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#### **WELCOME TO THE AGCAREERS.COM AG & FOOD CAREER GUIDE!**

AgCareers.com is "Feeding the World with Talent" by connecting top talent with agricultural employers across the globe. The Ag & Food Career Guide is just one way we are helping young professionals familiarize themselves and connect with some of the top organizations in agriculture and food.

Within the Career Guide you'll find a variety of employers and organizations offering opportunities for students and young professionals. Plus, don't miss out on the vast career education and advice featured within the articles in the publication. This Guide is a great resource to help lead you from the job search to assimilating in a new role and everything in between.

Be sure to sign up for the Student Career Success Kit from AgCareers.com (details on page 44). We'll keep in touch with additional helpful resources throughout your career journey. Finally, visit www.AgCareers.com to start your career adventure today! Best of luck to you!

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- 4 Farm Credit Services | www.farmcredit.com/careers
- 7 Wilbur-Ellis | www.wilburellis.com/careers
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# upping your AMBIGUITY IQ

by Erika Osmundson, AgCareers.com Director of Marketing & Communications

#### THERE IS THAT QUOTE OUT THERE

about nothing being certain but death and taxes! Which implies that all else is uncertain; ambiguous. In the workplace, ambiguity runs rampant, sometimes for good reason and others unnecessarily. As a young professional getting comfortable with ambiguity can be exhausting. Many employers think today's young professional isn't equipped to handle ambiguity. Let's challenge that!

#### WHAT IS AMBIGUITY?

By definition it is the quality of being open to more than one interpretation; inexactness. You can have ambiguity in the spoken or written word. It can be simple: David gave a ride to his daughter wearing a pink shirt. Was the daughter or David wearing the pink shirt? Or it can be more complex: we have this challenge and we could solve it this way or that.

The fact is that ambiguity is all around us, so you have had the opportunity to deal with it. You may just not have recognized it as such.

### WHY IS BEING ABLE TO HANDLE AMBIGUITY SO IMPORTANT?

We work and live in a changing and evolving world. Being able to adapt and learn the 'new' is so important.

"The ability to be able to handle ambiguity is an important skill," said Steve

Bent, District Sales Lead for Corteva Agriscience Canada. "It is crucial to success of the individual, but also for the workplace."

Companies need people with the skills to adapt with changing ways of doing business, shared Bent. People with the skills to navigate ambiguity sometimes find new and more efficient ways to operate.

"Technology has changed the way we live and work as well as how quickly business strategies pivot," said B.J. Warren, Employer Branding Lead for Bayer U.S. "Employees who thrive are those that can manage through change and that can move projects forward, even when all the answers are not yet clear."

WHAT ARE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS
GETTING WRONG WHEN IT COMES
TO DEALING WITH AMBIGUITY?

There are a variety of employability skills that employers feel young professionals lack coming into the workplace, but ambiguity is consistently mentioned.

"You will likely not always have all the answers, clear direction, and >>>





Warren

understand all the stakeholders when you start a project or initiative and they will likely change throughout the

process," said Warren. "Don't let these challenges prohibit you from moving forward."

It is easy to complain or to say you couldn't do it because you didn't have all the information, but those that utilize their networks and still move forward, come out on top, shared Warren.

Bent echoed these sentiments saying that it is important for young professionals to be okay with not having an answer immediately to an ambiguous



Rent

situation. In many cases there is no answer to the problem.

"It's about being comfortable with knowing a solution to

a challenge or problem will present itself, in time," said Bent.

## HOW DO YOU BUILD YOUR AMBIGUITY IQ?

Employers continue to say that young professionals haven't figured out ambiguity in the workplace. So, what can you do to build and grow in this skill?

Warren recommends that you build your internal and external network.
When you don't have all the information, you can rely on your network to help you fill in the blanks.

"Identify coaches who can also assist you in identifying your own blind spots and weaknesses when it comes to working in a complex, evolving environment," said Warren. "Finally, find your resiliency. Learn what works best for you to work through change and to have a healthy work-life balance."

Bent suggests putting yourself in situations where you are out of your element and need to work through a challenging situation. He also shares that being inquisitive and asking questions can help build your ambiguity IQ. He stresses that great question asking skills are extremely important.

"In my opinion, it is a two-way street when it comes to working through ambiguity," said Bent. "The person assigning the task needs to create regular checkpoints to minimize the risk of misunderstanding. The person assigned to the task has the responsibility to ask for clarification when they are not sure about something."

# HOW DO YOU LOOK FOR THIS QUALITY IN CANDIDATES? HOW DO THEY DEMONSTRATE THEIR CAPABILITIES/EXPERIENCES TO YOU?

You do have experience with ambiguity. Perhaps you just haven't found a way to articulate this in interviews.

Bent shared that he typically asks interview questions around the thought process that someone has gone through when they have faced an ambiguous situation. What were the results and what did they learn.

"It isn't so much what the outcome was, but rather how they dealt with the situation and what they learned," said Bent.

"Candidates who share specific examples of projects (whether from work or school) where they have been met with changes in deadlines, owners, scope, and more and then highlight how they managed through these changes demonstrates how they are able to manage ambiguity," said Warren.
"Candidates should avoid casting blame on anyone else and instead share what actions were taken to achieve a successful result."

Ambiguity is about change and your adaptability to change. Another large component to handling ambiguity is problem-solving skills. Being able to analyze changing situations and identify ways to come to a resolution/action.

That is the thing with employability skills – many of them are intertwined. A lot of these skills will come with time but recognizing them now and finding ways to practice and communicate about them will really UP your IQ, particularly when it comes to ambiguity! AG

#### DEALING WITH

#### AMBIGUITY

Act without knowing all of the details.

Be confident - take risks.

Plan for the future but remain in the present.

Communicate.

Embrace change.

Source: https://thetrainingassociates.com/blog/ career-development-skill-ambiguity





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**AGRICULTURE** has come a long way from the horse-drawn plows of our ancestors. The average farmer in the 1900s would be lucky to feed more than a family of five with their outputs, and many crops had a hard time withstanding the strains of the environment like unpredictable weather and insects.

Today, agriculture is more productive than ever before. The combination of advancements in technology along with pesticides and medication to keep plants and livestock healthy means that there is more being produced with far less inputs. The future is bright, but there are still challenges ahead. With eminent population growth and the strains of climate change, producing enough food is no easy feat.

Considering the increase in production that is still needed, more advancements in technology is in our near future. With it, comes an opening of agriculture-related jobs. A career in agriculture presents a wide array of opportunities in an always growing industry.

#### WHY WORK IN AGRICULTURE

#### Importance:

We've all heard the stats: with 9 billion people predicted by the year 2050, agriculture is more important than ever.

Even with food production at an all-time high, the FAO still estimates that around 815 million people are suffering from chronic hunger. This number is only expected to rise with the growing population.

Sufficiently fighting the global hunger problem will require an increase of production up to 70%. It is a task accomplished before, but to produce

# love your job

WHILE **BENEFITING THE WORLD'S LEADING** INDUSTRY.

that much more food in an industry that is already setting records will need all hands on deck. If nothing else, a career in agriculture means you are doing your part. Despite what sector you find yourself in, you will be at the forefront of the fight against hunger, making agriculture a rewarding career as much as it is practical.

#### Wide Variety of Options:

If working directly with plants or livestock is not for you, maybe communicating with people is more your style. Or, maybe your skills lie within a science lab, or with moving mechanical parts. Whatever your passion is, there's a role in the agriculture industry for you.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports that 11% of total U.S. employment is attributed to agriculture. That figure represents a lot of different career types to explore and the best part is, it's inclusive to everyone, whether you have a college degree or not.

Careers in agriculture are different from the stereotypes. Consider all the people it takes to run a flour mill, or the innovative minds needed to create the next groundbreaking animal health product. Both these areas require workers of different skill sets. The reach of agriculture stretches beyond farming and ranching and can range all the way to a CEO position at a major food production company. You can find a good fit within the industry, even if your role is not directly related to production agriculture.

#### Job Outlook:

Along with the variety of career opportunities, the number of >>> open roles available in agriculture is also growing, so once you find your place, you can feel optimistic about landing a job.

Each year there is an estimated 57,900 job openings in agriculture with only an average of 35,400 new graduates to fill the positions (USDA). That leaves the industry shorthanded when it comes to having workers that are skilled in the areas of agriculture and food sciences.

Like previously discussed, ensuring that food production continues to increase is more important than ever before. This cannot happen without skilled workers, so your help is certainly wanted. With an employment rate that is only expected to grow, choosing to pursue a career in agriculture takes the guesswork out of the job hunt. You will love your job, while benefiting the world's leading industry.

#### **Job Security:**

If you're worried about keeping a job once you find the perfect one, the agriculture industry can remedy your fears. With the growing importance of feeding an ever-demanding population, there's generally no reason to worry about job security. That's not saying there won't be ups and downs. Just like any other industry, agriculture has had its share of hardship, but the future is looking bright. Even during these times, jobs are still available because providing a stable food source will always be necessary.

#### **Work Environment:**

Agriculture encompasses a wide variety of environments to work in. Like spending time outdoors and working with plants? An agronomist job or getting hands-on with all different types of livestock from fish to cattle might be the best fit. However, agriculture is present outside of rural areas. There is still

opportunity for someone who prefers an office setting and a little extra time at home, or even a person who likes exploring and traveling every week.

Finding the right work environment is just a matter of researching what the job requirements are for a certain field. Regardless of where you feel the most productive, the agriculture industry has the potential to accommodate your particular tastes.

#### Salary:

Monetary compensation often proves just how important working for the agriculture industry is. According to salary data, the average United States Department of Agriculture pay is \$67,000. This is higher than the national average which the Social Security Administration reports as hovering just above \$50,000. Agriculture workers are valued in their craft. They are laborers who understand and are working to solve global problems with food security. Hard work does not go without notice in agriculture, and you will likely reap rewards in addition to good pay.

#### Ethic:

More goes into job satisfaction than just wage. While choosing a career, it is important to understand all the benefits. One of these benefits that people often forget about is the meaning a job gives to your life. The good news? Agriculture is a morally rich career. Your day-to-day life will consist of various tasks, all benefiting the collaborative effort of feeding the world. Even serving as an accountant aids the flow of the agriculture industry. When pursuing a career in agriculture, you will get the peace of mind knowing you are making a difference.

In the 1900's, a career in agriculture might have been working in the field.

But today, advancements in technology have opened a wide array of careers in biotechnology, engineering, and production along with many others.

So, when asking the question "why ag?", it's important to understand what the industry has to offer. Working with the 21 million people employed by agriculture means that you will reap the benefits of salary and plenty of choices, as well knowing you are contributing to global food security. AG

# **CHECK OUT OUR** cureer profiles

The AgCareers.com Career Profiles were created, in conjunction with FFA's Ag Explorer, as a resource to increase learning and understanding around the great variety of opportunities in agriculture and food. Read about job responsibilities, required education, potential employers, and more. Explore more than 250 different careers organized by pathway.







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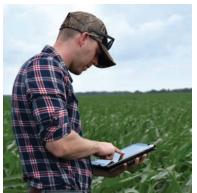














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YOU WENT TO COLLEGE to pursue a degree, but more than that, to pursue a career. Yet, you probably know employers want to see more.

If you're applying for a position that requires a degree, everyone you are competing against will also have a degree, says Nick Koewler from the Land O'Lakes talent acquisition team.

"It's what you have in addition to the degree that is important as we look at what qualifies candidates as top talent," he said.

Koewler added while you need technical skills, it is how you work in a team setting with both in-person and with virtual customers and colleagues that will make you and your future employer successful. Employers want to see you have pursued experiences that help position you as a well-rounded, attractive candidate, says Justin Margherio, Senior Recruiter for Bayer U.S.

"From our end, it's the combination of an individual's education and their extracurricular experiences," he said. "You have to be able to show that you have some kind of experience applying your degree outside the classroom."

So which entries on your resume will help you stand out? While every job, company, and recruiter might be looking for something slightly different, here

are five pieces of advice to help you get started.

#### 1. WORK EXPERIENCE

The first thing most recruiters and hiring managers look for is work experience that relates to the position. Sometimes it might feel like you have to have had an internship to get an internship. Margan Mulvaney, Executive Director of Human Resources for Merck Animal Health, encourages students to think beyond the standard internship when they are looking for their first work experiences.

"What we're looking for is any relevant experience, whether it be paid or volunteer, where you have had exposure to different parts of the business," she said. "We want to see that you have had an experience where you can relate to working in a particular field or line of work."

Another opportunity Tracie Gogolin, Vice President of People and Culture for Agribusiness at Wilbur-Ellis, suggests is taking time your freshman year to shadow at least two people working in the career you're interested in.

"Taking time to do this early in your education will help you make sure this is your passion and the right path for you," she says.

#### 2. PEER LEADERSHIP

After an internship or work experience, the next best way to show you are pursuing relevant skills is through on-campus peer leadership. In the workplace, you will have opportunities to lead with influence as you manage projects among groups of your peers as well as your superiors.

"Get involved in those organizations and take those leadership opportunities as early as you can," says Margherio. "That's a skill we look for. Can you lead your peers through projects?"

Mulvaney adds that leadership also extends beyond internships and club officer roles.

"It doesn't have to be an officer role," she says. "You can show that you have exposure to leading project teams though your studies or leading a volunteering effort."

In addition to peer leadership, Koewler adds that club participation helps recruiters get a better picture of you as a candidate.

"Student club participation is great," he says. "Seeing that helps us as recruiters understand a little bit more about the person, what they like to do and in what type of situation they will thrive." >>>

#### 3. EXPERIENCES THAT STRETCH YOU

Many people will tell you that the greatest growth comes from situations that stretch you beyond your comfort zone. Recruiters are looking for proof you've embraced and learned from experiences like this.

"I like to see experiences that have made you uncomfortable," says Koewler. "Those experiences are about rounding out what you have done, working with other people and problem solving."

Sometimes the type of stretch experience the recruiter is looking for depends on company values. Because community service is important to Bayer, Margherio says they look for that on applicants' resumes.

Gogolin adds that volunteer activities are a great way to learn more about an individual and how they are willing to stretch themselves.

"A lot of times what your passionate about shows through your volunteer work," she says. "We want to see you be part of something greater than yourself. We also want to see them making friends outside their circle."

These stretch activities don't end with volunteerism and extracurriculars though. Wilbur-Ellis also pays attention to see if students are pursuing internship opportunities in different areas of agriculture even if it's all within the same company.

#### 4. YOUR REAL IMPACT

You can have all of the right type of activities to list on your resume, but unless you can show the impact of those experiences on you and those you served, the value of those experiences might be lost.

"Quantify things on your resume" says Margherio. "Leading an organization of 100 is different than leading an organization of 3. Quantify as much as you can in those spaces."

Gogolin agrees that numbers help the recruiter understand the value of the experience as well as showing that you understand that and have made discoveries on your own.

"We're looking for statements that show impact and resourcefulness," she says. "Remember to tell your story. We don't know anything about you beyond the paper in front of us. Why do we want to talk to you?"

Don't be afraid to tout your accomplishments to help answer that question.

"If in your internship you helped save X amount of dollars, indicate that," says

AND TAKE THOSE
LEADERSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES
as early as you can.

Margherio. "Quantifying the things you've accomplished is a great way to help me see what you've contributed."

A lot of the people you are competing against will have similar experiences to list on their resumes. Being able to quantify what you've accomplished will help you stand out.

### 5. INTEREST IN SIMILAR OPPORTUNITIES

Every job has a different list of requirements and desired qualifications. That's a good cue that your resume should change based on the job you're applying for. When you take the time to call out your most relevant experiences and qualifications for a role, it improves

your chances of looking appealing to a recruiter.

"Highlight key experiences that are related to the role you're applying for," says Gogolin. "Give examples of how you've used your skills for a successful outcome. Tell your story and be proud of it."

When comparing candidates, recruiters are also looking at who shows the most interest or excitement in a particular field or role.

"The other thing that stands out to me when I talk to students often is their level of interest," says Mulvaney. "The level of interest shows by some of the things they do in school."

Especially if you've decided to make a change in majors or career direction, you don't want to make the recruiter work to understand your interest.

"We want to understand where you're at and where you come from," says Koewler. "Make a dedicated effort to getting experiences that correlated directly to what you're trying to get into. You have to start somewhere."

As you go through your collegiate career, take advantage of the opportunities that are available to you from the career center and your professors on campus to professional development organizations and individuals in your network.

If you're looking for specific skills to add to your repertoire, Gogolin suggests project management, personal financial management, negotiation and public speaking. Overall, be curious and open to the experiences and people around you, she says.

"The biggest thing is that it's never too early to start thinking about what's next in your career," says Koweler. "Whether you're a freshman or a senior moving toward graduation, always have an eye on what's after graduation." AG









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For more information about the scholarship program or Faculty Academy, please email us at workforcedev@irrigation.org or visit us online.

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# WRITING A SKILLS-BASED RESUME

by Kristine Penning, AgCareers.com Creative Marketing Specialist, & Kristi Sproul, AgCareers.com Education & Marketing Specialist

YOU'RE ABOUT TO sit down and write or update your resume. However, as you scan your work history and education, you feel it does not effectively speak to the kind of employee you are. You know that you have more to share and offer beyond a brief list of internships and bulleted tasks performed. But how can you demonstrate what you are truly capable of to a prospective employer?

What if we told you that you don't have to adhere to the traditional resume format that is often expected? The skillsbased resume is an excellent choice, both for those with plentiful education and experience and for those whose may not fill the page. Learn about what a skillsbased resume is, whether it may be right for you, and how to build one.

#### What Is a Skills-Based Resume?

When most professionals think about resumes, they picture the chronological style. A reverse-chronological resume is the standard resume format which lists and emphasizes your work and education history, with most recent experience first. This format is great, but it's often not right for everyone. Recent graduates, skilled trade workers, or anyone who has spent substantial time in just one position all likely have abundant experience and skills, despite being able to list only one or two jobs on a resume.

Enter the skills-based resume. This style of resume highlights specific skills gained from your experiences, honing in on their transferability to the current role

you're applying for. This type of resume doesn't exclude your work history; rather, it simply puts less focus on it, presenting your value as an employee and the skills you could bring to the workplace in a more comprehensive fashion.

Is this format for you? If any of the following apply, it may be a good fit:

- Your work history consists of numerous short-term roles (internships, work studies, temporary positions, on-campus jobs).
- There are long gaps in your employment (one year or more).
- You are seeking a new role that does not relate to your previous titles.
- You are far removed from your education experience (i.e. internship roles) but have only held one role since and have spent significant time in it (5 or more years).
- Your work history looks redundant on paper as many of your titles and experiences are similar in nature.
- You have no experience to list as you are just starting your career!

A skills-based resume isn't just a good fit for you. Employers may prefer a skillsbased resume (or a combination of the skills-based and chronological resume) as they get a better picture of what you bring to the table as a potential employee. You've likely heard that employers spend just seconds scanning any particular resume. A skills-based resume allows for the most important information to jump

off the page and catch the reader's eve.

Think that a skills-based resume is for you? Great! Still not sure how to write one? Not a problem. Here's an easy guide to assembling a skills-based resume.

#### How to Build a Skills-Based Resume

As with a traditional resume, crafting an eye-catching header that includes your contact information is necessary. Follow these tips for formatting the next sections of your skills-based resume.

#### 1. BRANDING STATEMENT A brief

branding statement provides a quick summary of your attributes and capabilities. A branding statement is a better use of space than a career objective and allows you to tell the hiring manager more about yourself. To help craft your branding statement think about what you would tell the hiring manager if you only had 15 seconds to sell yourself.

2. SKILLS Start with a self-assessment of your skills. Do this simply by conducting an internet search for "list of transferable skills." Print off an example list and mark the skills that you possess and can expand on with your experiences. These can be skills learned from course work, class projects, internships, volunteer experience and even student organizations. You may need to prioritize which skills to include on your resume due to space limitations. A good rule of >>>

thumb is to include three to five skills that are pertinent to the position you're applying for. Analyze the job description, specifically the required and desired skills section, and ensure the skills you include on the resume are relatable to the position.

You may consider including a mix of technical skills (like programming or graphic design) and soft (employability) skills. After each skill, include statements that explain your achievements for that skill. See the box below for example.

**Bonus Tip:** Practice for the interview by answering the question, "tell me about a time that you utilized your project management (include each skill listed on your resume) skills."

- **3. EXPERIENCE** This section will be brief and should include a short work history that only includes the employment dates, job title and employer. You will not provide an explanation along with the role. This section can include paid positions, internships and even volunteer work that is relevant.
- **4. AWARDS AND HONORS** Though optional, this section can highlight awards, accomplishments or other relevant honors received.

#### **Final Thoughts**

Your first attempt at constructing a skills-based resume may seem awkward if you're used to listing experiences in a chronological format. However, if you've determined that a skills-based resume is suitable for your circumstances it will likely come as a relief that there is a more effective way to showcase your qualifications for the position.

As with any resume, ask for a second pair of eyes to proofread and even suggest skills that they see in you which you may have overlooked! AG

**Author's Note:** Use this template to get started writing your own skills-based resume.

# FIRST NAME LAST NAME

Address · Phone

Email · LinkedIn Profile · Twitter/Blog/Portfolio

Brief branding statement that provides a quick summary of your skills and attributes.

#### **EDUCATION**

MONTH YEAR

**DEGREE TITLE, SCHOOL** 

Include upper level courses you completed that are relevant to your career goals.

#### **SKILLS**

#### SKILL

List your skills relevant to the position that you've gained through internships, education, volunteerism, etc. Include statements that explain your achievements for that skill.

#### SKILI

Continue to list skills relevant to the job. Include three to five skills.

#### **EXPERIENCE**

DATES FROM - TO
JOB TITLE, COMPANY
Do not include details.

DATES FROM - TO
JOB TITLE, COMPANY

Continue to list experience in reverse chronological order.

#### **AWARDS & HONORS**

Use this section to highlight scholarships or other relevant honors received.

#### SKILLS EXAMPLE

#### COMMUNICATION

Effective in both written and verbal communication. Skilled at writing press releases, technical reports and blog posts. Extensive experience in presenting material one-on-one as well as to large audiences.

#### PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Able to effectively manage projects through the initial stage of idea conception and final stage of presenting the finished project. Comfortable delegating assignments and following up with team members to ensure defined timeline is followed.

#### BILINGUAL

Fluent in both native language of English as well as Spanish.



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# TERVIE A GUIDE FOR INTROVERTS & EXTROVERTS by Bonnie Johnson, AgCareers.com Marketing Associate

THE JOB INTERVIEW is a chance to sell yourself, why you are a good fit for the organization, talk about your achievements, and show your excitement for the position. Just from that first sentence, the whole concept of iob interviews seems to favor extroverts. But wait...there are extrovert habits that may contribute to a poor interview performance, and alternatively, ways in which introverts can shine in the interview situation.

Most people lie somewhere in between these two ends of the introversion - extroversion scale. Self-awareness, an essential soft skill, enables you to recognize your emotions, motivations, strengths, and challenges. Self-awareness allows you to understand that you may lean more towards introverted or extroverted.

Even if you think you know where you stand, the following will examine both positive and negative stereotypes, and how you can excel in the interview.

#### **EXTROVERTS**

Strengths: Talkative, sociable, curious, positive, energetic, open to change, achiever, leader, quick-thinker

**Challenges:** Flashy, lack of substance, poor listener, speak before thinking, pushy, in-your-face, rambling.

In interviews, this can translate to filling conversation pauses with unnecessary information, unfocused answers, and talking over interviewers. If you already recognize your extrovert strengths, you may fail to properly prepare for an interview, because after all, you're made to talk!

Suggestions: While your extrovert energy for the job and communication skills should benefit you in an interview, don't go overboard. In the customary pre- and post-interview small talk, think twice before sharing too personal information.

The typical "Tell me a little about yourself" introduction needs to be just that... "little." Be wary of taking ten minutes to tell your life history. Keep your story relevant to the job and organization.

Extroverts may excel at sharing their ideas in social situations, but keep in mind that listening is just as important, if not more important. Don't interrupt your interviewer. Concentrate on what they are saying, not what your next comment will be. Use your naturally curious nature to your benefit by asking questions and expressing your interest in the employer.

Lack of preparation may become an obstacle for extroverts. Prepare for the interview by gathering facts that support your achievements. Practice answering typical interview questions with a concise response. Narrow your list of

accomplishments and top skills down, rather than running down the laundry list of why you're awesome. Look for repeated words or phrases in a job description and you will immediately know what is most important to the employer. What are the job requirements and how can you show you meet them? What about the preferred qualifications? Be ready to have concrete examples to back up your accomplishments.

Extroverts are known for their verbal communication skills, but written communication is also significant in the job search. Bring along a printed copy of your resume and references to the interview. Take a notepad and writing instrument to jot down notes during your interview. Sit down after the interview to review your thoughts then carefully craft a focused follow-up note to your interviewer.

#### **INTROVERTS**

Strengths: Listening, trustworthy, analytical, creative, reflective, intuitive, prepared, problem-solver, thoughtful

Challenges: Shy, private, solitary, quiet, reserved, follower, sensitive. Introverts can put too much focus on their perceived lack of verbal communication skills, that they're already predicting interview failure. >>>

Interviews can be scary for introverts, but everyone is anxious before an interview, whether you're an introvert or extrovert!

Suggestions: When AgCareers.com polled HR professionals and hiring managers, they said that one of the best ways for candidates to stand out was by researching the organization beforehand. Preparedness is an introvert super power—use this to succeed! It will increase your comfort and up your performance.

Find out all you can about the company via their website, social media, and news. Search for information about the people who will interview you, so you understand their role in the organization. Locate this information on the company site or on professional networking sites such as LinkedIn.

Do you know anyone that works for or has interned at the company? Talk to them about the culture and ask for any tidbits of information they could share that might be useful during the interview.

Practice answers to basic interview questions, instilling your personality and experiences so you don't sound like you're copying canned responses you've read online. Written communication is typically a strength for introverts, so practice by writing out your responses (but never read your written responses in an interview!). Additionally, use your written communication skills and thoughtfulness after the interview to send a thank you note or email. Lean on your reflective nature to highlight what you found most interesting and exciting throughout the interview process. Introverts' creative skills can also stand out in interview follow-up to make employers remember you.

If you find the interview interaction exhausting, prepare for that too! Refrain from scheduling an interview squeezed between a 9 am class and an 11 am off-campus work shift. On the day of the interview, take some time off before and/or after to organize your thoughts, and recharge yourself for social activity. You'll be charged up for the interview and reassured knowing you've scheduled much-needed quiet time for afterwards.

#### **AN INTERVIEW QUESTION**

After all our discussions about the positives and negatives of introversion and extroversion, are you ready to discuss where you land? A common interview question is "Are you an introvert or an extrovert, and why?" Maybe you've been doing your best during the interview to hide your shyness and highlight your listening skills, or

BE READY TO COMMUNICATE YOUR STRENGTHS THAT OUTWEIGH ANY WEAKNESSES

YOU MAY HAVE.

emphasizing your sociable personality without being overbearing. No matter where you land on the continuum, its reassuring to know that a healthy work team is a balanced mix of both. Imagine team meeting productivity with a room full of exclusively extroverts, or all introverts—nothing would get done in either meeting!

When AgCareers.com surveyed ag employers about what they are looking for in students and new graduates, team work was the skill set ranked highest.

Some may assume extroverts are naturally team players, but introverts aren't averse to team work either.

Extroverts could discuss their desire to work in a large team, or lead, while introverts may emphasize their small

group, or one-on-one teamwork and problem-solving qualities. There are strengths and weaknesses for both extroverts and introverts. For all, practice is an essential element of your interview success. Practice your interview skills with a friend or a trusted advisor. Ask them for honest feedback: are you saying too much, or too little? Cheerful or reserved? Vague or specific?

In summary, for interview success, prepare, practice, recognize, and be ready to communicate your strengths that outweigh any weaknesses you may have, no matter where you fall on the chart. AG

#### **EMULATE ENERGY LEVEL**

Extroverts could be too energetic; introverts might be too reserved. A potential employer told my introverted friend post-interview that they didn't get the job because another candidate had more "energy and showed more excitement." Likewise, I've heard employers remark that candidates can be too bubbly, loud, and "in-your-face." You might be thinking, I can't win!

The best advice is to emulate your interviewer. Employers have their own personal ranking on the introversion-extroversion scale. Take a few minutes to watch, listen, and measure your interviewer's energy level including body language and volume. Do they seem more outgoing? Up your energy level. More reserved? Take it down a notch. Mind-reading is not a requirement. You probably act differently around your friends than you do with your grandparents, so you're already familiar with adjusting your actions to match the situation and the audience. You've got this!



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Lidia, Research Lab Assistant: B.S. Veterinary & Bio-medical Sciences Pennsylvania State University

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# WHATIWISH, i hand he known

Faucon

Benoit

by Kristine Penning, AgCareers.com Creative Marketing Specialist

THERE'S NO DOUBT that there are things you'll look back on in your life and wish you would have done differently. This is certainly true of your career journey. While there is definitely value in learning lessons on your own as you experience the working world for the first time, it also doesn't hurt to gain perspective and advice from those who have started their journeys before you.

We reached out to two young professionals with a few years in the working world under their belts to find out what they would and wouldn't change if they could go back. Kristen Faucon works as an Issues Manager with GROWMARK, Inc. in Bloomington, Illinois, having graduated from Illinois State University in 2015. In her role, she communicates with policy makers and regulators on behalf of GROWMARK. Lauren Benoit, a native of Ontario and a graduate of the University of Guelph, is now employed as a Field Biologist with BASF in Tamworth, Australia.

If you could go back to your senior year of college and give yourself a piece of advice about working in "the real world", what would you tell yourself?

**KRISTEN:** Don't feel like you must have your career path all figured out, because it will change. Opportunities will come your way at unexpected times and the experiences you have will change your perspective.

**LAUREN:** Look for opportunities that might seem a little outside of your comfort zone. This could be applying for a new position, learning a new skill, or moving somewhere unexpected for work. Although creating a habit of taking on new challenges, learning new skills, and being open to new ideas can be difficult, you'll see a benefit from it in the long run.

What do you think post-secondary students often get wrong about entering the workforce today?

KRISTEN: I think we often expect to be CEO tomorrow. We have our degree and we have done all this great work in college, so we should start closer to the top of the ladder (with a huge paycheck) and continue to rise quickly. I think we could all stand to be a little more humble. I'm not advocating for complacency, but rather being honest about the work it's going to take to prove yourself and rise to the top. You're essentially going from the top of the totem pole as a senior in college back to the very bottom in the workforce. That's a hard adjustment and one I'll admit I have struggled with.

**LAUREN:** The first job you get after graduation might be the start of a long and successful career in a specific part of the industry, or with a single company; or it might just be a stepping stone onto other opportunities as you learn more about what you are passionate about and where you would like your career to go. If

your first job isn't the dream job you were hoping for, that's alright. Embrace it for what it is and keep putting in your best effort. When the time is right and a new opportunity presents itself you'll be able to move on to something you're more passionate about.

What advice would you give to a newly graduated young professional about working with older generations?

KRISTEN: Like building any relationship, you have to find common interests and learn how that person communicates. Respect their experience and the knowledge they have and tap into it. There's so much you can learn, and they want to share that with you. You just have to ask. But don't get sucked into how things have always been done. You are going to bring a fresh perspective to a process or issue and that may be the right approach, but it's about implementing it in a respectful way.

LAUREN: Respect is reciprocal, and learning can be mutual. This doesn't just apply to the older generations but all your new co-workers and peers. Everyone brings a different skill set to the table. Working with someone from an older generation is a chance to gain the tips and tricks of the trade from someone who has been there. Likewise, as a young graduate you'll bring fresh perspective to the team. Don't be scared to voice your ideas or ask questions. >>>

Do you think your expectations met your reality about working in "the real world"? Why or why not?

KRISTEN: My internship experiences in college helped prepare me for the real world. I think I expected group work to go a lot better than it does in college. I had this wrong assumption that if everyone at the table was getting a paycheck to be there, that they would all equally contribute. Unfortunately, I am here to tell you that project teams at work can be just as bad as project teams in college. I have learned a lot about project management and leading teams where I am not the most senior individual but still have to command deliverables from those who are.

LAUREN: After finishing my MSc. I moved to Australia to begin working for BASF as a field biologist. I didn't really know what to expect. My new role has had its fair share of challenges, adapting to a new environment and cropping system on top of being away from friends and family. The role itself is very similar to work I did as an undergraduate student, though.

What are some things you wish you would have done to prepare for the career you are in now that you didn't do in college?

**KRISTEN:** This sounds silly, but I wish I would have taken golf lessons. So much networking occurs on the golf course and I feel like I miss out on those opportunities to build relationships. Of course, it's not too late to learn and it's a skill I plan to work on in the next year.

LAUREN: Looking back, I wish I had made better connections with some of my professors and taken the time to learn more about their work. They are

there to help you learn, but they're also a wealth of information and are often working on cutting-edge research. I wish I had taken the time to understand what they were studying while I was a student.

What are some lessons you've had to learn the hard way about working in "the real world"?

KRISTEN: I think the hardest lesson I have had to learn is work-life balance. You're not only new to this, but it is very easy to work long hours because you're young and wanting to prove yourself. However, being that hard on yourself

**66** YOU'RE ESSENTIALLY GOING FROM THE TOP OF THE TOTEM POLE AS A SENIOR IN COLLEGE **BACK TO THE VERY BOTTOM** IN THE WORKFORCE, THAT'S A HARD ADJUSTMENT. 99

mentally and physically will catch up with you. No one else can manage that for you and you must learn your own boundaries. If you are stressed and run down, you're not your best self at work and you won't have the energy for things that you love. Over time you will figure out what opportunities to embrace and which to turn down, as well as how to manage getting things done around those hours required at work.

**LAUREN:** Mental and physical health is important, and burnout is a very real thing. Slow down. Make time for yourself and find a way to de-stress. For me, this was my first semester of grad school, between taking on graduate level courses and meshing into a different social environment. I burned out. Fast. In

the end. I learned more about my limits and now have a better understanding of how to take care of myself when it feels like the pressure is being turned up. Now, I make sure to set aside some time every week or two to have a phone call and catch up with friends as well as maintaining a pretty regular weekly running routine to stay in shape and burn off any extra stress.

What is something you recommend new graduates do today to stand out in the working world?

KRISTEN: Go out of your way to learn more about the company you are working for, and don't be afraid to ask higher level managers. When I started my first job, I took the opportunity to seek out job shadow experiences with individuals from various departments. I would simply reach out and ask if I could have twenty minutes of their time to learn more about what they do. Those twenty minutes often turned into an hour or a day of experiences. One notable experience was riding with a vice president for a day of merger meetings few people get that kind of opportunity. I was able to learn a lot about the business and I got noticed because I was genuinely interested in learning and I wasn't afraid to ask.

**LAUREN:** Do your best, ask questions, and reach out to your network if you're looking for advice. People will see if you're driven to do a good job and putting in an honest effort to be the best version of yourself. Don't worry about bench-marking yourself against where you think you should be or where your friends are. If you're looking for advice don't hesitate to ask someone who is there already, most people are happy to offer their insight. AG



















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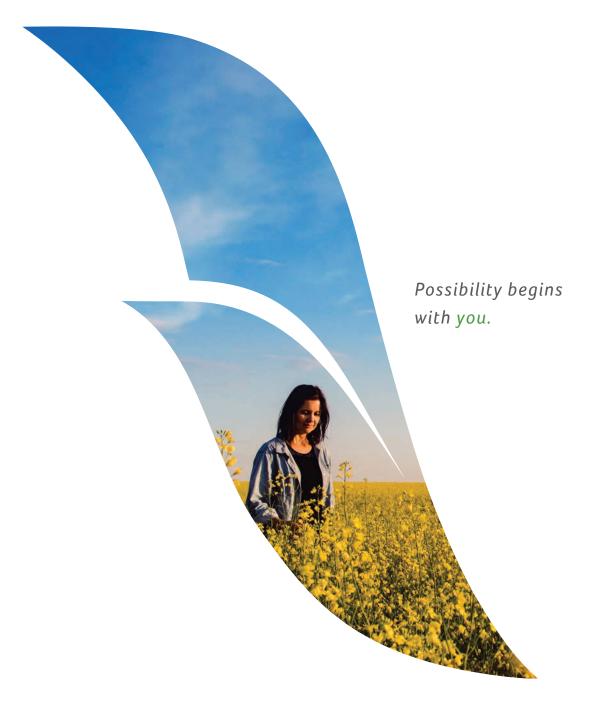
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# dealing with critical feedback

by Erika Osmundson, AgCareers.com Director of Marketing & Communications

YOU'VE JUST RECEIVED a piece of critical feedback and aren't sure how to move forward. Obviously hearing that you've done something wrong or displeasing to someone else is hard to handle (for most people). Some can let negative feedback roll right off their backs, but for those that can't, how do you make positive steps forward?

First, do you have a true and accurate understanding of what the feedback means? Critical feedback can come in heated discussions or moments of heightened emotion. Facts might not always be straight. We can tell ourselves stories in our heads to increase the magnitude.

Take a moment to reflect on the things that were shared. You may need to step away from the discussion for a bit,

but don't wait too long, or the situation can fester. Ask yourself if you fully understand what was discussed. If not, what are the points that you are unsure of and need more explanation? Ask questions. Have a candid conversation to clear up any misinformation. Most often, feedback is really about the result not the person. Identifying this, if it is the case, can help to tame personal emotion and reaction to critical feedback.

Once you know what the issue is, identify if and in what ways you can address the situation in the future. Create a game plan and follow through. If you are unsure if or how to make steps to correct the situation, brainstorm some ideas or alternate options. Then propose those back to the person that provided the feedback and ask for input.

Finally, reflect. What did you learn? How will you use that information to make changes next time? What did you learn in the feedback communication process? How will you implement what you've learned for the future?

Critical feedback that is constructive and for the betterment of the situation/business is one thing. Unconstructive feedback is another. Understand the difference. If feedback seems personally attacking or demeaning, you may need to consider your options. In extreme cases, consult with your HR team for advice.

Feedback should be a good thing, both positive and critical. It is what helps us grow. It helps us move beyond our norms and try new things. Feedback creates the change we need to drive business forward! AG

# tips for handling a poor intern manager

by Kristi Sproul, AgCareers.com Education & Marketing Specialist

MY BIGGEST HOPE is that you never have a reason to put the tips in this article to use! Ideally intern managers will be selected because of their competence, supervisory experience and ability to structure (and deliver) a meaningful intern program. The impact a manager has on an intern can either make or break the experience. Fortunately, 77% of respondents to our 2018 Internship Benchmark Survey, rated their supervisor as above average. However, 5% did not have the same experience and rated their supervisor as below average. If you find yourself in a similar boat how do you handle a poor manager?

Seek out other professional mentors in

the organization. Find opportunities to connect with other full-time employees that you could learn from. This may be in an official capacity through assigned project work, or you may invite them to lunch or coffee.

Don't let it affect your work. It's important that you still work hard and treat others with respect. Other leaders in the company will appreciate your commitment to your role.

Do not bad mouth your manager...even if you have plenty of reason to do so and even if everyone else is doing it. Maintain professionalism by taking the high road. The exception to this rule is if you or others have been verbally or

physically harassed, in which case talk to your Human Resources office immediately.

#### Find out what makes them tick.

This may take some time and keen observation, but analyze what your boss responds best to, what time of day they are most approachable, and even what their personal interests are. Utilize this knowledge when approaching them.

While a poor manager can make you feel like you didn't learn anything during your internship, it does in fact teach you a very valuable lesson. It teaches you how not to treat others or behave in the workplace, and your future coworkers will appreciate your perspective! AG



### WHAT TO DO AFTER THE INTERVIEW

by Tiffany Tomlin, AgCareers.com Marketing Intern

YOU MADE IT through the interview and are waiting to hear back from your potential employer. Sure, you may no longer be preparing for a face-to-face conversation, but work is not yet done. If your goal is to set yourself apart from others, here are some ways to stay on your potential employer's mind.

**DON'T PANIC:** The saying, "there's no use crying over spilled milk" absolutely applies here. Before proceeding, forget about everything you may have forgotten to say and give yourself some grace. The interview process can be very stressful, and you do not want to take any negative emotions into the next step. MAKE USEFUL NOTES: You may get the chance to bring up more key points later. To ensure you have valuable content for the next step in the post-interview plan, write down everything you thought went well while meeting with your potential employers, along with things to change if you get the opportunity to talk with them again. You can include these topics in a thank you note or mention them in a second interview.

**THANK YOU NOTE:** The most important task on your to-do list after the interview is to send a thank you note. If you're short on time, there is no need for a hand-written letter, but send a

professional, well-written email the same day as the interview to express gratitude to your potential employer. If done properly, this step will give the potential employer another look at your name and insight into your background.

FOLLOW-UP EMAIL: During the initial interview, you should have gotten an estimated time frame that you will be hearing back from them. If that period has come and gone, then it is time to write a follow-up email. The purpose of this email is to reinforce your interest in the job. AG





### SOCIAL MEDIA DO'S & DON'TS

by Kacey Toews, AgCareers.com Talent Solutions Sales Specialist









THERE IS NO DOUBT that social media plays a huge part in our everyday lives, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't have a sense of etiquette with how we present ourselves there. Remember: if you wouldn't want grandma to see it, you probably shouldn't post it! Not only do friends and family see your profile, but potential employers may take a look around as well. Here are a few do's and don'ts when it comes to your social media profiles and what can make or break you getting the job.

#### DO'S:

 Post positivity! If you post negative comments or opinions, this could be a turn off to a future employer.

- Google yourself, just to see what is out there. Its good to check just in case someone has tagged you in an embarrassing photo or post that you may not be aware of.
- Share interesting content that you are passionate about.
- Interact with others in a supportive and positive manner.
- Socialize with your peers. Sometimes friending a classmate or lab partner might result in networking opportunities down the road so keep vour connections close.

#### **DON'TS:**

• Upload or post anything you don't want everyone to see. If you have

second thoughts about posting something, just keep it offline.

- Trash talk. The beauty of social media is that everyone can express their own opinions on their chosen platform, so be respectful of others' opinions and if you don't like it, you can always unfollow or unfriend.
- Brag! Its nice to highlight accomplishments and proud moments, but make sure that's not the only type of posts you are making.
- Use foul language. Nobody likes a potty mouth, especially in the workplace.
- Assume that your profile is private. Nothing online is truly private! AG

### **5 QUICK TIPS TO BUILD**

## A GOOD REPUTATION AT WORK

by Kristine Penning, AgCareers.com Creative Marketing Specialist

WHEN YOU FIRST START a

new job or are just
beginning your career, if you're
anything like me, you'll want people to
like you and respect you right off the
bat. The key to earning a good reputation
quickly lies in working hard and
remaining humble. Here are my top
five recommendations to build a solid
reputation at work quickly.

#### Do something without being asked.

Take initiative and do something for someone else, or work ahead on a project or task that's upcoming. Putting in the work and the time, perhaps even ahead of time, to get something done not even (yet) assigned to you will impress quickly.

Try figuring it out on your own. While you shouldn't be afraid to ask questions (because you are learning and questions should be welcome), it's also important to try fending for yourself early on. If you encounter a problem or find yourself unsure in a situation at work, try using your available resources to solve it on your own. This, just like doing something without being prompted or asked to, also shows initiative and independence.

Practice patience, humility & kindness. These three are some of the most important traits you could ever possess. Everyone wants to work with someone who is kind, humble, and patient. Display these qualities by listening well, respecting others, taking ownership and apologizing for mistakes,

giving credit to others when due, smiling, and saying thank you.

Be an asset. With humility in mind, also don't be afraid to offer your opinion, ideas, or suggestions in places where welcome and where it could help or improve something. Show your coworkers and manager that you are a good hire and a valuable team member.

Welcome challenges and new experiences. You prove accountability when you are willing to take on or try something new. This is especially true if this task or experience is something new to your organization/business, or if it is a difficult or menial job. Growth occurs outside of your comfort zone.

Professional growth increases your value as an employee. AG

# why you should tell your non-ag friends ABOUT AG

by Bonnie Johnson, AgCareers.com Marketing Associate

**IF YOU'RE MAJORING** in agriculture, thank you! You recognize the importance our industry plays in food security, sustainable energy, and environmental quality around the world.

I mentioned "Agvocating" to someone outside the industry, and they asked, "Is that even a word?" Well, it's not officially in the dictionary, but we're working on that!

You may wonder why you should give away the secret of this vital industry? Why should you tell your non-ag friends about our important industry? After all, you don't want more competition vying for your dream job!

It's a job seekers' market, and there

is a real labor shortage in the ag and food industry. We need people with agriculture degrees and farm experience, but we also need diverse experiences and education. Various educational backgrounds are already experiencing success in our industry. When we look at applicants on AgCareers.com, 37% did not have an ag degree and 32% were not working in agriculture.

In the USDA report on Employment Opportunities for College Graduates in Food, Agriculture, Renewable Natural Resources, and the Environment 2015-2020, it's estimated there are only enough U.S. graduates in these fields to fill 61% of the jobs.

A quick search of AgCareers.com reveals the variety of positions available: Project Engineer, Research Chemist, Accountant, Public Relations Director, Software Developer, Logistics Coordinator, IT Administrator, and Digital Marketing Manager.

Employers may need to look beyond the college of agriculture to fill nearly 40% of openings. It's clear there is plenty of room to share the story about the breadth of careers available in agriculture and food with friends across campus, and in other colleges.

So, tell your friends, share facts (not hype) on social media, and let's Feed the World with Talent! AG

QUICK READS

AG & FOOD CAREER GUIDE AGTreers.com 35



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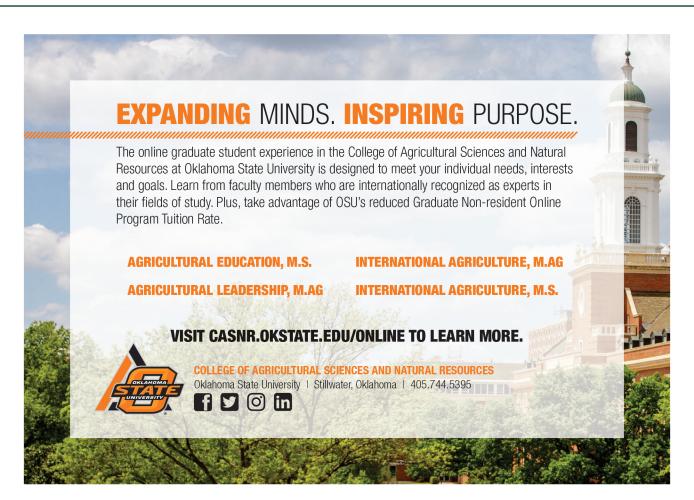
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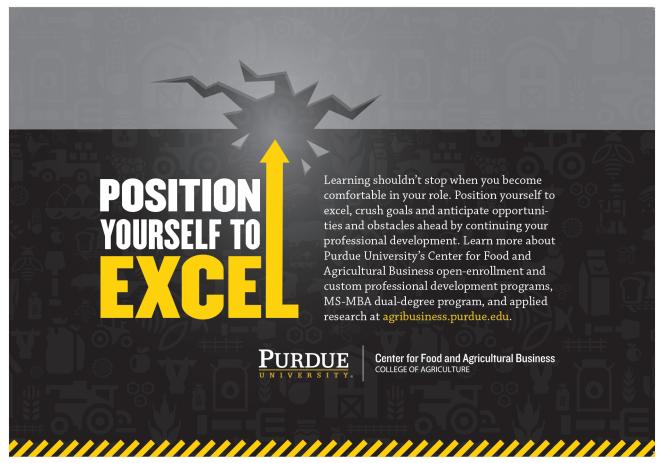
**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Time to rethink your career direction? The AgCareers.com University Partners program provides universities with graduate and distance education programs in agriculture the opportunity to reach out to students and professionals. Find out more about these programs: click on the University Partners icon on www.AgCareers.com. AG













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# HOW TO USE AGreers.com

Download the AgCareers.com Job Seeker Mobile App







#### SETUP AN ACCOUNT

- Click "Setup Your Profile" under the Job Seeker drop-down menu at the top of the page.
- Enter your contact information; uploading a resume and cover letter at this point is optional.
- Browse and apply for jobs or internships, update your profile, view saved jobs, view your application history, register for job alerts, and post your resume so employers can seek you.



#### APPLY TO A JOB

- Once you have searched for a job and viewed the description, click "Apply to This Position."
- Add your email address. If you create an account, you may streamline this process and record your application in your application history.
- Fill out the required fields. Attach an optional cover letter by clicking "Browse" or copy and paste into the text box.
- Attach your resume in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format by clicking "Browse." You may also select a resume from your account if logged in and if you have uploaded a resume.
- Click "Submit Application."
- Some employers may require applicants to complete the application process on their site. If this is the case, you will see a note in a red box and be redirected. Follow directions given on their site.
- You may view all the positions you have applied to in your "Application History."



#### POST A RESUME

- Login to your account. Select "Post Your Resume" from the main job seeker drop-down menu at the top of the homepage.
- Fill out the resume profile form on the new page. The fastest way to fill in the "Resume" box is to copy and paste your resume from a Word document.
- You also have the option to upload a .doc, .docx, or .pdf file by utilizing "Upload Resume File" below the resume box. Browse and select from your documents.
- Click "Process & Preview Resume." If you need to make changes, click the back button. Once satisfied, click "Save & Exit" at the bottom.
- You can update or add resumes any time by clicking on "Manage Resumes."

# 4 WAYS TO SEARCH



Conduct a simple search by typing keywords in the first search box at the top left of the homepage.



Search by location using the top box labeled "Job Location" or by using the interactive map on the homepage.



Search by industry type by selecting the industry from the drop-down menu in the top box labeled "Industry Type."



Conduct an advanced search by clicking on the "Advanced Search" option in the top right corner of the













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- Effective Communication Strategies for Job Seekers
- Tips for Developing Skills Employers Want

Access the Career Success Kit now at <a href="https://bit.ly/2KM13RL">https://bit.ly/2KM13RL</a>

The first 25 students to sign up will be eligible for a resume critique from AgCareers.com staff!

