SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Career Planning Manual for Paralegals

Career Services and Cooperative Education

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PARALEGAL STUDIES
ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY

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LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon successful completion of the Paralegal Studies A.A.S. Degree or Certificate Program, graduates will be able to:

1. Conduct basic legal research and analysis
2. Draft basic legal documents
3. Describe the Federal and New York State court systems and the jurisdiction of the civil courts
4. Access the Federal and New York State court websites and electronic forms
5. Identify and describe the legal characteristics of the various forms of business organizations
6. Identify and describe the ethical considerations for a legal professional
At Suffolk County Community College, the Paralegal Studies Program, approved by the American Bar Association (ABA), offers students an opportunity to major in the field and accumulate coursework that will build their foundation in the legal world. Students learn about trusts and estates, probate, real estate, criminal law, corporate law, elder law, family law, intellectual property law, environmental law, bankruptcy law, federal government law, state & local government law, banking & financial law, insurance law, health care law, and civil litigation.

The role of a paralegal is primarily to perform specific delegated substantive legal work for which the lawyer is responsible; this program is not designed for attorneys or law office administrators. The Suffolk County Community College Paralegal Studies AAS and Certificate Programs are offered for paralegal education. Paralegals may not provide legal services directly to the public, except as permitted by law.

Learning everything you can about the field you wish to pursue is critical to success. Using your research skills to find out more about the field of a paralegal or legal assistant, or visiting sites such as the Occupational Outlook and Career One Stop Center, can only be helpful if there is a connection to past experience with future pursuits.

LEGAL ASSISTANT/PARALEGAL DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of clarifying the role of a paralegal/legal assistant, the membership of the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) approved a resolution to adopt the 1997 American Bar Association (ABA) definition of a legal assistant/paralegal as follows:

"A legal assistant or paralegal is a person qualified by education, training or work experience who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency or other entity who performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible."

Note that the definition recognizes the terms "legal assistant" and "paralegal" as identical terms.

In fact, in recognition of the similarity of the definitions and the need for one clear definition, in July 2001, the NALA membership approved a resolution to adopt the ABA definition. According to NALA, the following is a description of what a Legal Assistant/Paralegal can or cannot do in their respective positions.

"Working under the supervision of an attorney, the legal assistant's work product is merged with and becomes part of the attorney work product. In communications with clients and the public, the legal assistant's non-lawyer status must be clear. A legal assistant may perform any function delegated by an attorney, including but not limited to the following:

- Conduct client interviews and maintain general contact with the client, so long as the client is aware of the status and function of the legal assistant, and the legal assistant works under the supervision of the attorney.
- Locate and interview witnesses.
- Conduct investigations and statistical and documentary research.
- Conduct legal research.
- Draft legal documents, correspondence and pleadings.
- Summarize depositions, interrogatories and testimony.
- Attend executions of wills, real estate closings, depositions, court or administrative hearings and trials with attorney.
- Author and sign correspondence provided the legal assistant status is clearly indicated and the correspondence does not contain independent legal opinions or legal advice."
• Professionally, a paralegal’s time for substantive legal work (as opposed to clerical or administrative work) is billed to clients much the same way as an attorney’s time, but at a lower hourly rate.”

For more about paralegal responsibilities go to www.nala.org

Quick Facts about Paralegal and Legal Assistants

Median Pay, 2014: $23.24 hourly, $48,350 annual
Number of Jobs, 2012: 277,000
Job Outlook: Faster than average growth of 15% -21% from 2012-2022


For more info, go to: O*Net Online www.onetonline.org/link/summary/23-2011.00

Paralegal Internships

Suffolk recognizes the importance of providing sound training to paralegal students. The paralegal internship program provides students with experience in law as practiced in legal offices and trains them to prepare documents such as probate forms, title searches, closing statements, pleadings, discovery proceedings, legal memoranda as well as other types of supportive legal work.

Many lawyers expect students to enhance their degree with an internship or relevant experience. It is the student’s job to determine how to best meet this requirement.

Cooperative Education and Internship Program

One of the best ways to succeed in the job search process is to consider participating in Suffolk County Community College’s Cooperative Education and Internship Program before graduation. This opportunity allows for career exploration while working in a legal environment.

The Paralegal Studies Internship course (LAW 213) is offered online in the Spring semester, with no classroom meetings. Part of the course requirements is that each enrolled student works a minimum of 120 hours in their internship work assignment for the semester while being enrolled in the paralegal internship course.

The Cooperative Education and Internship Program primarily combines a learning seminar with supervised work experience related to a student’s academic major and/or career direction. Typically, students work an average of 10 - 20 hours a week (a total of 120 hours for the semester), earn 3 credits applicable to their degree from the internship course, and attend an online class. Hundreds of students at Suffolk who enroll in these programs each year have discovered many advantages, including the opportunity to:

• apply academic knowledge to concrete, tangible work environments
• test out their career choice and determine their potential to succeed
• enhance their future marketability by adding career-related work experience to their résumé
• work 10 to 20 hours a week in the field while attending classes
• share and reflect on work experience with peers and faculty member in weekly seminar
• build networking skills in a professional environment
• increase their potential for permanent employment in their chosen field
• gain experience, exercise abilities and enhance skills for future job searches
• learn how to achieve excellence in the workplace by becoming professional, highly-motivated, career-focused employees
• earn credit towards a degree
The reality is that most employers will be expecting a student intern to incorporate experience in their field to strengthen academic training. There are several options to consider if an internship is not possible, such as changing a current job to one that is in the legal field to afford a student the opportunity to see how the legal environment works; or working in an office setting to develop administrative and technical skills; or even volunteering in a law or office setting. It is important to assure that a significant amount of research, skill-building and learning is invested in the process, to become a competitive candidate in the field.

**LAW213 PARALEGAL INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES**

Students must be paralegal majors and receive permission of the Coordinator of the Paralegal Studies Program. Registration includes required liability insurance, which is included in the tuition.

Prerequisite courses for acceptance into the course are: Law Office Practice and Management (LAW105) and Legal Research(LAW240). A major GPA average of 3.0 is required.

A very important part of your role as an aspiring paralegal intern is participating in the process of pursuing a work assignment. The SCCC internship programs consider this phase of the internship process a collaborative effort. It involves active research and follow-up on your part. While you are cultivating your own viable contacts, a SCCC faculty/career advisor will pursue internship opportunities, in parallel to your efforts. The SCCC faculty/career advisor will research your specific legal area of interest, including commercial, institutional, governmental, municipal, marital, family, elder, personal injury, criminal, intellectual, corporate, probate, real estate, estate planning, international, tax and litigation law. The SCCC faculty/career advisor will reach out to new and established legal affiliates that fit your interests. You will be exposed to opportunities at Suffolk County government offices, private and publicly-owned business legal departments, public agencies, and/or private law offices.

Together, we will work towards finalizing an appropriate work assignment in a timely manner, which coincides with the semester for which you are registered. An appropriate work assignment is one that permits you to apply learned skills and to build upon those skills. You should be given tools to perform needed tasks, along with guidance and supervision.

Once you accept an internship assignment, you will need to complete an **employer agreement form** which requires your supervisor’s signature.

You are required to accrue 120 hours of field work and the hours must be approved by your supervisor and professor.

The professor will provide your supervisor with an **assessment form** near the end of the semester to review your performance as an intern.
There are several approaches to seeking assistance with the internship process. The process may involve the following steps:

**PROCEDURE FOR YOU TO BEGIN A SUCCESSFUL INTERNSHIP:**

1. Speak with the College-wide Coordinator of Paralegal Studies, Dr. Ronald Feinberg. Contact Teri Sammartino at 631-451-4262 to schedule an appointment with Dr. Feinberg.
2. Send an e-mail to internships@sunysuffolk.edu. Include your name, student ID#, course number (LAW213) and area of interest (Paralegal).
3. Your SAIN report will be reviewed and, if guidelines are met, you will be accepted.
4. You will then receive an e-mail with a schedule of the information sessions. You must select a session that is convenient for you, and call Career Services and Cooperative Education Office (631-451-4049) to schedule a time to attend. Attendance is mandatory.
5. At this meeting you will:
   - Complete an application
   - Discuss the process and procedure for securing an internship
   - Review available internship opportunities
   - Review resume formats to prepare your own resume
   - Discuss interviewing expectations
   - Discuss effective communication protocol and follow-up

**CAREER SERVICES AND COOPERATIVE EDUCATION**

Each campus has a number of people who can help you get on track if you are interested in pursuing an internship. Seeking help from your campus career services office is always a plus to assure you have the right tools to connect with your internship site. Services are also available to you even after you have completed your degree.

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CAREER SERVICES AND COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

The Career Services and Cooperative Education offices support the mission, academic programs, and the advancement of Suffolk County Community College. The office of Career Services and Cooperative Education assists students and alumni in understanding the career development process. It offers opportunities for students to enhance their educational and career goals through experiential learning and relevant work experience. In addition, students are provided with assistance in developing effective job search skills, for the ultimate purpose of pursuing meaningful careers.

Each campus provides an array of programs and services promoting career planning as a lifelong option. The focus is primarily on career-related programs such as providing career opportunities for immediate or future employment; the option to explore careers through co-op and internship programs; and the opportunity to develop job preparation skills.

Our goal is to link the college experience with the world of work and to advance students’ and alumni’s ability to make meaningful career decisions.

SOME OF THE PROGRAMS/SERVICES OFFERED:

- Career Counseling
- Cooperative Education/Disney Experience/Internships
- Federal Work Study Program/America Reads/Community Service
- Job Search Preparation Skills
- On-Campus Recruitment/Career and Job Fairs
- Resume Assistance/Reviews
- Suffolk’s Job Connection online job board
- Student Employment
- Workshops/Seminars

CAREER AND JOB SEARCH RESOURCES:

Through the Career Services and Cooperative Education website, your student portal, department web pages, social media vehicles, and/or the campus offices, students can connect to:

- **Career-Related Resources.** Links to books, magazines, and websites on various career related topics for job readiness skills and the job search.
- **Career Videos.** View career videos available in the Virtual Career Center, on the left-hand side of the student page of the student portal, MySCCC.
- **Suffolk’s Job Connection.** Through the student portal, on your home page, find Suffolk’s Job Connection and peruse more than 500 job opportunities.
- **Student Computer Stations/Lab.** Use offices’ student computers to explore the Internet, design your professional resume, go to the Student Portal (MySCCC) and visit Suffolk’s Job Connection for jobs listed online.
- **Job Bulletin Boards.** Examine the jobs listed on Job or Office Bulletin Boards usually located outside of the Career Services and Cooperative Education offices.
- **Job Notebook Binders.** Browse the job postings categorized by field for the job seeker.
- **Mock Interviews.** Ask about scheduling mock interviews to work on your interviewing skills, and gain practice for your interviews.
- **Career Assessment Tools.** Learn about various career assessment inventories on the website and gain useful information to begin your job search. Gain access to online inventories; ask your campus office today!
EMPLOYER CONNECTIONS:

- **Legal Society/Studies Club.** Develop your leadership skills by participating in an active student club sponsored by Campus Activities on each campus, offering students an opportunity to network with a variety of representatives from the legal community. The club has held successful events such as a Dining Etiquette activity and field trips to visit different organizations.

- **Suffolk’s Job Connection.** A free online job listing database service that provides access to job information. Visit your student portal and MySCCC and browse jobs.

- **Cooperative Education and Internships.** You are provided with an opportunity to gain work experience in an area related to your major or explore possible careers, while at the same time gain academic experience and earn income.

- **On-Campus Employer Recruitment Visits.** Meet with employers who visit the campus and recruit potential employees each semester.

- **Career/Job Fairs.** Practice introducing yourself to employers who are participating in these events and obtain face-time to network with employers.

TRANSFER COUNSELING:
Both the Ammerman and Grant Campuses have a separate Counseling Center that provides academic, career, personal, and transfer counseling. On the Grant Campus, transfer counseling is also provided by Thomas Tartaglia at the Career and Transfer Center.

Transfer Days, are offered during the fall and spring semesters, where you can meet with admissions representatives from various colleges and universities to speak about four-year programs.

In addition, transfer counselors are available to meet with you one on one to discuss the transition and how best to make it work for you.

JOB INFORMATION

Specific jobs in the paralegal field are circulated among faculty on both the Ammerman and Grant campuses.

Workshops or class presentations are offered each semester on topics such as job search strategies, resume writing, and interview techniques. Students nearing graduation are especially encouraged to attend these workshops.

Check with your campus office to determine how you should proceed with your job search.
STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL JOB SEARCH

There are several steps for a successful job search and depending on which article you read online or which book you purchased, you may get slightly different suggestions, but in the end it is all about getting THAT job.

You will learn that finding the ideal job is not easy. However, there are things that you can do to make it easier for you to attain your goal. It is important to identify the type of job that you would like to find, recognize the environment you would like to work in, and determine the location that you would prefer. Knowing this information will assist you in finding the job.

Once you have figured the above then you can begin looking at web sites, job search engines, Suffolk’s Job Connection, company web sites, and professional organizations, to see what the job market is like and if it meshes with your preferences. You may have to commute a bit further than you thought to get the salary you want or you may have to start in an entry-level position before you can reach your career goal.

Now, it is critical to pull out your résumé and make sure that it is up to date and tailored for the job you want. Have several people review your résumé and then listen carefully to their suggestions. If the suggestions sound like they will make you appear to be a better candidate, then use them. However, if after you evaluated everything and it is not communicating the message you want, then ignore them. If you find that during interviews that particular area seems to draw unwanted attention, then you may want to go back and revise it. Keep in mind that your résumé should always be a work-in-progress. The résumé is always evolving as you move within your career and accumulate experience, skills and additional training.

PREPARING A RÉSUMÉ

One of the first steps for a successful job search is a strong and effective résumé. With access to the internet, résumés have become much easier to prepare and create, with many samples to follow. However, writing a professional resume is still a challenge to many individuals.

What is a résumé? A résumé is a written document that describes your background, skills, and abilities as they relate to the position for which you are applying. In today’s competitive job market, most job applicants will be expected to target their résumé to each job to be successful. There three basic types of formats: the traditional chronological résumé, the functional résumé, and the combination résumé.

Keep in mind that the purpose of a résumé is primarily to get you an interview. Your resume should stand out from the crowd, conveying to the prospective employer that you are someone he/she should meet. The prospective employer will normally take only 20 - 30 seconds to scan your resume. In that time, the resume needs to say who you are, what you know, and what you can offer the employer.

Remember –
The resume should be CLEARLY written.
The content should be CONCISE.
The grammar and spelling should be **CORRECT**.
The traditional résumé is usually known as the **CHRONOLOGICAL** résumé which is usually the easiest to read and prepare. This résumé style is the one format that is most familiar to employers. A chronological format includes information about education, the listing of each job or volunteer position you’ve held, in reverse sequential order, with your most recent information listed first. Depending on the job and where you are in your education, one of the first questions you need to consider is... which area is your best selling point? Recent graduates usually include Education first to indicate a new direction. On the other hand, if a particular employer is seeking someone with experience and you have work experience or have participated in an internship working in a law firm that is relevant, you may want to consider putting Experience or Related Experience information first. See two samples of chronological resume on page 16 and 17.

The **FUNCTIONAL** résumé is used best when changing careers or when demonstrating certain functions that are relevant to the job. The format emphasizes your qualifications and transferable skills as they apply to the job. This format is also useful if you have interrupted your career or you trying to minimize certain information that is best discussed during the interview. See a sample of a functional resume on page 15.

**HEADINGS**
Group all information on the resume according to relevant headings and categories.

**Contact Information:** The sequence of information included in your résumé should start with your name, complete address, telephone/cell phone number, and an e-mail address. Always make sure your name is slightly bigger and bold it so that it stands out on your resume. A word of caution: if you have a "fun" e-mail address, please be sure to change it to a more professional one for employment purposes. Better yet, consider using your college email address.

**Impressions do count:** The rest of the résumé information may be presented in a variety of ways, but it should always be in a consistent, logical, easy-to-follow format. Keep in mind that the categories you select should be listed in the order of priority of importance and relevance to the job. Always highlight your best skills and abilities on your résumé.

Readability, eye appeal, and an overall positive impression is the goal.

Important “**Do’s**” to consider when preparing and targeting your résumé:
- Do use action verbs to describe your experience (see page 14).
- Do list tasks that relate to job in priority order.
- Do include all relevant experiences, whether paid or volunteer.
- Do mention important aspects of your background, i.e. foreign language, extensive travel.
- Do promote all school and community activities in which you were involved.
- Do add interests in sports and hobbies, if they relate to the job.
- Do include a personalized cover letter with each résumé when mailing, e-mailing, and/or faxing your resume.

Important “**Don’ts**” to consider:
- Don’t list personal information, i.e. age, religion, and gender.
- Don’t include previous salaries or salary requirements unless requested specifically.
- Don’t use abbreviations, or “etc.”; to explain what you mean.
- Don’t list names, addresses or telephone numbers of references on your resume. This information belongs on a separate page.
- Don’t exaggerate, embellish, or lie on your resume.
- Don’t use personal pronouns.
- Don’t use formal sentence structure on your resume.
**Length:** Try to limit your résumé to **one page**, unless you have extensive experience that is relevant to the job. Before you choose to add a second page, explore different formats and font sizes. Also, keep in mind that a résumé is not about providing every single detail of your work and achievements. Select information that is most relevant to the position for which you are applying.

**Font:** When selecting fonts for your résumé, try to avoid using font sizes that are too small and difficult to read (usually anything less than 10 points in size.) Using large font sizes (larger than 12 points) could give the impression that you do not have much to offer. And the only item that should use slightly larger font is your name. Bear in mind that you want your name to stand out in a positive, confident manner. (Name font: 14-16pt)

Things to keep in mind when developing your résumé:

- Keep the layout simple and easy to read, make sure it is appealing to the eye, not overly crowded.
- Use 8 ½” x 11” quality bond paper, and stay conservative, limit the color to white, ivory or light gray. Be sure it looks professional. Colored paper may make your résumé stand for all of the wrong reasons – do not use it.
- Proofread your résumé very carefully; use spell check on your computer but don’t depend on it as your only source. Ask friends and family members to review your résumé.
- Remember to use the correct word when writing a resume. Spell check will not recognize a word that is correctly spelled but is not the appropriate one grammatically for your statement.
- Investigate different résumé options before deciding which one is the best for you.
- Don’t reduce the font size of the text to squeeze your resume onto one page; this will make it harder to read. Minimum is 10pt font size.
- Be selective; only keep information that is relevant.
- Consider that your résumé should not be used as a substitute for an application.
- Remember that for every position you apply for, there could be over 100 résumés already in the line so make sure you did your homework and created an outstanding résumé.
POWER WORDS

When designing your resume be sure to use an extensive vocabulary to describe your accomplishments and successes. The biggest mistake applicants make is wasting space to say the same thing over and over. If you worked at two places where you did similar tasks then consider the differences – was one site busier than the other, did you work with one population more than others, did you use the computer more, did you complete reports, did you train people? Pull out the various tasks that you did and utilize words that encompass much more than a simple task.

For example: Clerical skills – stating this on a resume does not say anything about you other than perhaps you filed or complete data entry. But changing and expanding this statement to – Provided clerical skills to support customer services, initiated contact, followed-up with accounts, answered customer inquiries and completed all necessary paperwork.

Remember – you are painting a picture of the type of employee you can be.
### ACTION VERBS FOR RESUME PREPARATION

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Objectives:

Entry-level paralegal position in a law firm that specializes in litigation and will utilize my excellent research, communications and written skills.

Summary of Qualifications:

Research

Demonstrated effective research skills with great attention to detail developed through work experience and course work. Accurately established new accounts after thoroughly investigating all documents and details.

Communications

Strong communication techniques used to work with people at all levels. Efficiently responded and acted upon all customer inquiries and complaints. Effectively motivated and lead others to participate in a variety of programs.

Writing

Proficient in preparing legal documents and numerous research papers for college course work. Wrote several articles for company newsletter.

Computer Skills:

Skilled in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Access, Internet Research and Social Media

Education:

SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Selden, NY
A.A.S. Paralegal Studies May 2015

Experience:

TD BANK, Lake Grove, NY
Customer Service Representative, 2010 – 2015

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA MEDICAL CENTER, Smithtown, NY
Office Assistant, 2005 – 2010
MICHAEL EDWARDS
291 East 14th Street Deer Park, New York 11729
631-234-5555 edwardsm@hotmail.com

CAREER OBJECTIVE
Highly-talented and accomplished Paralegal graduate looking for an entry-level position in the legal field to apply strong computer and research skills.

EDUCATION
Suffolk County Community College Brentwood, New York
AAS in Paralegal Studies, May 2016 GPA – 3.6
(ABA Approved Program)

Honors: Dean’s List – Fall, 2009/Spring, 2011
Student of the Year Scholarship
Who’s Who in American Junior Colleges

Relevant Legal Research Civil Litigation
Coursework: Business Law I&II Computer Applications

SKILLS
Westlaw, Microsoft Word, Access, Excel, PowerPoint, Lexis-Nexis, and Internet research

ACTIVITIES
Student Government Association
Vice President September 2015 - Present
• Coordinate and report on sub-committees of the Student Government.
Treasurer September 2014 - May 2015
• Maintained accounting of expenditures and funds.

Legal Society
President September 2014 – May 2015
• Organize and plan on-campus activities with guest speakers from various fields in law.

EXPERIENCE
Sales Consultant Macy’s, Huntington Station, New York 2013-Present
Camp Counselor Park Shore Camp, Dix Hills, New York Summers 2013 -2015
Prep Cook/Server Wendy’s, North Babylon, New York 2010-2012
JENNIFER GARCES
122 Ocean View Court • Quogue, New York 11959 • 631-692-1972 • JGarces@optonline.net

EDUCATION:  Suffolk County Community College  Selden, NY
Certificate in Paralegal Studies  January 2016  3.75 GPA
(ABA Approved Program)

Adelphi University  Garden City, NY
B.A. in International Studies  May 2014

RELEVANT COURSEWORK:  Computer Applications in the Law Office
Law of Property
Estates, Trusts, and Wills
Estate, Trust and Gift Taxation
Sociology of the Aging

SKILLS:  Computer: Proficient in Windows, MS Word, Excel, Power Point, Access
Internet research and social media
Language: Fluent in Spanish, verbal and written language.
Communication: Strong communication skills, both oral and written.
Research: Extensive research skills sharpened through course work.

PARALEGAL INTERNSHIP:  Smith & Smith  Smithtown, NY
Paralegal Intern  September 2015 – December 2015
• Assisted with scheduling meetings with clients
• Helped with filing pleadings
• Performed legal research using Westlaw and in the library
• Wrote legal memoranda
• Prepared demand letters

RELATED EXPERIENCE:  Law Office of Peter J. Ford  Westhampton Beach, NY
Legal Assistant/Secretary  January 2015 – Present
• Assist attorney with probate proceedings, accounting, and distribution of estates.
• Plan and review estate documents.
• Prepare documents for and assist in real estate transactions and elder law issues.
• Maintain client files and assist with office management.
• Handle record keeping and computer input of attorney’s time and expenses, make
  arrangements for support services, and set up meetings, conferences, and
  conference calls when necessary.

Suffolk County National Bank  Riverhead, NY
Customer Service Representative  February 2005 – November 2010
• Worked directly with the public; opening new accounts and promoting services
  and programs provided by the bank.
• Established strong customer relationships.

ACTIVITIES:  Member, Pi Alpha Sigma National Political Honor Society, inducted 2015
President, Legal Society, 2015- Present
Student Orientation Leader/Ambassador, Campus Activities, 2014 - Present
RÉSUMÉ CHECKLIST

To help you create an even better résumé, use the following checklist:

FORMAT / PRESENTATION

_____ Is your résumé typed neatly?

_____ Are your margins balanced (0.5 - 1 inch with eye appeal)?

_____ Did you highlight your relevant strengths?

_____ Is the information relevant to the position for which you are applying?

_____ Did you use appealing font styles that are easy to read?

_____ Did you use the correct font size (10 – 12 points only)?
  Only your name should use a larger font size.

_____ Make sure your resume does not exceed 1 – 2 pages.

_____ Is your presentation consistent throughout your resume?

RESUME STYLE / SPELLING AND GRAMMAR

_____ Did you use an action verb and/or accomplishment phrase to describe your duties?

_____ Did you use a variety of professional vocabulary when describing skills?

_____ Did you double check your spelling and grammar? Have another person proofread your resume. Many resumes have been rejected due to misspellings and incorrect grammar.

ORGANIZATION

_____ Did you list appropriate headings, skills and experience?

_____ Did you include your education?

_____ Did you remember to include relevant information to enhance your resume?

_____ Did you remember to include additional related categories? (i.e. Community Service).
REFERENCES
As a matter of determining how and when to provide reference information, it is important to prepare a separate page devoted to your references in advanced to give the employer. Make sure to title this page REFERENCES and then list three to five individuals that know you well and that you have asked their permission to use them as your references.

Be sure to include names, titles, complete addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. “References Available upon Request” should no longer be included on your résumé. Some employers use references to secure additional background information and to confirm your qualifications. Keep in mind that some employers may not ask for your references and then there are those employers who will attempt to contact people other than those listed on your list. Every employer has a different process for hiring.

Remember –
Always ask permission before listing someone as your reference.

Prepare a copy of your references and take additional copies to your interview. You may offer the employer your references but do not submit to an employer unless they are requesting your references. Preparing your references and bringing copies to the interview demonstrates to employers that you are one step ahead of the job search by offering them at the interview.

Selection Tips for References
• When approaching potential references, ask their permission to use them as a reference.
• Handpick people who know you and will give you a positive reference.
• Make sure that they are enthusiastic about being your reference.
• Do not assume that because you had a class or two with a particular professor that they will automatically give you a glowing reference.
• Your reference list should include professors, counselors, and professional people who are familiar with your abilities and strengths, like co-workers, supervisors and administrators.
• Do not include friends who are currently students, or your family members as references.
• Do not include individuals who show a lack of enthusiasm because they are more likely to be detrimental to your job search if they are vague in their responses.
• Also include any references you have from any volunteer work.
• Collect all of the contact information details needed for each reference.
• Always thank your references for their help.
• Choose wisely.

Once you have selected your references, it would be a good idea to provide them with a copy of your updated resume so that they can be reminded of some of your accomplishments and achievements. It is important to maintain open communication with your references to keep them informed of the type of jobs you are looking for so that they can help you with leads and/or referrals.

Your references are more likely to keep in touch if you keep them abreast of your job search situation. Note: An employer has the right to contact anyone outside of your list of references and most likely will unless you specify that you prefer they do not until they make you an offer. This is why it is important to always leave your job situation in a positive manner.
THE COVER LETTER

The cover letter is an introduction about you, your skills, qualifications, knowledge as well as your personality and why you would be a good fit for the job. This is the one tool that you can personalize and use to promote your abilities and your knowledge about the organization. It is important to remember that a cover letter should always accompany your resume whether you are using mail, fax, e-mail or an online application system.

The cover letter should be brief and to the point. Remember that the purpose of the cover letter is to get the employer interested in reading your résumé. The prospective employer needs to be motivated to read your cover letter within the first 10 to 20 seconds.

The best cover letter should always be addressed to a specific individual in the organization. Getting this information may involve some research, so go investigate! As a last resort, you could address the letter to the Hiring Manager or Human Resources Representative but it will not have the same results that a specific name draws. Make sure to indicate the job you are interested in and where you learned of the vacancy. This information will set the tone for your presentation. Do not be vague about the position you are applying for – do your homework.

Research and learn all you can about a company before you contact them. The information obtained will be helpful in writing a more targeted and focused letter.

A cover letter needs to be specific to get the attention of a prospective employer. Point out why you are qualified for the position. Convey information that directly relates to your qualifications and to the position to which you are applying.

Keep a positive tone in your letter and convey enthusiasm. Stress what you can do and how you can meet their needs.

At the end of the letter, have a plan of action, be specific, let the employer know what you want, i.e., an interview or that you plan to follow-up and then make sure you do so!

The cover letter should be typed on quality paper, which matches your resume and envelopes.

The format should be a business style letter containing at least three to four paragraphs. See the cover letter sample format on page 21 and the sample cover letter on page 22.

Keep in mind that your cover letter and résumé are indications to the prospective employer of your qualifications, your attention to detail and your ability to communicate effectively in writing. Employers need to know that you have done your research and that you know how your qualifications and skills can fit in.

A cover letter is also a great way to demonstrate your strong writing skills. Writing a carefully well-thought cover letter allows you to demonstrate to the employer that you can communicate clearly and succinctly in written form.

Make sure that you use a proper business format; keep it brief but personalize it and make sure it is error-free.
Here is a sample cover letter format. The information presented may help you decide what information you should include in your cover letter.

Your street address
City, State Zip Code
Phone
Email Address

Date

Mr./ Ms./ Dr. First Name Last Name
Title
Company Name
Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr. /Ms. / Dr. Last Name:

State in your first paragraph why you are writing and how you heard of the position ("as listed/advertised in the..."). If you are applying for a specific position, mention the title. If someone recommended that you write, mention his/her name ("at the suggestion of ___ ____").

The second paragraph should describe your interest in the position and highlight your skills and qualifications as they relate to the specific employer/position. Try not to restate your résumé. Instead, bring something definite to the employer's attention, something specifically related to the position for which you are applying. Prove why you are the best candidate.

Refer to your résumé. Indicate to the employer that your résumé contains information related to the position. If requested, make note that your writing sample is also enclosed.

Your closing paragraph should indicate your interest in meeting with him/her to discuss your qualifications further and that you look forward to hearing from him/her. Should you want to take action, you may want to indicate that you will be calling on (mention a specific time frame, i.e. next week) to arrange an interview. If you use this approach, follow-up and call when you said you would! Mention that you are willing to provide additional data if needed (i.e., writing samples). Thank the employer for his/her time, and state that you look forward to hearing from him/her.

Sincerely,

Signature

Your name typed

Enclosure(s)
August 25, 2015

Mr. Brandon M. Walters
Walters, William, and Henry
1700 Veterans Highway, Suite 5
Islandia, NY 11722

Dear Mr. Walters:

As a recent graduate of Suffolk County Community College with an associate’s degree in Paralegal Studies, I am currently looking for an entry-level paralegal position. Enclosed please find my résumé for the Paralegal opening at Walters, William and Henry as seen advertised on your company’s website.

In addition to the excellent preparation outlined by the Paralegal Studies program, I have taken additional courses in computer training and communication to strengthen my abilities to be an asset for your organization. The paralegal internship afforded me an opportunity to work in the legal environment, specifically in the field of estates and wills. I am fully confident that my educational training and varied work experiences have provided the foundation to work effectively with your office.

While in college, I served as the president of the Legal Society and developed leadership and organizational skills. As the club leader, I invited a number of key guest speakers to address our membership and provide some beneficial networking opportunities. I also coordinated several field trips, and participated in fund-raising events. Mastering time management skills, I was able to maintain a 3.3 grade point average and work part-time in a real estate office. As you can see, I am a very hard-working individual with multiple talents who is also well-organized, disciplined, and flexible.

I am eager to bring both my personal and professional attributes to your work setting. I will contact your office within the next week to schedule an interview, at your convenience, and discuss my qualifications in further detail. Thank you for your time. I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Greg Taylor

Greg Taylor

Enclosure: Résumé
EMAILING RESUMES & COVER LETTERS AND SENDING ATTACHMENTS

A quality tailor-made résumé is expected of all new applicants. The ability to create your document on your computer can be very convenient and inexpensive, as well as afford you the opportunity to save your document, make changes as needed and print extra copies for your interviews. Always keep a copy of your résumé on a flash drive or consider emailing yourself a copy so that your résumé can be housed in an easy accessible location.

Keep in mind that not every employer will have the most up-to-date software and it is possible that when you email it, they may not be able to open your document. Your safest bet is to save your document under a PDF format so that anyone can open your document. When you follow-up with your employers, you may want to ask them if they were able to open your document.

Tailoring your résumé for each position that you apply to and highlighting those skills and strengths you have for that particular position is a great way to get noticed. No matter how often you change or update your résumé, always keep your original résumé. Just make sure to copy and create a new document because you never know when you may want to cut and paste some information that you included in your initial résumé. Always print your resume on a LETTER QUALITY printer. The worst thing you can do is provide a resume that is smudged, wrinkled or stained. Employers will assume this is a representation of the quality of your work and is considered poor taste and very unprofessional. Print out your resume to make sure it looks the same as it does on the screen – sometimes certain templates change when printed.

It important to keep duplicates of your résumé in each of the following versions or formats:

- **A Print Version** is designed format with bullet lists, and other highlights, ready to print, mail or hand to employers.
- **A Version that can be Scanned** which is designed without the fancy font or highlights.
- **A Plain Text Version** is a plain text file ready to copy and paste into online forms or posted in online resume databases. This format can also be saved under a Rich Text format.

Some simple rules to consider when e-mailing your cover letter and resume to an employer:

- The Subject line should not be left empty.
- The Body of the email should include what specific job you are applying for.
- Attach two separate documents: 1. a cover letter addressed to the recipient 2. Résumé
- Read all the application instructions and follow them.

**Remember –**

**It only takes a second for someone to delete an email message.**
NETWORKING
Successful job hunting is considered a full-time job and one of the primary keys to your success is networking. Your job is to explore every single option available, including talking to faculty, friends, and family.

Networking is about people and communication. There are two types of networks, informal and formal. Informal includes people you know or work with, family, classmates, and acquaintances. Find out if your college has an active alumni association for contacts and/or mentors in the field. Formal networks refer to professional organizations.

Almost 75-80% of all jobs are obtained through personal contacts and networking. Networking means establishing relationships to lead you towards a job in your field. Newsgroups, chat forums, networking websites (www.LinkedIn.com) and mailing lists can all expand your possibilities.

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS
More and more students are using social media web sites (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.) to create pages and share information about themselves, sometimes sharing a bit too much. Employers, too, are using Facebook and other social media web sites to create a presence and market their company. Unfortunately, what started out as a way to connect with your peers is slowly creating additional problems for people who are looking for work. So here are a few suggestions to follow when posting information on your social media pages to beware of your digital footprint:

1. Be extremely careful what you post on any social media site, both text and photos. You don’t want anything to come back and haunt you.
2. Don’t rely on privacy settings or selective "friending" to protect you. Just because you are careful does not mean the people you "friend" are careful with your information.
3. The free speech rights guaranteed by the First Amendment are not absolute. They can only protect a Facebook post in certain circumstances.
4. Think twice before you post, particularly any comments that are negative in tone or photos that some may find objectionable.
5. Remember that employers do sometimes run social media background checks.

As a student starting out in your career journey, you need to take ownership of the image you are presenting in person and online.

Utilize social media to brand yourself in a positive way and create a network that will help you become successful.
LinkedIn Profile Checklist

- **PHOTO:** It doesn’t have to be fancy – just use your cellphone camera in front of a plain background. Wear a nice shirt and don’t forget to smile!

- **HEADLINE:** Tell people what you’re excited about now and the cool things you want to do in the future.

- **SUMMARY:** Describe what motivates you, what you’re skilled at, and what’s next.

- **EXPERIENCE:** List the jobs you held, even if they were part-time, along with what you accomplished at each. Even include photos and videos from your work.

- **ORGANIZATIONS:** Have you joined any clubs at school or outside? Be sure to describe what you did with each organization.

---

David Xiao
Econ Major and Aspiring Financial Analyst
San Francisco Bay Area: Financial Services

- **Position:** Berkshire Ventures
- **School:** University of California, Berkeley

**Background**

**Summary**

I’m a senior at Berkeley, starting to look for roles in the financial industry. As an economics major, I’m fascinated by the invisible forces that shape our world. Why does company success and another fail? Is it possible to predict which idea will be the next big thing?

As such, I’ve taken lots of microeconomics coursework and have interned with a local venture capital firm. And now I’d like to put that experience to good use, analyzing frameworks and scoring companies.

**Experience**

**Venture Capital Internship**
Berkshire Ventures
May 2013 – September 2013 (3 months) | Berkeley, CA

Conducted research on 30 startup companies and presented my findings to the fund’s board, leading to a new $1.5 million investment.

**Organizations**

**Berkeley A Capella**
Last Singer
March 2013 – Present

Schedule and perform events for one of Berkeley’s oldest a cappella groups, including last year’s Cal–Stanford game.
EDUCATION: Starting with college, list all the educational experiences you've had—including summer programs.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE & CAUSES: Even if you weren't paid for a job, be sure to list it. Admissions officers and employers often see volunteer experience as just as valuable as paid work.

SKILLS & EXPERTISE: Add at least 5 key skills and then your connections can endorse you for the things you’re best at.

HONORS & AWARDS: If you earned a prize in or out of school, don’t be shy. Let the world know about it!

COURSES: List the classes that showed off the skills and interests you’re most excited about.

PROJECTS: Whether you led a team assignment in school or built an app on your own, talk about what you did and how you did it.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Ask managers, professors, or classmates who've worked with you closely to write a recommendation. This gives extra credibility to your strengths and skills.

Education
University of California, Berkeley
Economics, BA
2010 - 2014 (expected)

Volunteer Experience & Causes
Big Buddy
Skyline High School
September 2012 - May 2013 (9 months) | Education
Maintained an Oakland High school student through the college application process, helping him get into his dream school.

Skills & Expertise
Most endorsed for:

- Economics
- Start-up
- Due Diligence
- Venture Capital
- Management

Honors & Awards
The Achievement Award Program
UC Berkeley
Four-year scholarship awarded to community-minded students with a proven track record of academic success.

Courses
University of California, Berkeley
- Microeconomics Theory (Econ 101A)
- International Monetary Economics (103A)
- Public Economics (230A)

Projects
Venture Capital Financing in India
May 2013
For our International Monetary Economics course, Paul and I decided to study the emerging venture capital industry in India. By looking at data from the World Bank, we were able to understand the challenges and opportunities facing this nascent sector. And we developed a series of recommendations for overcoming these challenges, which we delivered to our professor in a final term paper.

Received (2)

Venture Capital Internship
Berkeley Ventures

Tien Lee
Partner

David spent the summer with us at Berkeley Ventures and made an immediate impact. He showed us a brand new technique for firm analysis that he had just learned in school and came through with recommendations that opened our eyes to a unique set of opportunities.

We don’t normally hire undergrads as interns but after working with David, we will again!

November 13, 2013, Tien's note

Want more LinkedIn tips for students? Check out students.linkedin.com
Professional associations are an excellent resource for networking. They offer a multitude of valuable information that keep you informed with the latest development in your career industry. Student memberships may be available which add another item to highlight in a résumé. Some of their services may include professional workshops and employment notices.

American Association for Paralegal Education
19 Mantua Road, Mt. Royal, NJ 08061
Telephone: (856) 423-2829
Fax: (856) 423-3420
E-mail: info@aafpe.org
Web Site: www.aafpe.org

American Bar Association
American Bar Association
Standing Committee on Legal Assistants
321 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60610
Telephone: (800) 285-2221 or (312) 988-5000
Fax: (312) 988-5483
E-mail: abajobs@abanet.org
Web Site: http://www.americanbar.org/aba.html

National Association of Legal Assistants
1516 S. Boston Avenue – Suite 200, Tulsa, OK 74119-4013
Telephone: (918) 587-6828
Fax: (918) 582-6772
Web Site: http://www.nala.org

National Federation of Paralegal Associations
P.O. Box 2016, Edwards, WA 98020
Telephone: (425)967-0045
Fax: (425) 771-9588
E-mail: info@paralegals.org
Web Site: http://www.paralegals.org

Suffolk County Bar Association
560 Wheeler Road, Hauppauge, NY 11788
Telephone: (631) 234-5511
Fax: (631) 234-5899
E-mail: info@scba.org
Web site: http://www.scba.org
Start building a network and get busy. When it comes to networking, there is more to consider than simply who you know. Expand your network and focus on meeting new people. It is important who knows you!

When selecting an employer in this field, know what you want. Are you looking for a certain practice area? Are you looking for a prestigious firm? Are you more interested in a local employer?

Employees look for a variety of opportunities to grow but keep in mind that the employer expects you to have done your homework before you interview with them. And when it comes to asking questions, the primary message you should be promoting is your interest in the position and not necessarily the salary and benefits.
CIVIL SERVICE

There are many job opportunities in Civil Service. You should consider all opportunities and learn as much as you can about these careers.

All Civil Service positions, whether federal, state, or county, require you to take a written examination and/or submit a qualification application before you can be considered for the position.

Most positions are wait-listed. This means that after you take the test, you are placed on a list and called for an interview at a later date. This process may take a month, six months or possibly a year or more. Keep your options open. Take any test that sounds interesting or is related to your field.

**U.S. Office of Personnel Management**  
Federal Job Information & Testing Center  
New York, NY  
24-Hour touch-tone Service  
https://www.opm.gov/  
1-800-688-9889

**Examination Information Desk**  
New York State Civil Service Department  
Alfred E. Smith Building  
80 South Swan St.  
Albany, NY 12239  
1-877-NYS-JOBS or  
518-457-2487  
http://www.cs.ny.gov/

**Suffolk County Department of Civil Service**  
North County Complex, Building 158  
725 Veterans Memorial Highway  
Hauppauge, NY 11787-0099  
631-853-6399  
http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov

**Nassau County Civil Service Commission**  
40 Main Street  
Hempstead, NY 11550  
516-572-1882  
www.nassaucivilservice.com

Generally you are required one year Nassau residency prior to exam date. Please check site for any updates. On occasion, there may be a resident waiver. Check each individual announcement.
THE INTERVIEW

Your résumé, cover letter, and application were successful! You landed an interview.

An interview is an opportunity for people to meet and make assessments about each other. The goal of the interviewer (your potential employer) is 1) to determine whether you have the right qualifications, 2) the potential to do a specific job well, and 3) that you fit in with their organization. The goal of the interviewee (you) is to gather as much information as you can about the position in order to make an informed decision if you are offered the job.

A good interview is a conversation and an exchange of information. Contrary to popular belief, there are very few bad interviews, just poorly prepared people. Preparing for an interview involves being ready to answer the interviewer's questions and having some questions of your own.

Interview preparation takes many forms. One obvious way to prepare yourself is to look at your résumé. Can you expand and give details and examples regarding every statement on your résumé? In some cases, the interviewer will base interview questions from what they read on your résumé.

ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING

It is important to approach the interview process with confidence in yourself and a positive attitude. You should know yourself and that means your career goals, your interests, and your strengths. But you should also know to keep this information relevant to the job at hand. Be ready to demonstrate how your skills and abilities fit into this particular job. Learn to introduce yourself and shake hands. Demonstrate good manners (make your parents proud!), poise and friendliness at all times.

DO YOUR RESEARCH IN ADVANCE

Find out as much as you can about the organization before the interview. Interviewers love to hear that you've taken the time to investigate their organization. Read company literature, if available, and speak with employees or former employees. The information you gather will also help you ask informed questions. Another way to prepare is to review the list of questions (see the Frequently Asked Interview Questions on page 34.) Don't just read them. Write down potential answers, practice responding aloud as if you are being asked the questions, and/or do one-on-one practice interviews with friends, family, or a counselor.

There are different types of interviews, ranging from the seemingly casual and open-ended to the highly structured. One-to-one interviews are most common, but sometimes students are interviewed in group settings. Always be prepared. Make sure you know the interviewer(s)' name(s). Remember to ask for business cards. The more you prepare for the interview, the more confident and professional you will be.
INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

One way to gain valuable insight about a particular career is to schedule an informational interview. Most people love talking about their jobs and themselves, so when contacting an employer for information, rather than asking for a job, talk to them about their position, how they got started, and what they like best/least about their job. Also, ask them for suggestions to improve your job-hunting success. In the meantime, utilize this time to promote your skills and qualifications with the employer.

Informational interviews are a great way to discover information about specific careers from the true source, the employer. Effective informational interviewing allows you to gather information that will help you in your job search. Stay away from using this opportunity for a job. Remember - you are there to get information and use the opportunity to network. Informational interviews may introduce you to internship opportunities if you provide an excellent presentation and impress the employers with your communication skills.

Suggested steps to follow when approaching an employer for an informational interview:

- Telephone or send an email or letter to an employer in the field. Indicate that you are seeking information, not a job.
- If you send a letter, state that you will be calling within the week to schedule an appointment. **DON'T FORGET TO CALL!**
- Prepare a list of questions you would like to have answered. If you are unable to schedule an appointment, ask if they may be able to answer some questions over the telephone. If they are unable to do so, ask if she or he knows of anyone who might be willing to meet with you and/or answer a few questions.
- Be courteous and remember to send a thank you letter for any assistance you received. Always remember you may be speaking to a potential employer.

MOCK INTERVIEWS: PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!

At Suffolk, career professionals can provide feedback through practiced mock interviews. This is a great way to prepare for an interview and practice your responses to typical interview questions. A career professional can give you some pointers that will help you improve. You could also record your interview to focus on your non-verbal skills.
FREQUENTLY ASKED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
3. How do you spend your spare time?
4. What have been your most satisfying experiences?
5. Your most disappointing experiences?
6. What are your strengths?
7. What are your weaknesses?
8. What courses did you like best? Least? Why?
9. What do you consider your greatest achievement(s)?
10. Why did you choose your major? Your career goals?
11. What made you decide to attend Suffolk County Community College?
12. If you could, what would you do differently in your education?
13. Do you have plans for furthering your education? If so, what are your plans?
14. Why do you want to work here?
15. Why should I hire you?
16. How would you describe yourself?
17. How do you think a friend or a professor who knows you well would describe you?
18. Tell me about your extracurricular activities? Interests?
19. What did you learn from your part-time and summer job experiences?
20. What are the most important rewards you expect from your career?
21. What salary do you expect to be earning in five years?
22. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
23. How do you determine or evaluate success?
24. In what ways do you think you can contribute to our company?
25. What qualities should a successful manager/supervisor possess?
26. Do you think your grades are a good indication of your academic skills?
27. What kind of work environment are you looking for?
28. Describe how you handle working under pressure?
29. Tell me what you know about our organization?
30. What two or three things are most important to you in your job?
31. Are you willing to travel?
32. Are you willing to relocate?
33. What have you learned from your mistakes?
34. What questions do you have for me?

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK:
Remember that the employer wants to hire someone who can demonstrate intellectual curiosity.
Make sure to prepare some questions to ask such as:
- What are you looking for in a successful candidate?
- What is a typical day like in this position?
- How would you describe your management style?
- What are some of the objectives that you would like to see accomplished in this job?
- What type of support does this position receive?
- What would you like to have done within the next 2-3 months?
- What are some of the most challenging aspects of this position?
- How do you think these challenges should be handled?
- What would you say is the best thing about working with your organization?
- What significant changes do you foresee in the near future for your organization?
- If I was to be hired by your organization, where could I see myself in five years?
- What can I tell you about me that will help you make your decision to hire me?
Things to Consider:
- Be realistic - no one wants to interview the perfect candidate.
- Do your homework- don’t show up being clueless about the job.
- Don’t take shortcuts - use a cover letter to introduce yourself properly.
- Keep your examples relevant and to the point.
- Avoid being generic - employers want you to connect the dots and demonstrate why you would be the ideal candidate to hire.

THE WRITING SAMPLE

In many cases, a prospective employer will request a writing sample for evidence of your research and writing abilities. Keep in mind the following guidelines when selecting your writing sample.
- Your writing sample MUST reflect your ability to research and analyze cases.
- Select a short sample, 5 to 7 pages. Employers do not have time to read a lengthy memorandum.
- Do not submit a paper that has your professor's comments or corrections written on it. It should look as professional as possible.
- If you submit a memorandum that was prepared for your employer, remove all client names to protect confidentiality.
- Take your writing sample to your interview and be prepared to leave it with the interviewer if requested.

ARRIVE ON TIME!

During the interview:
- Let the interviewer know that you are interested in the position.
- Listen carefully and think about each question before answering.
- Establish eye contact with the interviewer.
- Show confidence and a sincere interest in being interviewed.
- Conclude the interview with a firm handshake.
- Thank the interviewer for taking the time to meet with you and let the interviewer know that you look forward to hearing from him/her.

Important Points to Remember:
- Be yourself and approach the interview with a positive attitude.
- Ask questions.
- Be courteous to everyone.
- First impressions are very important. A firm handshake, a friendly smile, and a polite greeting will start the interview in a positive way.
- Bring copies of your résumé and references which should be printed separately, listing 3-5 people that you have already contacted and received permission to use as references.
- Bring a pen. You may need to complete an application and/or other forms.
- Know the interviewer's name and use it when greeting and saying good-bye. Address the interviewer formally, for example, "Mr. Gibson," "Ms. Smith," "Dr. Adams."
- Be professional and confident in yourself.
- Be specific when asked about your strengths and abilities; give examples from experiences.
- Indicate that you have put considerable thought into your career, your job objectives, and your decision to apply at that particular company/firm.
- Research the company/firm prior to your interview; be prepared to ask questions about the company/firm and the position.
- Know the strengths and experiences you want to stress before you go to the interview.
PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE

The goal in dressing for an interview is to feel great about the way you look and to project an image of confidence and professionalism. You do not need to make a fashion statement. This is not a social affair. This is about you getting that job.

- Think conservatively. Clothes should be appropriate for the organization for which you are interviewing.
- Professional suits and dresses should be muted colors, such as navy, black, or gray.
- Length should be conservative for females. No provocative items should be worn; remember you are there to get a job.
- Dress shoes and stockings for females and socks for men are a must.
- Hair and nails should be well groomed.
- Keep hair away from your face and make sure that the interviewer can see your face.
- Perfume/cologne should be worn to a minimum, or not at all.
- Do not wear distracting items such as dangling jewelry, a frilly blouse, or a loud tie.
- Good hygiene habits are important; cleanliness is paramount.
- Dressing professionally does not have to mean dull, stiff and boring.
- Your outfit should not distract from your abilities and skills.
- Dressing smartly could be the difference between you getting the job or not.
- Do not be swayed by the dress code of the employees, you are not hired yet!

Stay Focused!

As a trick of the trade, practice introducing yourself in front of a mirror. Practice until you feel comfortable with your presentation. Briefly outline a few positive informational items about yourself. Keep the information relevant to why you are a great fit for this job. Practice, practice, and practice your interviewing and presentational skills.

A good strategy for interviewing is to project confidence in yourself and your ability by standing straighter and taller. In fact, practice your handshake - firm and sure. Establish positive eye contact. Convey your professionalism with a smile. And remember to take a deep breath and relax. Remember ... first impressions do count.
SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF A PROFESSIONAL

1. Specialized knowledge based on extensive preparation
2. Participates in ongoing training and development
3. Accepts responsibility
4. Has a sense of ownership of their work
5. Advocates a collective networking spirit outside of the organization
6. Upholds high standards of ethics and integrity
7. Maintains high standards of performance

FOLLOW-UP

The interview is over and you are feeling pretty good about yourself (or maybe not) – this would be a great time to follow-up immediately and send the employer a thank-you note. Why? Sending a thank-you is a positive professional courtesy. It gives you an opportunity to reaffirm your interest in the job, and if you truly want this particular job, sending a thank-you note that lets them know you feel you would be a good fit.

A critical part of your job search is the follow-up. Employers need to be reminded that you are the right match for their job. So, extend that professional courtesy, and take a few minutes to thank the employer for their time. Keep in mind that the choice of a personal thank-you card or a typewritten letter is clearly up to you as long as the intent is still the same. A word of caution: if your handwriting is not legible, do not send a handwritten note; but do trust a professional business thank-you.

If in the course of the interview, you neglected to mention some relevant information or you recognize your error in not doing your homework, use the thank-you note to update the employer about additional thoughts you had about the job. Do not call repeatedly or email them or text them more than once. Employers might get a sense of desperation from you if you call repeatedly and will not call you back.

Sending a thank-you letter after the interview is a polite gesture and often gives you an edge over other candidates. Writing a thank-you letter allows you to re-state your interests and qualifications. A formal business style thank-you letter should be printed on a letter quality printer using a standard three-paragraph format. See sample thank-you letter on the next page.

The first paragraph should remind the employer when you interviewed and for which position. The second paragraph re-states your interest and should mention the specific skills that fit the position, perhaps additional items that were not covered in the interview. This is a great time to validate your fit for the job. The third paragraph is to thank the employer (again) for taking the time to meet with you and inform them that you look forward to his/her decision.
May 20, 2015

Mr. Brandon M. Walters  
Walters, William, and Henry  
1700 Veterans Highway, Suite 5  
Islandia, NY 11722

Dear Mr. Walters:

It was a pleasure meeting with you today to discuss the paralegal job opening at Walters, William, and Henry.

I am very excited about your position, which offers an excellent opportunity for me to use my background, training, and computer skills. In reviewing our discussion about your office needs, I am eager to apply my knowledge and make a contribution to your organization. I feel confident that I can be an asset to your organization.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration. I hope that we will be working together in the future. If you have any additional questions or need supplementary information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (631) 698-1234.

Sincerely,

Lynn Rodriguez

Lynn Rodriguez
**CAREER RESOURCES**


[Legal Assistant Today](www.legalassistanttoday.com)

The periodical and books are located in the Huntington Library, Ammerman Campus, and at the Grant Campus Library. Books are accessible to all campuses through intercampus loan. Check your library catalog for new additions.

*The Chief*, a weekly newspaper available at the Grant Campus Library and at most public libraries, lists all upcoming civil service exams for the city, state, federal, and local governments.
PARALEGAL WEB SITE LINKS

- American Association for Paralegal Education – www.aafpe.org
- America’s Jobs Bank – www.ajb.org
- Federal Job Digest – www.jobsfed.com
- FindLaw – www.findlaw.com
- Law Employment Center – www.lawjobs.com
- Nassau County Bar Association – www.nassaubar.org
- National Association of Legal Assistants - www.nala.org
- National Federation of Paralegals Associations - www.paralegals.org
- N.Y.S. Civil Service Department – www.cs.ny.gov/
- Suffolk County Bar Association - www.scba.org/eva/index.php
- Suffolk County Department of Civil Service - www.suffolkcountyny.gov

General Sites to Visit:

America’s Career Information Network – www.acinet.org
This resource provides a wealth of information on the job market, occupational profiles and allows you to find information for New York State and Nassau-Suffolk area.

CareerBuilder.com – www.careerbuilder.com
CareerBuilder.com is the nation’s leading recruitment resource, with presence in more than 130 local newspapers and more than 26 million unique visitors to its newspaper websites each month.

Indeed.com – www.indeed.com
As the world's #1 job site, with over 180 million unique visitors every month from over 50 different countries, Indeed has become the catalyst for putting the world to work. Indeed is intensely passionate about delivering the right fit for every hire. Indeed helps companies of all sizes hire the best talent and offers the best opportunity for job seekers to get hired.

International Trademark Association – www.inta.org
A non-profit organization is providing a liaison between law firms and corporations and trademark paralegals and legal assistants to explore employment opportunities.

This resource gives a complete description of several occupations, including paralegal.

Exclusive Job Board for SCCC Students and Alumni:

Suffolk’s Job Connection – Go to your Student Portal – MySCCC
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<tr>
<th>EXAMPLES OF INTERNSHIP AND COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PLACEMENTS</th>
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<td>Miller, Gillard &amp; Mari, Esqs., Hauppauge, NY</td>
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Nassau County District Attorney, Mineola, NY
Nassau/Suffolk Law Services, Hauppauge, NY
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Tully, Rosemarie, Islandia, NY
Tsunis, Gasparis & Dragotta, Hauppauge, NY
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U.S. District Court, Central Islip, NY
U.S. Federal Magistrate’s Court, Brooklyn, NY
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Wurman, Howard, Esq., Bellport, NY
Zahn, Daniel A, Esq., Holbrook, NY
Zenk, Carolyn A., Hampton Bays, NY
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New York Court of Claims, Hauppauge, NY
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Vardaro & Helwig, Smithtown, NY
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