
Explore Careers Through Networking

Experienced professionals can share advice about industries, organizations, and required skills. They may be able to connect you with resources for potential internship and job opportunities:

- As you conduct research and discover career paths that match your competencies and interests, the Tufts University Career Network and other Tufts groups on LinkedIn are valuable resources. If you aren’t sure how to begin this conversation or which questions to ask, visit the Networking section of this guide.

While you explore career fields through networking and the many resources described in this guide and online, ask yourself:

1. Can I see myself working in this particular career area?
2. Does it match with my interests as well as I had anticipated?
3. Will it afford me the lifestyle I seek?
4. Does it use my top competencies and match my top values and strengths?

Learn about Majors and Career Fields Through Career Conversations (a.k.a. Informational Interviews)

As you get started, keep these things in mind:

- Have fun! You’re asking questions to gain an insider’s view of a major and/or career field. It’s a short discussion, not something that should intimidate you.
- Ask your friends about their majors or the career fields they intend to pursue, and then ask them for names of other people who could help you. Get a variety of opinions so you can see many sides of the same story.

- Why did you choose your major?
- Why are you interested in this career field?
- What do you like/dislike about the major/career path?
- Which competencies have you strengthened through your major? How do they relate to your field of interest?
- What does your four-year schedule look like?
- What do you want to do after you graduate?
- Who are the most interesting professors and what were the most helpful classes you took?

Factors to Consider in Career Research

Education and skill requirements: What educational background or specific competencies does this career field typically require? Will you need a graduate degree to get a job?

Typical positions: Where does an entry-level or experienced employee fit within this field? How do responsibilities vary at different levels?

Day-to-day operations: What does a typical day look like for an employee in this field? How do the roles of various team members differ?

Industry trends and developments: What is the future of this field? Trends? Is it expanding?

Personality traits/experiences valued by the field: Which traits are necessary for success? Are there experiences that many in this field share?

Salary information: What type of salary can you anticipate, given your education and experience level? What is the salary range for the field as you progress?

Visit the Salary and Cost of Living page (Explore Majors and Majors section of the Career Center site) for tools to help you.

Hiring cycles and recruiting practices: When and how does the industry hire? Do employers recruit on campus? Some industries have unique recruiting practices, e.g., engineering, finance and consulting companies tend to recruit during the fall semester, while nonprofits tend to hire later in the spring. Carefully research the hiring timelines for your targeted field(s).

Geographic location: Are opportunities in your desired career field primarily located in specific areas of the country/world? Would you be happy living there?

Sample Questions About Majors & Career Fields

1. What can you see many sides of the same story.
2. Get a variety of opinions so you intend to pursue, and then ask them for names of other people who could help you. Visit the Networking section of this guide.
3. As you conduct research and discover career paths that match your competencies and interests, the Tufts University Career Network and other Tufts groups on LinkedIn are valuable resources. If you aren’t sure how to begin this conversation or which questions to ask, visit the Networking section of this guide.

Received a Job Offer?

Congrats! Visit Find a Job on the Career Center site for factors to consider when evaluating offers and tips for negotiating salary and benefits.

Career Center Summer Internship Grants

The Career Center funds 40-50 undergraduate students each summer doing unpaid internships for a minimum of 300 hours. These funds offer students the opportunity to explore career fields and gain experience. Selected students will receive $4,000. Students must secure an internship prior to the grant application deadlines.

Visit the Internship Funding section of the Career Center site for complete information, including application details and deadlines, selection criteria, requirements for recipients, and more.

Career Fairs at Tufts and Beyond

More than 300 employers attend fall and spring career fairs each year. In addition, Tufts students participate in company-specific events throughout the year, both online and in various cities.

Tufts Internship Profiles (TIPs)

Internship Tips From Tufts Students For Tufts Students

The Tufts Career Center has compiled hundreds of summer internship profiles packed with helpful advice from your classmates to help you in your search. In addition to talking about their daily tasks, students answer questions about what they enjoyed, what they found challenging and how YOU can land a similar position. Visit Find an Internship on the Career Center site for internship profiles in these career fields:

- Arts & Museum
- Environmental/Wildlife
- Nonprofit: Advocacy
- Communications & Media
- Finance & Consulting
- Nonprofit: Human Services
- Computer Science / Technology
- Government & Think Tank
- Real Estate
- Consumer Products & Business Services
- Healthcare / Biotech / Pharma
- Research
- Education
- International
- Sports
- Engineering / Energy
- Law
- Start-up / Entrepreneurship / Philanthropy
- Additional Resources

Visit Find a Job or Fellowship / Find an Internship on the Career Center website for info about the following:

- Fellowships and gap year programs
- Rotational and leadership development programs
- International job search
- Job/Internship searching for international students
- Diversity resources
- Summer housing resources
- Academic credit for internships
- Many more internship and job listing websites
Interviewing is a skill. The more you practice, the better you’ll do! The Career Center offers mock interviews to help you strengthen your interviewing skills. Schedule an appointment via Handshake before you have an interview so you’ll have extra time to prepare.

Before the Interview

- Review your resume. Be prepared to discuss every bullet point, from internships and employment to courses and activities.
- Assess yourself and develop career objectives. Identify strengths and weaknesses, interests and skills. Employers are looking for transferable skills as well as candidates who have carefully considered their goals and can connect these goals to the position and organization.
- Research the employer. Learn its history as well as its current position and future prospects. Begin with the employer’s website and proceed to trade journals, professional organizations, and media coverage. Familiarize yourself with the employer’s mission, culture and challenges. Finally, find out the nature of the interview (one on one discussion with HR/ multiple conversations with future co-workers?) before you go in.
- Speak with alumni who work at the organization or in the same industry (this is called informational interviewing or having a career conversation). You can identify these individuals through LinkedIn.
- Understand your fit with the organization. Why are you interested in the organization? This particular position? Why are you the best person for the job?
- Practice, Practice, Practice. Prepare responses to common interview questions and rehearse out loud with a trusted friend or with a Career Advisor in a mock interview to ensure a professional, articulate performance. Likewise, consider questions that you would like to ask the employer to convey your research, interest, and enthusiasm.
- Choose your interview outfit. Model it for a friend at least two days ahead. Business attire is appropriate for all interviews, unless you’ve been instructed differently.
- Do a trial run. If the interview is off campus, consider a test run to ensure you know how to get there — and how long it could take. Don’t forget about train delays or traffic & parking (if applicable). Check the weather.

Sample Questions Asked by Employers

Getting to Know You

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why/why not, are you qualified for this position?
- What do you know about our organization? Our products? Services? Competition?
- Why do you want to work here?
- What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
- Why should we hire you over another candidate?
- Of which three achievements are you most proud?
- Who are your role models? Why?
- What motivates you?
- Have you had difficulty getting along with a professor (supervisor, co-worker)? Explain.
- Do you prefer to work independently? With supervision?

Your Education

- How did you choose your college? Why did you choose your major?
- Which classes do you like best? Least? Why?
- Would you change anything about your education? In which campus activities do/did you participate?

Your Education, continued

- Do your grades accurately reflect your ability? Why or why not?
- Did you pay for any portion of your education?
- Describe the skills you’ve gained through your coursework and projects.

Your Experience

- What did you most/least enjoy about your last job or internship?
- Which skills do you enjoy using?
- Have you ever spoken before a group of people?
- Have you ever quit a job? Withdrawn from a course?
- How would a former supervisor describe you and your work?

Your Career Goals

- Describe your ideal job and work environment.
- What other types of positions are you considering?
- Where do you want to be in five years?
- Do you plan to go to graduate school?
- Would you be willing to relocate?

Develop Competencies and Transferable Skills

Beyond the competencies you will gain in any major at Tufts, employers value those that you develop outside the classroom. Consider participating in internships, volunteer service, and extracurricular activities.

Set Up Career Conversations (a.k.a. Informational Interviews)

These short conversations (self-initiated chats with people you find interesting) are a great way to explore majors. Talking with alumni, upperclassmen, faculty and others can help you determine which major might be a good fit for you. Visit the Networking section of this guide for more about the process, and view sample conversation questions on the next page.

Continue Exploring

In addition to conversations with fellow students, faculty, and Tufts alumni...

- Visit Explore Careers & Majors on the Career Center site for What Can I Do With This Major? which allows you to explore career options across a variety of majors. You’ll also find worksheets and other tools to help you reflect on your interests, personality, competencies and values and how they connect to possible majors and careers.
- Check out the websites of Tufts academic departments for info on majoring in that discipline, courses offered, and faculty.
- Get advice from your advising dean in Dowling Hall or your Student Success Advisor (SSA).
- Think about which competencies you would like to develop, or which classes your ideal major would include.

Major Myths

Myth: Only certain majors are practical when it comes to finding a job.
Reality: Employers are more interested in your competencies and experience than in any specific major. Liberal arts & engineering students gain a variety of transferable skills or “soft skills” that are highly valuable to employers.

Myth: If I want to go to law school or medical school, I have fewer choices for majors.
Reality: There is no required major for law school or medical school. Your ability to think analytically and communicate clearly will be important for law and medicine. In addition, Tufts has pre-law and pre-health advisors to discuss the requirements for law and medical schools.

Myth: Majoring in engineering will limit me to working only in engineering.
Reality: Engineering skills and expertise are more valuable than ever in a variety of fields. Tufts Engineering students have pursued careers in technical writing, finance, law, medicine and more.
COMPETENCIES AND CAREER READINESS

Career readiness is the attainment and demonstration of competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition to the workplace. Think about the competencies that enable you to succeed. These can include broader areas such as global/intercultural fluency or leadership, but can also encompass what we and many employers refer to as transferable skills, such as the ability to work in a team. All competencies can be developed over time through a variety of experiences (community service, internships, student clubs, coursework) and apply to many career fields. Based on competencies developed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), the Tufts Career Center is committed to helping students develop/enhance the following competencies. Refer to the Competencies and Career Readiness page of the Career Center website for ways to develop each of these.

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

Oral/Written Communications
Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

Civic Engagement
Work with others to define, analyze, and form relationships that manifest such civic virtues as tolerance and respect. Others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

Teamwork/Collaboration
Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure and can negotiate and manage conflict.

Digital Technology
Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

Global/Intercultural Fluency
Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individual differences.

Leadership
Leverage strengths of others to achieve common goals and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage emotions; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.

Professionalism/Work Ethic
Demonstrate effective work habits and personal accountability, e.g., working productively with others, practicing punctuality and time management, and understanding the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from mistakes.

Career Management
Identify and articulate one’s strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate/explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

The Day of the Interview
Get off to a good start
- Check your appearance and grooming; Bring extra copies of your resume in a portfolio.
- Arrange 10-15 minutes early so you don’t appear rushed or hassled. The interview begins at the moment you cross an employer’s threshold, sometimes earlier. (Candidates tell stories of meeting VPs – unknowingly – in the parking lot!)
- Behave respectfully with everyone you meet, from administrative assistants to managers.
- The first 60 seconds create lasting impressions. Offer a firm handshake, greet the interviewer by name, and don’t be lured by ‘small talk.’ You’re being evaluated from many angles, including informal conversation.
- Be aware of your non-verbal communication, especially your eye contact and physical posture.
- Display energy and enthusiasm in a way that fits your personal style. Be YOU.

Keep up the momentum
- When the recruiter begins discussing the organization or position, ask questions if you need clarification or want to know more. Be sure you have a clear understanding of the job, the requirements, and the challenges. Your questions should highlight your interest and knowledge of the organization and industry.
- The interviewer will ask about your qualifications as well as areas where they may have concerns. Be prepared to deal with aspects of your background that could be construed as negative (e.g., low GPA, few outside activities, no related work experience). Strategize with a career advisor about these things.
- Watch your grammar and enunciation.
- Never criticize a former employer. Never bring up salary or benefits in the first interview.

Conclude with confidence
- As you conclude, the recruiter is assessing your overall performance. Remain enthusiastic and courteous.
- If you’re unclear about next steps in the process, ask for clarification, e.g., “When do you expect to make a decision regarding this position?”
- Shake the recruiter’s hand, offer thanks for the opportunity to interview, and request a business card (so you have contact information for your thank you letter).

After the Interview
Jot down the pertinent facts you want to remember and make note of questions as preparation for future interviews. Within 24 hours, send a thank you email to those who interviewed you. Emphasize your interest in working for the organization and how you can contribute. Use this as an opportunity to briefly clarify or mention something you might have overlooked in the interview. When writing an email, be as formal as you would in a snail mail letter.

Your Turn: Questions You Can Ask Employers
- What is the most significant challenge facing this organization? This department?
- What kinds of assignments might I expect initially?
- How is training provided for new employees?
- How much opportunity is there for __________?
- How often are performance reviews given?
- How are performance reviews given?
- What do you like best about working for this organization?
- What is the most significant challenge facing this organization? This department?
- What do you like best about working for this organization?

Expect the Unexpected
Who’s our CEO?
- What’s the last book you read?
- Describe your most creative costume.
- Tell me about your most awkward moment.

Some recruiters have favorite questions. These inquiries are designed to observe your processing: the way you think, behave, and respond. Besides doing the research we’ve recommended (which would give you the CEO’s name), you cannot predict all these questions. Stop and think. Respond carefully. Use humor, if it comes naturally. Don’t just give the answer – give the reason for the answer.
Behavioral Interviewing

Behavioral interviewing is a popular interview framework because employers believe it will illustrate how you—as an employee—will function in a new organization. Employers will pose a problem or describe a scenario and ask how you would handle it. This style of interviewing allows you to demonstrate how you manage challenges, awkward situations, and stress.

To prepare for behavioral interviewing, you should develop stories from all your experiences: employment, internships, and extracurricular activities. These examples should show your strengths, achievements, work style, teamwork, initiative. When asked to describe a situation, choose an appropriate example and adapt to fit the question. The more stories you develop, the better equipped you are for behavioral interviewing.

If you’ve done your research on the position, organization, and industry, you’ll have a good sense of what is needed in an intern or entry-level candidate. Knowing this, you can create a list of stories that match those needs. For example, if you know the employer requires individuals to work in teams, be ready with stories of your teamwork.

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Mastering Behavioral Interviewing with the STAR Method

The STAR Method is a framework that will help you organize your stories to give the ‘big picture,’ get quickly to the point, and make a positive impression.

Emphasize your achievements and attitude, yet remember to include some evidence of struggles or turnarounds. Keep each story to 2 – 4 minutes, and when you conclude, you may want to invite questions from your interviewer to ensure that you accurately interpreted the question and provided helpful information.

Remember: Develop 6–8 stories from different experiences, e.g., an internship, part-time job, volunteer experience, activity, or class project, rather than drawing all your stories from one experience.

Sample Behavioral Interviewing Questions

- Describe a project or experience where you worked as part of a team.
- Discuss a situation where you resolved a conflict.
- Talk about your leadership skills.
- Tell about a time when you persuaded someone or successfully pitched an idea.
- Describe a time when you worked under stress and demonstrated your coping skills.
- Tell about a time when you provided a solution or improved something for an employer.
- Give me an example of a time when you set and then achieved a specific goal.
- Tell me about a difficult decision you’ve made in the past year.
- Describe a time when you failed.

Additional Resources

Visit Prepare for an Interview on Career Center website for info about the following:
- Preparing for phone and video interviews
- Different types of interviews — Technical, consulting case questions
- Many more sample interview questions
- Appropriate interview attire

Career Center Assessment Tools

Strong Interest Inventory — Online instrument that can help you identify specific areas of interest; it compares your interests with those of individuals in a variety of occupations.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) — Helps you identify your natural personality preferences and how they influence the way you make decisions, interact with people, gather information, and get energized. The MBTI does not measure aptitudes, but helps you better understand yourself, your motivations, strengths, and implications for career fields that you may find satisfying.

To access the Strong or MBTI, schedule a general 30-minute meeting with a career advisor. You’ll also meet with an advisor to discuss results from the Strong or MBTI.

IMPORTANT OF SELF-ASSESSMENT

Self-assessment is the first step toward choosing a fulfilling career path. View the sections below and worksheets on the Career Center website to help you reflect.

Career Center Resources for Exploring Competencies, Interests, Values, Transferable Skills, and Personality

Tools available on the Explore Skills & Interests page of the Career Center site:

- Skills Inventory
- What’s Your Skillset?
- O*Net Online Skills Search
- Interests Checklist
- Interests Questionnaire
- Career Interests Game
- Work Values Inventory
- Family & Culture Assessment
- Career Competencies Worksheets

Interests

What do you like to do in your spare time? Which courses and activities do you most enjoy? If you consider these things, you’ll often come up with common themes running through your personal narrative.

Values

Values play an integral role in career satisfaction. Do you prefer risk or stability? Variety or routine? Teamwork or autonomy? Finding work environments that align with your values is often just as important as the actual tasks involved in a job or internship.

Transferable Skills

As the name implies, transferable skills are those that can carry over to many environments, whether from home to school, school to work, or beyond. These broad-based skills, such as communication skills, problem-solving and taking initiative, are highly sought after by employers for their applicability across different settings.

Personality

Understanding your personality preferences is an important part of choosing a fulfilling career path. Personality can be defined as a combination of qualities that form an individual’s distinctive character, influencing how you see, experience and interact with the world. For instance, how and with whom do you prefer to spend your time? How do you approach new projects or activities? How do you make big decisions?
YOUR CAREER DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

The career development process is a lifelong journey. The earlier you begin to focus on your career development, the better prepared you will be to make decisions and pursue the opportunities available to you. Good news: There are a variety of things you can do now to prepare for your future! Every class and experience will build your competencies, focus your interests and inform your goals. From individual advising to career education tools and programs, the Career Center offers extensive resources to help you explore options and develop strategies for pursuing those goals.

Here are the basic elements of your career development journey:

Explore

Get to know yourself: What do you enjoy? What are your strengths? Begin to identify your competencies, transferable skills, interests, values and personality preferences. Gaining awareness of these core “satisfiers” will help you link to potential career fields. Start researching career possibilities and think about the connections between experiences and careers.

Action Steps:

- Visit Explore Careers & Majors on the Career Center site for info about competencies and career readiness, self-assessment tools, and more
- Begin to identify majors that fit your interests and competencies
- Review the list of organizations/clubs (via the Office of Campus Life) and join clubs that will help you develop your competencies and interests
- Gather information on different fields, industries and companies
- Take advantage of the Career Center’s educational workshops and programs
- Decide on a major and learn how your major(s)/minor(s) link to potential career paths

Build

Polish your resume and cover letter writing skills. Refine your career goals and strategy. Test career paths through career conversations (a.k.a. informational interviewing), shadowing, internships, and part-time and summer jobs, and determine potential career direction(s).

Action Steps:

- Create/revise/finalize resume and have one of our career fellows or career advisors review it
- Get help writing an effective cover letter and/or artist statement
- Learn to present your goals and competencies in networking conversations
- Conduct career conversations and/or shadow people working in fields that interest you
- Create a LinkedIn profile and join groups like the Tufts University Career Network and other professional groups
- Practice interview skills; set up a mock interview
- Explore opportunities to gain relevant work experience through an internship, job or fellowship
- If interested in graduate school, research schools, visit campuses, and take required standardized tests
- Attend events such as career fairs, industry nights, employer programs and alumni networking events

Launch

Make informed and meaningful career decisions. Remember that the choices you make today will not define your entire career path. Instead, focus on the experiences you would like to gain over the next couple of years.

Action Steps:

- Meet with a career advisor to help with your decision making or career planning
- Tailor your self-marketing materials (e.g., resume, cover letter) to individual employers and jobs
- Get help writing your personal statement if you are applying to graduate or professional schools
- Continue to strengthen your interviewing skills
- Apply to positions/schools: analyze offers from employers and grad schools; learn/practice negotiation basics
- If you have accepted a job, tell us about it through the Handshake First Destination Survey
- Reflect on your career journey through an internship/job/fellowship or grad program (remember: this is a lifelong process!)

APPLY TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

Applying to grad school can be a daunting process, whether you’re finishing your undergraduate degree, completing another degree program or working full-time. We encourage you to bring specific questions to a 1-on-1 appointment where a career advisor will discuss your goals and guide you in developing a course of action.

Evaluating Graduate Programs

A school’s reputation is an important factor, but it’s often overrated. The most important criteria involve how well the program matches your specific interests, abilities, academic background and finances. To make sure a program meets your needs, do the following:

Consult with faculty and students in your intended field.

- Talk to professors and read professional journals to find people who are researching and publishing in your area of interest. You could gain valuable info to differentiate yourself from others.
- Seek out those already in your chosen line of work. Ask how their grad school/program influenced their career development.

Evaluate the specific program.

The quality and reputation of a program and its professors is more important than the overall status of the institution. Stay focused on how a program will help you get to the next step of your career.

Use LinkedIn groups.

Find alumni and others with grad degrees similar to the one(s) you’re researching and learn from their advice.

Consider the financial aid package.

Ask about the duration of funding and the possibility of increased funding depending on your academic performance.

What You’ll Need to Apply

Pay careful attention to instructions, as different schools and programs have vastly different requirements.

Testing & Transcripts

Testing information (GRE, MCAT, LSAT, GMAT) is available in the Apply to Graduate or Professional School section of the Career Center site. Consult individual test sites if you need info regarding test fee assistance/reduction programs. Official transcripts are available free of charge from the Tufts Registrar’s Office (online, in person, or by mail). Plan ahead to ensure you will receive your documents by the appropriate deadlines.

Letters of Recommendation

- Choose people who know you well, e.g., professors, faculty advisors, work supervisors and others. Avoid the CEO trap.
- Unless the head of the company really knows you, this will work against you. Schools are more impressed by letters with specific examples that show your interests/abilities.
- Find enthusiastic recommenders. A lukewarm endorsement makes you a weaker candidate in a program’s eyes.
- Select people who know you in different ways. Three people raving about your research skills is less effective than three individuals who can highlight three different skills like research, leadership and writing.
- Give your recommenders plenty of time. Allow one to two months to write your letters. Check in with them after a couple of weeks or a month to ask if they need additional info. This also serves as a gentle reminder.
- Provide everything the recommender needs. Make sure each person has your resume, personal statement, and research info, if applicable. Don’t forget any forms, stamped/addressed envelopes, and other details specific to your target schools.
- Say thank you. This is good manners 101. Do it for that reason alone.

Is Grad School Right for You?

Typically 15% of Tufts seniors go directly to graduate or professional studies after graduation. Of those who do not go right away, 77% plan to pursue graduate work within the next three years. The decision is highly individual; however, it could be a good fit if you are:

- Pursuing a specific occupation that requires an advanced degree such as medicine, law, university teaching
- Committed to a specific field of study and want to gain knowledge and expertise
- Aware of how an advanced degree will further your career goals

Before you make the decision, research what’s needed to succeed in the field you choose. In some cases, you may flourish with a bachelor’s degree. There are many career options for different Tufts majors.
Personal Statements
The most effective statements hook a reader right at the start. Admissions counselors only spend one to two minutes per essay, so invite them to linger on yours with a compelling introduction.
• Think first. Reflect on how best to tell your story and develop an outline before you start writing.
• Tell a story. Choose a turning point, important lesson, or self-discovery that corresponds to the essay question, demonstrates why you are applying to this particular program, and shows why you are a fit. Tailor statements to each graduate program.
• Be you. This is your opportunity to stand out from the crowd. Authenticity is the most effective differentiator.
If you’re stuck, ask yourself: Who is my audience? What is my goal? Remembering these things will help you stay true to your purpose.

Sample Graduate School Timeline
Review this list of tasks as you move through the application process. Keep in mind that timelines always vary by individual.

If you’re thinking about medical school, visit the Tufts Pre-Health Advising site at uss.tufts.edu/hpa. (Advising appointments take place in Dowling 710.) If you’re thinking about law school, visit the Apply to Graduate or Professional School section of the Career Center site for Pre-Law Advising info. (Advising appointments take place in Dowling 740.)

If you’re an alumna/us or grad student applying to grad or professional school, you’ll complete similar tasks but in a different time frame than the one shown here. Consult a career advisor for assistance in structuring your timeline.

Available on the Career Center site:
School-Specific Resources for ...
Medical Schools & Health-Related Programs
Law School
Business School
Graduate Study in AS&E
Ph.D. Programs

Paying for Grad School
From school funding to loans and external scholarships/aid

Advice from Alumni and Faculty
A cross-section of alumni and faculty discuss all aspects of the application process. Regardless of specific academic and professional focus, these individuals offer important general information.

Personal Statement Assistance
Tufts Career Center: Request an appointment so one of our career advisors can review your statement. You may want to ask for the advisor’s email address and send your statement ahead of time.

Academic Resource Center: Writing consultants are available to meet 1-on-1 with students at any stage in the writing process, both for class assignments and graduate or professional school applications/statements.

Sample Interview Questions
• Outline of a career journey with action steps to help you move forward
• Importance of Self-Assessment; Competencies and Career Readiness
• Understanding competencies, interests, values and personality; self-assessment resources for Jumbos

Choose a Major and Research Careers
• How to make decisions about your major and debunk myths about majors
• Ways to explore careers via networking; factors to consider in career research

Use Resources Especially for Jumbos
• Tools for researching career fields, majors, employers and types of jobs

Write Resumes and Cover Letters
• Instructions for creating and evaluating your documents
• Resume and cover letter samples for AS&E and SMFA students

Build Your Network and Use LinkedIn
• Networking essentials; an in-depth look at career conversations
• Guidelines for creating a strong LinkedIn profile; sample networking messages for email/LinkedIn/The Herd

Find Internships and Jobs
• Checklists for your job or internship search
• Resources especially for Tufts students, including Handshake and the Campus Recruiting Program
• Internship Grants; Tufts Internship Profiles (TIPs)

Prepare for Interviews
• What to do before, during and after interviews
• Sample interview questions; information about behavioral interviewing

Apply to Graduate or Professional School
• How to evaluate grad programs; what you’ll need to apply; sample application timeline

TUFTS CAREER CENTER
We will help you identify your career goals and gain the competencies, resources, contacts, and tools necessary to achieve them. Whether you are deciding on a major or career, looking for an internship or job, or considering graduate school, we can help.

Mission
To foster transformational experiences that shape the professional, academic and personal development of Tufts students and alumni for lifelong impact.

Vision
That every Jumbo is prepared for a lifetime of fulfilling career opportunities.
CAREER GUIDE
for undergraduate students