

PARSONS

JOB SEARCH GUIDE

PARSONS OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES

PARSONS THE NEW SCHOOL FOR DESIGN

Dear Students and Alumni,

The work world today is highly competitive, and employers are looking for creative professionals who can express their ideas in both images and words. The Office of Career Services can help you navigate the process of finding an internship or job. This guide offers you some basic tools. Stop by or email our office for more resources, including access to the online job board and information on career development workshops and events. We wish you the best of luck!

The Staff of Parsons Career Services

Web Designer, Design Director, Broadcast Designer, Art Director, Multimedia
 Developer, Conceptual Designer, Product Designer, Visual Merchandiser, Video
 Watch Designer, Intimates Designer, Merchandising Coordinator, Book Design
 es Designer, **TABLE OF CONTENTS** Book Designer, Knitwear Designer, Mar
 y Designer, Web Designer, Design Director, Broadcast Designer, Art Director,
 er, Product Developer, Conceptual **JOB SEARCH PREPARATION 4** Visual Mercha
 nical Director, Book Designer, Knitwear Designer, Marketing Executive, Muse
 ner, Environmental Analyst, **RÉSUMÉ WRITING 6** Urban Planner, Curator, Infor
 imator, Toy Designer, Web Designer, Design Director, Broadcast Designer Mu
 product Developer, **HELPFUL VERBS FOR RÉSUMÉ WRITING 7** Conceptual Design
 menswear Designer, Character Technical Director, Watch Designer, Intimates
 Associate, Menswear Designer, Storyboard Artist, Interactive Designer, Envir
 Architect, **USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES 7** Interior Designer, Trend Designer, G
 Designer, Art Director, Multimedia Designer, Game Designer, Event Planner, Tre
 ducer, Accessories Designer, **SAMPLE RÉSUMÉS 8** Womenswear Designer, Cha
 nator, Book Designer, Knitwear Designer, Marketing Executive, Museum Rese
 ental Analyst, Urban Planner, Curator, Information Architect, Fashion Buyer, F
 r, Web Designer, Design Designer, Art Director, Multimedia Designer, Game D
 ual Designer, **WRITING A COVER LETTER 13** Product Designer, Visual Mercha
 nical Director, Watch Designer, Intimates Designer, Merchandising Coordinat
 te, Menswear Designer, Storyboard Designer, Environmental Analyst, Urban
 erior Designer, **SAMPLE COVER LETTER 14** Graphic Designer, Animator, Toy De
 signer, Game Designer, Event Planner, Trend Researcher, Developer, Conce
 s Designer, Womenswear Designer, Character Technical Director, Watch Desig
 gnner, Marketing Executive, **PREPARING A PORTFOLIO 15** Museum Research As
 alyst, Urban Planner, Curator, Information Architect, Fashion Buyer, Furniture
 Designer, **ORGANIZING YOUR JOB SEARCH 16** Design Director, Broadcast Desig
 er, Product Developer, Conceptual Designer, Product Designer, Visual Mercha
 nical Director, Watch Designer, Intimates Designer, Merchandising Coordinat
 te, Menswear Designer, **SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING TIPS 17** Storyboard Artist
 itect, Fashion Buyer, Furniture Designer, Graphic Designer, Animator, Toy Des
 signer, Game Designer, Event Planner, Trend Researcher, Brand Manager, P
 o Producer, Accessories Designer, Womenswear Designer, Character Technica
 signer, Knitwear **SAMPLE JOB SEARCH WORKSHEET 18** Museum Research Ass
 alyst, Urban Planner, Curator, Information Architect, Fashion Buyer, Furniture
 Designer, Design Director, Broadcast Designer, Art Director, Game Designer,
 signer, Product Designer, Visual Merchandiser, Video Producer, Accessories
 es Designer, Merchandising Coordinator, Book Designer, Knitwear Designer, M
 Artist, Interactive Designer, Environmental Analyst, Urban Planner, Curator, In
 Graphic Designer, Animator, Toy Designer, Web Designer, Design Director, Bro
 end Researcher, Brand Manager, Product Developer, Conceptual Designer, Pr
 swear Designer, Character Technical Director, Watch Designer, Intimates Des

JOB SEARCH PREPARATION

Developing Your Presentation

Now is the time! You are ready to enter the working world. But first you must make some key decisions that will affect the way you're viewed in interviews and differentiate you from the competition. How will you package yourself? How will your cover letter and résumé read? What will your portfolio look like? Consider these three key elements as you prepare for your job search.

Résumé: Who are you and what have you done?

You are a professional working in a creative industry; your résumé should reflect this. Before you showcase your talents, you will need to send out a résumé. Seriously consider how you present yourself. Students sometimes make the mistake of underestimating the importance of their résumés because they think their art should speak for itself, but often an employer reads your résumé before seeing you or your portfolio. Your résumé must promote your skills and accomplishments while sparking the employer's interest in interviewing you. See page 6.

Cover Letter: Why should they hire you?

This letter describes what you are looking for (an internship or job) and sums up your pertinent skills. Potential employers use this letter to assess your written communication skills and your enthusiasm for the job. If you have a winning personality and portfolio but can't communicate your ideas clearly, you will run into trouble. See page 13.

Portfolio: What is your range of skills and design sensibility?

Your professional portfolio represents your skills and aesthetics. It is essential that you present your work in a clean, professional manner. See page 15.

Developing the Brand Called You

Think of yourself as a brand. How will you package your brand? Your cover letter, résumé, and portfolio should work together to create a consistent look and feel. Your choice of fonts, layout, and color will begin to depict your brand. Using these choices consistently throughout many of your pieces will show that you have a distinctive style. This is one of the few opportunities you'll have to be your own client, so put your heart into it!

Online Profile Checklist

When looking for a job or an internship, it is important that you manage your public image. Employers often Google applicants and decide who to interview or hire based on what they learn. That means editing your profile or setting it to "private." Select appropriate photos of yourself, and delete other things that an employer might find offensive, immature, or unprofessional. Be sure you update the following:

- ☐ CollegeCentral.com/Parsons résumé
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Google+
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Your website

Networking

Networking might seem like a formidable task, but it is not as difficult as you think. You probably have more contacts than you realize. When you put together your contact list, think about these basic categories: educational, professional, personal, and community. Your contacts can include a favorite faculty member, supervisor from a previous internship, fellow Parsons students and alumni, or anyone else with whom you work or socialize. Networking is about being friendly and connecting with people. It can be as simple as picking up the phone and calling family friends who work in a field that interests you. They can introduce you to their circle of friends. LinkedIn is also a great way to network. You never know who your contacts may be acquainted with. Follow up on all phone calls and other leads that come your way. Make an appointment for an informational interview where you can ask questions about the contact's career and get advice on whom you should speak to next.

The Breakdown

75% of jobs are found through networking.
Develop a contact list.

12% are found via the classifieds, newspapers, and the Internet. Use the Internet and read the classifieds.

8% are found using employment agencies and search firms. Register with a few agencies and search firms.

5% are found through the direct approach.
Make cold calls and write emails to companies.

How to Find Company Contact Information

When preparing to send your cover letter and résumé, the fastest way to get company contact information is to call the company directly. Dial 411 for business listings or go to www.superpages.com, a free business pages resource. When using Superpages, enter the company name in quotes for the fastest results. When calling the company, ask for the Human Resources department, or in a small company, speak with the receptionist. Identify yourself as a Parsons student, and let them know your major. Explain that you are about to graduate (or that you are looking for an internship), and would like to send your résumé to the appropriate person at their company. Be sure to get the correct contact name, spelling, title, department, company address, email address, and phone and fax numbers. Remember that there are often separate hiring managers for internships, and entry-level positions. Plug the information into your cover letter, and send away!

RÉSUMÉ WRITING

Limit your résumé to one page. Résumés for entry or mid-level candidates should generally be limited to one page in length (with the exception of fine arts and CVs). Graduate students who have extensive transferable skills and work experience may have longer résumés. The main purpose of your résumé is to land an interview, so stick to the key elements that highlight your value. Save the rest for the interview.

Do the 5-second scan. Your potential employer will scan your résumé for the most important information in a matter of seconds.

Use action verbs to describe your job responsibilities. Refer to the list on page 7 to get you started. Use past-tense action verbs, except to describe a current position. The more consistent your language and presentation, the easier it is for the reader to absorb.

Write concise yet powerful job descriptions. Use phrases or short sentences. Use lists in place of paragraphs. Rule of thumb: The bigger the block of copy, the smaller the chance that it will be read. Be sure to put descriptions of duties in order of their relevance to the prospective job.

Describe your “transferable skills” when writing descriptions for positions you held in an unrelated field. Omit any industry jargon you may have used in your former profession, since the field you are entering may use entirely different terms. Don’t understate your accomplishments, but describe them in a way a layperson would understand. Keep your thoughts simple and clear.

Keep the content professional and current. Stick to describing your professional qualifications. Do not write in the first person, and do not include your picture, birthday, hobbies, or interests. Do not include the word “résumé” at the top of the page, references, GPA, or any high school information. Keep your contact information up-to-date. Use a New York address if applying for a New York position, keep voicemail clear and concise, and leave only your cell phone number so that the employer can reach you more easily.

Keep your résumé up to date. List your most recent accomplishments first and proceed backwards chronologically.

Customize your résumé. Do not be afraid of having more than one version of your résumé or of tweaking it to suit a specific job. Consider varying your objective and content based on the position you are applying for.

PROOFREAD!! Misspelled words, incorrect punctuation, and grammatical errors will send your résumé straight to the trash. Have a faculty member, career advisor, or trusted friend with good editing skills review it. Attention to detail will get you a long way.

Make a PDF version so anyone can view your document without formatting or font issues. (These issues often arise when attaching Microsoft Word documents). Save your document as yournameresume.pdf.

Do not use Times New Roman. It is too commonly used in corporate résumé design. There are many interesting, legible fonts to choose from. Use universal fonts such as Arial, Century Gothic, Garamond, Helvetica, and Verdana. Stick to just one or two typefaces to avoid “over-designing.”

Make your résumé easy to read. Keep the margins wide and allow for negative space. Your résumé will be much easier to read. Don’t make your typeface too large or too small. Most fonts are legible in 8- or 9-point type. Stick with the smallest legible size (consider how it will read after being printed or viewed on screen) to allow room for white space on the page. The “lighter” the overall appearance of the content, the better the chance that it will be read.

Showcase your publications, exhibited work, and research projects. Your résumé is a good place to highlight achievements such as published and exhibited work and research projects. This is particularly beneficial for those who are pursuing careers in academia or fine arts. When listing published and exhibited work, follow the APA, MLA, AP, or AMA organizations for citation styles that best suit your industry.

HELPFUL VERBS FOR RÉSUMÉ WRITING

administered
advanced
analyzed
approved
arranged
assembled
assessed
assisted
built
calculated
collected
communicated
compiled
completed
composed
conceived
conceptualized
conducted
consolidated
constructed
coordinated
corresponded
counseled
created

defined
demonstrated
designed
determined
developed
directed
displayed
distributed
drafted
established
evaluated
executed
expanded
expedited
fabricated
facilitated
gathered
generated
guided
helped
identified
illustrated
implemented
improved

increased
informed
initiated
installed
instructed
interacted
interpreted
launched
led
maintained
managed
negotiated
organized
originated
participated
performed
planned
prepared
presented
processed
produced
programmed
proposed
provided

publicized
published
recommended
remodeled
rendered
reorganized
reported
represented
researched
resolved
reviewed
revised
scheduled
sketched
sourced
streamlined
strengthened
supervised
supported
targeted
trained
updated
utilized
volunteered

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

ability to delegate
ability to implement
ability to plan
ability to train
ability to work well
adaptable
analytical ability
assertive

communication skills
conceptual ability
conversant in
critical thinking skills
detail-oriented
flexibility
follow-through
follow-up

handle multiple tasks
industrious
innovative
leadership qualities
organizational skills
persuasive
problem solver
public speaking skills

results-oriented
risk taker
self-starter
setting priorities
take initiative
team player
willing to travel
working knowledge of

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ

COMMUNICATION AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

HAROLD LLOYD

250 Burbank Ave.
Brooklyn, NY 11232
Tel: 917.111.5555
haroldlloyd@gmail.com
www.haroldlloyddesign.com

OBJECTIVE

Seeking a summer internship opportunity in communication design.

EDUCATION

Parsons The New School for Design, New York, NY
Bachelor of Fine Arts, Communication Design, Candidate May 2013

SKILLS

Mac and PC platforms. Adobe Suite: InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash, DreamWeaver. Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint.
Fluent in Spanish.

EXPERIENCE

Brand New Branding, New York, NY

Design Intern, 02/12–05/12

Assisted Art Directors with branding and packaging design for new cosmetics line.

Designed logo for new skin care product line.

Performed general office duties such as answering phones and filing invoices.

Big Duck Design, New York, NY

Design Intern, 05/11–08/11

Worked on book design layouts, spreads and mock-ups for clients including Scholastic and Sesame Workshop.

Organized and archived past client work into digital database.

Parsons Career Services, New York, NY

Student Worker, 01/09–05/09

Assisted a high traffic office in answering student and alumni employment inquiries.

Scheduled appointments for a staff of five counselors.

Advised students on resume and cover letter writing.

AWARDS/HONORS

Represented Parsons at Art Director's Club National

Portfolio Review 2013

Parsons The New School for Design, Dean's List,

Fall 2010 & Fall 2011

Parsons The New School for Design, Scholarship 2010

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ

MASTER'S AND FINE ARTS DEGREES

Melicia Estes

35 ST. MARKS PLACE, APT.3, NEW YORK, NY 10003 • info@meliciaestes.com • 917.111.1111

Summary

Published Master of Fine Arts candidate with extensive experience as both an exhibitor and curator. Interested in research on the intersection of new media and fine arts. Advanced skills in a variety of media.

Education

MAY 2013 Parsons The New School for Design, New York, NY
Master of Fine Arts Candidate, Fine Arts

MAY 2010 Hunter College, New York, NY
Bachelor of Fine Arts, Visual and Cultural Studies

Residencies

2012 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM
Summer Residency, Painting

Experience

2012-PRESENT Peace for Humanity, New York, NY, *Educator/Presenter*
Facilitate a peace education project in which children from Iraq and America exchanged art as an expression of peace and humanity.

2010-2011 Apex Art, New York, NY, *Curatorial Fellow*
Assisted curators with artist liaison, marketing, events and installation of exhibitions.

2009 *Art in America*, New York, NY, *Editorial Intern*
Assisted the editor in chief in conducting library research, fact-checking articles, and updating editorial databases.

2008-2009 Ivan Golgursky, New York, NY, *Studio Manager/Artist Assistant*
Managed studio and office of internationally shown painter.
Created digital archive.
Served as liaison to press and galleries.
Assisted in the creation of artwork.

Selected Exhibitions

2013 MFA Thesis Show, Reese Gallery, New York, NY

2012 Johns Residence Show, Johns Gallery, New York, NY

Selected Publication

Estes, Melicia. *Fine Arts and the Media: Teaching Across the Digital Divide*. New York: Apple Research Group. 2011.

Bibliography

OCT 2011 "Best in Show" (Review), Sarah Gold, *The Village Voice*

Skills

Acrylic, Oil, Collage, Visual Merchandising, Installation, Advanced Research and Writing, Lecturing. Mac and PC proficient. Photoshop, Digital Archiving. Fluent in Spanish. Conversant in Portuguese.

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ

FASHION DESIGN

Michael Kang

2030 Broadway, #6H, New York, NY 10023
917.555.1111, michaelkang@gmail.com

Education

Parsons The New School for Design, New York, NY
Associate in Applied Science Candidate, Fashion Design, December 2012

Hanyang University, Seoul, Korea
Bachelor of Science, Textile Engineering, May 2008

Lorenzo de Medici, Florence, Italy
Study Abroad, Art History, Fine Arts and Italian Studies, Spring 2007

Experience

Donna Karan New York, New York, NY
Design Intern, Women's Collection, January 2011–Present
› Assist design team with preparing mood boards based on trend research.
› Organize fabric swatch library.

Michael Kang Designs, Seoul, Korea/New York, NY
Principal Designer, September 2009–Present
› Design, develop and produce custom jewelry.
› Work with staff on creating marketing materials, such as lookbook and website.

Olympic Gallery, Seoul, Korea
Gallery Assistant, August 2008–December 2009
› Greeted clients and handled scheduling at premier contemporary art gallery.

Honors

Parsons The New School for Design, New York, NY
› Dean's List, Fall/Spring 2011

Lorenzo de Medici, Florence, Italy
› Selected for group show "Studies in Figure Drawing"

Skills

Illustration, Flat Sketching, Spec Sheets, Technical Drawing, Mood Boards,
Trend Research, Fabric & Trim Sourcing, Welding.
Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator.
Fluent in Korean, conversant in Italian.

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ

BUSINESS

JILL PATTINSON

215 East 61st Street, Apt. 10C • New York, NY 10002

jill_pattinson@yahoo.com • 917.375.6233

OBJECTIVE

Seeking an entry level merchandising position.

EDUCATION

Parsons The New School for Design, NEW YORK, NY

Bachelor of Business Administration, Design & Management, Candidate MAY 2013

Dean's List: FALL 2009, SPRING 2010

Coursework includes: Retail Math, Brand Strategy, and Business Ethics

SKILLS

Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint

Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator

Retail math, trend research, detail-oriented

Fluent in French, conversational Italian

EXPERIENCE

Ann Taylor, NEW YORK, NY, JANUARY–MAY 2012

Merchandising Intern

Assisted handbag merchandiser with line assortment by analyzing sales.

Wrote purchase orders for Fall 2012 line.

Maintained samples by tracking in an Excel based database.

Interbrand, NEW YORK, NY, SEPTEMBER–DECEMBER 2011

Brand Management Intern

Researched consumer trends and made recommendations to brand manager.

Created filing system for account tracking.

Coach, NEW YORK, NY, JULY–SEPTEMBER 2008

Sales Associate

Assisted customers in sales transactions and making style suggestions.

Created visual displays per corporate guidelines.

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ

FIRST YEAR OR FRESHMAN



Lauren Kennedy

768 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10153
646-867-5309
lauren.kennedy@yahoo.com

EDUCATION

Parsons The New School for Design, New York, NY
Bachelor of Fine Arts Candidate, May 2014
Relevant Coursework: Color Theory, Art History, Figure Drawing, Printmaking

SKILLS

Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Adobe Photoshop
Conversant in French

EXPERIENCE

H & M, New York, NY, June 2011-Present
Retail Sales Associate
Maintain floor by organizing merchandise.
Perform store opening and closing duties.
Assist customers with styling.

Save The Music Foundation, Irvine, CA, August 2010
Volunteer
Managed RSVPs and final guest list.
Created and distributed gift bags to attendees.
Designed poster used for marketing the event.

AWARDS

Parsons The New School for Design Scholarship 2011
Dean's List Spring 2011

MAXIMIZE YOUR CONTENT AND SPACE USAGE

As a first year or freshman student, it is not uncommon that your résumé may lack extensive experience.

Fill the page. Reduce left and right margins. Use a larger font for your name and headers. Add an original, professional-looking graphic element that showcases your aesthetics. Avoid writing in paragraph format. Instead, start each new idea on a separate line.

Broaden the scope of your content. Your first résumé may include school activities or projects, volunteer work, extracurricular activities and part-time jobs that may not seem directly related to your course of study. At this stage of the game, any transferable skills can help secure your first position.

WRITING A COVER LETTER

Every time you send your résumé, you should include a cover letter. The purpose of a cover letter is to help get you an interview. It gives you the opportunity to strategically introduce yourself, highlighting relevant parts of your background that spark the reader's interest. It should not reiterate your résumé but reinforce why you are interested in the job and why you think you are an outstanding candidate.

The letter, written in business format, should be no longer than three-quarters of a page in length. The briefer the letter, the greater the chance that your prospective employer will read it. Give a concise pitch about who you are and why you are contacting them, and save the rest for the interview.

- Proofread the letter for spelling and grammatical errors and ask at least one other person to proofread it as well.
- Business language is expected. Spell everything completely; do not use informal speech or abbreviations. For example, use “I am” instead of “I’m.” Your letter will be viewed as a sample of your language and writing ability.
- Double check that you changed the company names and addresses for each cover letter.
- Use an appropriate email address, (e.g., yourname@yahoo.com). The subject of the email should be either your name or the job title.
- Thoroughly read and follow application instructions.

Following Up

Following up after sending your résumé and cover letter is essential. If you do not, your information can easily fall through the cracks. Employers receive hundreds of résumés a week and have very little time to sift through them. Following up shows drive and determination, and most importantly, a real interest in the company.

Five to seven days is an appropriate amount of time to wait before following up. If you sent your letter via email, follow up with an email. If possible, refer to the date you sent your letter and résumé. It will make it easier for the employer to locate your information.

When following up, be brief and to the point. Remind the person who you are and let them know that you recently sent your résumé/application. If sending an email, identify yourself in the subject field. Indicate that you are a student or graduate following up from Parsons The New School for Design. Reiterate that you are interested in the position and hope to have the chance to meet in person. Leave your contact information again for the employer's convenience.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Gloria Cruz
110 Wooster Street, Apt. 9
New York, NY 10012
917-802-3297
gloria_cruz@yahoo.com

April 27, 2010

Jane Johnson
Internship Coordinator
Barneys New York
660 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10065

Dear Ms. Johnson,

I am writing to apply for the junior design internship at Barneys Central. As a recent graduate of Parsons The New School for Design, I have long been interested in working with Barneys New York. I have long been interested in design.

I have enclosed my résumé for your review. I have completed internships in advertising, public relations, and fashion illustration and assisted designers. My experience to be extremely valuable, and a

My background and experience meet your requirements. I am available for an interview at your convenience. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Gloria Cruz

Use the **first paragraph** to let the reader know briefly who you are and how you found out about the opportunity (e.g., College Central, an advertisement, or a referral). Be sure to indicate your major and that you are a student at or an alumni of Parsons The New School for Design. Let the reader know that you are interested in an internship or position at their company. State recent news or observations about the company. The last sentence may be used to express your interest in or awareness of the company. The reader should be able to tell you have done your research. (Keep this paragraph to 3–4 lines.)

The **second paragraph** is your opportunity to be strategic. Briefly introduce the reader to your background. If your studies prior to Parsons are relevant, highlight those in one or two sentences. If you have had relevant internship experience, highlight this as well. The key is creating a concise, dynamic letter that will keep the reader's attention; he or she can always refer to your résumé for more details. (Keep this paragraph to 4–6 lines.)

In the **last paragraph**, reiterate your interest in the opportunity. Indicate that you are attaching your résumé and, if appropriate, samples of your work (see page 15). (Keep this paragraph to 2–4 lines.)

Note: Depending on the extent of your background, it may make sense to add a fourth paragraph before your closing paragraph, in order to break up information about your prior work or educational experience. The more relevant your background is to the field you are about to enter, the more likely it is that you will want to write a few extra lines in a fourth paragraph. Remember, the longer the paragraph, the less likely it is to be read! It is better to write a couple of short paragraphs than one long one. (Keep this optional paragraph to 3–5 lines.)

PREPARING A PORTFOLIO

Invest in Yourself

Do not use the same portfolio that you have been using for years. Buy a new portfolio in a size that is easy to handle. Your portfolio case is the first thing a potential employer will see and you want to be viewed as a professional.

Select Relevant Content

Select approximately 15–20 pieces of your best work. If you are uncomfortable with a piece or feel that it needs a lengthy explanation, leave it out. Quality is more important than quantity. The contents of your portfolio should focus on the particular field you wish to enter. For example, if applying for a graphic design position, you should include pieces that showcase the range of your design skills and interests. Your portfolio might include corporate design work such as logos, poster designs, CD covers, and magazine page layouts. Do not include examples of work that do not directly relate to the job you are seeking. For example, a graphic designer should reconsider including figure drawings and fine arts pieces in his or her portfolio. While this can show creative range, it can also give the appearance that your portfolio lacks direction. Avoid including work that may be offensive.

Format

There is nothing a creative recruiter or hiring manager hates more than a sloppy, disorganized portfolio. A good rule of thumb when deciding on the size of your portfolio is to consider whether the reviewer will be able to easily view it while sitting at his or her desk. Desks are often small and cluttered, so an 8" x 10" or 11" x 14" portfolio is usually a good choice. Anything larger can be cumbersome for the person who is reviewing it. Place your pieces primarily in one direction, either horizontally or vertically. Make it easy for the viewer to see your portfolio without having to turn your book around every few pages. Consider labeling each piece with a small description that includes your name, phone number, medium, project topic, and client. It is particularly helpful when dropping off your work. Make your portfolio speak for you. Never

include original work, because it may get damaged or lost.

Several online digital portfolio sites can help show off your work and allow employers to view your updated portfolio anytime, from anywhere. Talk to your career advisor about suggested sites that can serve your needs.

Include Important Contact Information

Always include a couple of résumés with your portfolio. More than one person may be looking at your work. Be sure to label your portfolio with your name and phone number so that it is easy to recognize. This simplifies the process of dropping off and picking up your work.

Attaching Samples of Your Work

If applicable, attach samples of your work when sending your résumé and cover letter to an employer. This speeds up the recruiting process because the employer will be able to tell right away if you are a potential candidate. It separates you from those who only send a cover letter and résumé. If your work looks right for their hiring needs, they will pick up the phone and call you for an interview right away. If you are attaching digital files, save them in JPEG or PDF format, and keep the file size per image small (300–500kb). Files that are too large may cause problems for the person opening them. Include a selection of flat sketches and fashion illustrations for fashion design; renderings, CAD drawings, and watercolors for interior design; and logos, collateral, and editorial design for graphic design. Showing a range of style and work is ideal. It is typical to attach 4–8 single-page files or one multipage document.

Labeling Your Work

When sending digital files to a prospective employer, label your files carefully. Your résumé, cover letter, and samples should all be named using a consistent format. First name, last name, and the word “résumé,” “letter,” or “sample” is ideal, and will make it much easier for the person on the receiving end to locate your files on his or her desktop.

ORGANIZING YOUR JOB SEARCH

Determining Your Market

1. Decide who your target market is when job hunting. Identify a broad range of companies that offer positions in the field you are entering.
2. Make a list of potential employers whose work you most admire and/or feel your own design sensibilities are aligned with.
3. Research companies via the Internet to find out who their clients are and what their design aesthetics are. Visit each company's website.
4. Register with search firms that specialize in the creative field.

Staying Organized

1. Maintain a working contacts list. This is your new industry network! See the sample interview/company contact tracking sheet on page 18.
2. Record all of your job search information as you collect it in one notebook or Excel document. Allow 1–2 pages per company of interest so that you can keep relevant information in one place.
3. In your notebook, record all of the company contact information you collect (names, titles, emails, etc.) as well as notes about when you contacted or spoke to people, when you followed up, and how the conversations went.
4. Keep your notebook with you at all times so that when an employer calls you on your cell phone, you can easily refresh your memory by flipping to the page for that company. The notebook will allow you to stay organized, and it is a great way to document your job search progress.

SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING TIPS

Be Prepared

- Read up on the company and do research on the Internet before your interview. Employers are impressed when you can demonstrate a familiarity with what their organization does.
- Prepare a couple of questions to ask the interviewer about the company or job.
- Bring at least four copies of your résumé and a small notepad and pen to take notes.
- Read the job description carefully before the interview and be prepared to answer basic questions such as:
 - Why did you choose Parsons?
 - Why did you choose this particular field?
 - Where do you see yourself in 5 or 10 years?
 - Can you tell me a bit about yourself and your educational background?
 - Why do you think you would be a good candidate for this job?
 - What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Look the Part

People form an opinion about you in less than 30 seconds! Give some thought to the dress code in your industry and dress accordingly. It is always better to overdress for an interview. Jeans are usually not appropriate. Women should avoid wearing too much makeup or perfume. Refrain from chewing gum when you are networking or interviewing. Everything about you, says something about your professionalism and design sensibility. Take charge of the impression you are making.

Be on Time

Employer surveys reveal that being late to an interview can be a determining factor in not getting a job offer. Arrive at least 10 minutes early to ensure that you will be on time. The extra minutes will afford you the time to compose yourself and focus on the impending interview.

Body Language Speaks Volumes

You should greet the employer with a firm handshake and a smile. Be sure to maintain eye contact with the employer during the interview. Watch that you aren't tapping your foot or wringing your hands. Remember to speak clearly.

The Salary Issue

You should not bring up the salary in your first interview. Talking about the salary before you have had the chance to discuss the position will make you seem more interested in the money than the job. When you are actually offered the job you may discuss the salary. Research salaries and become familiar with salary ranges at your level, in your field, and in your location before you start negotiating your salary. Visit www.salary.com for a guide to current salaries in many fields.

Always keep an open mind when negotiating. You should consider what the opportunity is, whether there is growth potential, and whether you think the job will make you happy.

The Thank-You Note

Always send a thank-you note to your prospective employer immediately after an interview. Hiring managers are busy people, and anything you can do to subtly remind them that you exist and remain interested will help you stay fresh in their mind. The manager knows you by name and may even recognize your email address. This approach is tried and true and worth the extra effort on your part.

Either handwrite your thank-you note on appropriate letterhead or stationery or write an email. It should be brief and reiterate your enthusiasm. In your note:

Thank the employer for taking the time to meet with you. Remind the interviewer of the value you have to offer the company and refer to something you discussed during the interview to emphasize your understanding of the company's needs. Reiterate your appreciation for the interviewer's time and your interest in the opportunity. Finish by stating that you look forward to hearing from the employer soon.

SAMPLE JOB SEARCH WORKSHEET

	COMPANY	CONTACT	PHONE	EMAIL	POSITION	DATE RESUME SENT	DATE OF FOLLOW UP	1ST INTERVIEW DATE	1ST INTERVIEW COMMENTS	DATE THANK-YOU CARD SENT	OUTCOME
1	C. Connor Advertising	Bill Smith	(212) 555-5555	bsmith@connor.com	Graphic Designer	10/2/12	10/10/12	10/31/12	Interested in seeing more of my Web design work	10/31/12	Awaiting second round interviews
2											
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											
9											
10											

We're Here to Help

Seeking your first internship or job is both exciting and daunting. Schedule a meeting with a career advisor. Career Services is here to help you polish your résumé, improve your portfolio, and strengthen your interview skills.

Take advantage of our resources and insight into what's happening within various creative fields.

Remember that we are here to help you succeed in your professional endeavors, both while you're in school and after you graduate.

Contact

Office of Career Services
Parsons The New School for Design
66 Fifth Avenue, room 823
New York, NY 10011

Tel: 212.229.8940

Fax: 212.229.5853

parsonscareers@newschool.edu
www.newschool.edu/parsons/careerinfo

