CAREER SEARCH GUIDE
FROM YOUR FIRST YEAR THROUGH ALUMNI STATUS

Framingham State University
Career Services and Employer Relations

CAREER SERVICES AND EMPLOYER RELATIONS
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Phone: 508-626-4625
http://www.framingham.edu/the-fsu-difference/career-services/
Email: careerservices@framingham.edu
Monday and Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
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How to find a career that fits you

If you are not sure what type of career you want, you are not alone. The process of finding the right career for you is worth the time and effort. (After all, you will be spending 40 hours a week or more doing it). Career satisfaction relies heavily on two factors: (1) understanding yourself and (2) learning about the jobs and careers that are available.

Step 1: Know yourself
Knowing yourself is the first step to discovering your natural career path. Here are areas to think about:

What are your VIPs?

Values: Factors other than the job itself that can play a role in workplace satisfaction (Travel? Indoor/outdoor work environment? Large salary? Short commute? Good benefits?)

Interests: What you like (Technology? Politics? Children? Art or Music?)


Aptitude & Skills: What you are good at (Organizing? Public speaking? Working with your hands?). What skills do you want to use?

Step 2: Learn about career options
There are countless career options. Many careers may be unfamiliar, but do not rule them out. (You may be an awesome fit for them)! Here are some ways to check out all the possibilities:

Research: Quick internet searches and websites such as MassCIS.intocareers.org and the Occupational Outlook Handbook (www.bls.gov/ooh) are great places to start.

Professional associations: Every career has its own association, and they are a great resource for info. Do a quick Google search on the career you are considering and add "professional association" to find out more information.

Network, network, network: Attend a Career Services and Employer Relations networking event, join LinkedIn (a professional social networking site), and talk to professors, family members, and friends about their professions.

Informational interviews: Interview professionals about their jobs (See additional details later in this guide).

Job shadowing: Spend a few hours or a day with a professional at their job.

Internships: Take a test drive for your desired career! (See additional details later in this guide).

Need help?
Set up an appointment with one of our career counselors to find out more about the best career assessments, reviewing results, researching careers and planning a course of action.

Your time at Framingham State will be over before you know it, and you will be entering the world of work. We are here to help with this process!
Job Search Process

Explore Career Options

Focus

Self-exploration

Online job/internship database

Register on RamTrack

Develop Network

Make connections throughout

Build Resume & Cover Letter

Research companies; tailor documents to each position

Apply To positions

Office: MC 412

Prepare for Interview

Negotiate Offer

https://www.framingham.edu/the-fsu-difference/career-services/index
Two main ways to find a job or internship:
Reactive and proactive (both are needed)

**Reactive – online postings**

80% of jobs are found through networking
(National Association of Colleges and Employers)

**Proactive – networking**

**Ramtrack**
Step 1. Register for Ramtrack
This includes postings by employers for Framingham State students and alumni for full-time, part-time, internships, and work study positions. It is free for students and alumni to use and free for employers to post.

Free registration (takes only a few minutes)

To access:
Go to http://www.framingham.edu/career-services/
Click on Ramtrack on the right-hand side.

Step 2. Utilize additional job posting sites
We recommend these sites because they pull from many listings already present:
www.indeed.com
www.simplyhired.com
(can filter by years of experience in advanced search)

Step 3. Create LinkedIn Account and use LinkedIn job board
www.linkedin.com
LinkedIn is a main site where recruiters look for candidates. Develop a strong profile by using a professional picture, descriptions of positions and joining groups that match your interests.

**Informational Interviews:**
Seek Advice, Information, and Referrals (AIR)
Learn more about career options by interviewing people about their work and career path. Do not ask for a job, but seek out advice, information, and referrals to additional contacts. Many people feel nervous about this process, but remember that people love to talk about what they do!

**Step 1: Think about what you want to know**
Potential questions to ask in an informational interview: (remember there are many other areas to cover)
· Please tell me more about your job/career tasks.
· What did you major in? How did your major help (or not help) you get your first and/or current job?
· How did you get to your current position? (What other jobs did you have before this one?)
· What is a “typical” day like? What do you like and dislike?

**Step 2: Reach out to your network and ask them questions (can be referrals from friends, family members, faculty)**
· Start with “safe” contacts such as referrals from your parents, friends and relatives, then move on to other people in your network or contact list.
· Make it clear that you are a student or alumni from Framingham State and are exploring career options. You would like to speak with them for 20-30 minutes about what they do. You could buy them a cup of coffee as a way of showing thanks.
· Try to make the conversation an actual conversation. The questions in Step 1 are meant to help get things started. Take time to LISTEN to the answers and ask whatever follow-up questions come naturally.

**Step 3: Reflect and be thankful**
· Take the time to write down what you learned from each person.
· What sounded interesting to you? What stood out?
· Always remember to thank the people you spoke with by writing a nice note or email (Also do this for your parents and relatives. They will be impressed and truly appreciate your effort).

In addition to informational interviews, be sure to join LinkedIn to build and maintain your professional network. Also attend career fairs and events. Prepare by developing a 30-second introduction (see next page for details) and researching companies beforehand.
How to develop your 30-second introduction (also known as an Elevator Pitch)

When and why do you need one?
- To answer the interview question “Tell me a little bit about yourself.”
- While networking at social situations when someone asks “What’s your background?”
- When speaking with employers on campus so they can get to know you and your goals.
- Helps make you unique to a potential employer and stand out for employment.

What is it?
A brief statement that usually contains the following:
- Degree (your major, the type of degree, anticipated graduation date)
- Experience (relevant volunteer, paid, on campus or off)
- Goals (type of position you are seeking and why)

How to prepare one (These are only suggestions, and be sure to make this your own).
- Hello my name is _______.
- I am a ________ at Framingham State University studying __________ with an anticipated graduation date of _________.
- I have gained useful knowledge of ______ while learning __________.
- Along with my education, I have worked at ____________ where I gained valuable experience doing ___________ and observing ____________.
- I am particularly proud about ________.
- My current hope is to _______ and I have a long term goal of _________.
- PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE until you become comfortable with it. The best introductions come across smoothly and naturally.

Example introduction

Hello, my name is Jonathan Student, and I am a senior at Framingham State University majoring in Criminology with a minor in Spanish. My ability to speak Spanish and my internship in the criminal justice system makes me a good candidate to work with a variety of populations. Recently, I interned at the Framingham Police Department where I observed criminal processes first hand. I am currently seeking a position in either the prison system or with a law enforcement agency.
Resume writing introduction

Purpose of a professional resume
Your resume is an introduction to a potential employer. More often than not, employers will initially scan your resume and make an assessment quickly, often in 6 to 30 seconds. Your resume should create an interest in meeting you to learn more about your skills and experiences. The goal of your resume is to get an interview. Keep in mind that the resume you used for your college applications is different than a professional resume, and your performance during the interview lands you a job offer.

A professional resume IS...
- …a marketing tool that distinguishes you from the competition by highlighting your major accomplishments and related experiences.
- …a way to emphasize your contributions and impact to previous organizations and show how you match the employer’s needs.
- …one-page in general (not a list of everything you have ever done). Those with many years of experience may have a two-page resume.
- …specific and targeted to a particular opportunity.
- …different than a CV (or curriculum vitae). A CV is a longer document used most frequently by those seeking a faculty position at a university or an advanced research position.

Before you begin writing, perform a comprehensive self-inventory:
- Make a list of experiences, activities, and volunteer work. Note the skills and accomplishments you want to highlight for each.
- Write as many details as possible about all of your experiences. (Do not worry about length initially).

Self-inventory starter worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Experience (Can be an activity, employment, volunteer work, leadership position)</th>
<th>Contribution, accomplishment, skill you want to highlight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

Stop by the Career Services and Employer Relations Office for help
While the information in these pages will get you started in creating your resume, we are available to critique your resume, answer questions, or provide additional information. Developing a resume can take time and a number of drafts. This is a skill that you will need throughout your career, so it is well worth the effort.
Develop and write accomplishment statements

Effective bullet accomplishment statements demonstrate your key skills, talents and capabilities with measurable, concrete examples. These statements give specific examples of tasks you completed and the contribution or benefit of your efforts to an organization. The diagram below will help you develop these statements.

**ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENT**

**What you did**

- Provided customer service and sales support to 15 customers per day to increase repeat customers

**Why you did it** (Purpose or Result)

- to increase repeat customers

---

**Example contribution, accomplishment statements (do not copy, but use as a guide)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Name</th>
<th>What you did (Your contribution)</th>
<th>Why you did it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nordstrom, Sales Associate</td>
<td>Provided customer service and sales support to 15 customers per day</td>
<td>to increase repeat customers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*How this would look on a resume:*

**Experience**

Nordstrom; Natick, MA

*Sales Associate*

- Provided customer service and sales support to 15 customers per day to increase repeat customers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Name</th>
<th>What you did</th>
<th>Why you did it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Framingham State University, Library Assistant</td>
<td>Implemented and organized a filing system of over 1,000 books in Excel</td>
<td>which enabled students to locate materials more efficiently</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*How this would look on a resume:*

**Experience**

Framingham State University; Framingham, MA

*Library Assistant*

- Implemented and organized a filing system of over 1,000 books in Excel, which enabled students to locate materials more efficiently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Name</th>
<th>What you did</th>
<th>Why you did it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CVS, Manager</td>
<td>Opened and closed the store through restocking, taking inventory, and cleaning</td>
<td>to keep the store up to corporate standards and better the customers’ overall experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*How this would look on a resume:*

**Experience**

CVS; Boston, MA

*Manager*

- Opened and closed the store through restocking, taking inventory, and cleaning to keep the store up to corporate standards and better the customers’ overall experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Name</th>
<th>What you did</th>
<th>Why you did it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Metrowest, Social Media Intern</td>
<td>Constructed corporate site using HTML and Dreamweaver</td>
<td>resulting in more than 300 views per week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*How this would look on a resume:*

**Experience**

Leadership Metrowest; Framingham, MA

- Constructed corporate site using HTML and Dreamweaver resulting in more than 300 views per week
Develop and write accomplishment statements (Continued)

In developing these statements, think about times when you have made a contribution. Ask yourself “When have I ……….? 

- Provided unique, helpful, and/or informative customer service?
- Trained, taught, or educated individuals or groups?
- Directed and/or managed people?
- Improved a process?
- Achieved more with fewer resources?
- Saved money/reduced costs?
- Improved productivity or operations?
- Saved time?
- Increased sales?
- Took initiative and solved a problem?
- Did something newsworthy or noteworthy?
- Created an original report, paper or document?
- Created or designed a new, process, program, procedure or product?
- Created and implemented a new procedure?

Quantify your statements whenever possible by using numbers, dollar amounts, percentages, etc.

Incorporate numbers, data, facts, percentages and figures that create an impact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A long report</td>
<td>50-page status report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed staff</td>
<td>Managed four-person staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised money</td>
<td>Raised more than $500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many students</td>
<td>Up to 25 students per class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Be aware that recruiters will likely read the first one or two accomplishments under each job (even though all are important). Therefore, order the bullets to reflect the skills that the employer finds most pertinent and not necessarily those most important in the old job or those that consumed the greatest amount of time.
Resume writing checklist for format and content

**General:**
Resume samples are included later in this guide. While these are guidelines, they are also supported by overall feedback from employers.

- If you are interviewing with a company that prefers, or even requires, that resumes be submitted in a specific format, then tailor your resume accordingly.
- If you plan to pursue opportunities in different fields, you should have more than one version of your resume. Each version should emphasize the skill set that you offer a prospective employer in that specific field.
- Include your name and the position in the resume file name.
  (Example: Bob Smith – Event Coordinator.doc)
- Avoid using tables. (Formatting can be altered when submitting electronically to an employer; tables are also difficult to edit). To ensure correct formatting, submit files as PDF.
- Never use Word resume templates. They are very hard to modify and are overused.

**Effective use of space: Is it easy to read and scan?**
- We recommend a one-page resume in general. (Employers only spend 5-30 seconds during an initial scan of your resume). Those with many years of experience may have a two-page resume. (Some industries and fields – such as teaching – may have more flexibility with resume length, but the overall norm is to have a one-page resume).
- Left, right, top and bottom margins should be no less than 0.5 inches. Smaller margins may result in your resume being cut off when printed by a prospective employer. At a maximum, margins should be no wider than one inch.
- Each line on your resume is important. Using a 0.5 inch margin on all sides can create a few more lines for content. Also, if a line includes only a few words, it could be reworded to create space.
- It is recommended that you use a traditional, easy-to-read font, such as Times New Roman or Arial.
- Your name can be larger than the other content (14 or 16 point). Use the same font type and font size for the rest of your resume (other than your name), preferably 11 or 12 point, but never smaller than 10.

**Resume sections:**
- Avoid sections such as Objective Statement, Qualifications or References Available upon Request. Information from your Objective or Qualifications can be addressed in your cover letter. References should be included as a separate document.
- Include headings that describe your most related experiences. In general, we recommend having education as the first heading. The order of the following headings should depend on your most relevant experiences, which can be from internships, leadership and club involvement, volunteerism, coursework or projects, or part-time/full-time employment, class projects, papers, and/or presentations.
- Resume section headings should be distinct and easy to read by use of bold, italics, capital letters and/or underlining. (Each heading should be consistent in formatting).
- Heading sections can be: education (can include a subheading with awards or licensure), experience, leadership, activities and skills (usually computer and/or language). See the samples later in this guide for examples.

**Content:**
- Avoid first person pronouns (I, me, my) when describing experience and achievements.
- Start bullet points with strong and relevant action verbs to emphasize and draw attention to your skills in a creative way that will grab an employer’s attention (see examples later in this guide). Use a variety of action words, so the same word is not overly repeated.
- List experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent at the top).
- The best resumes are tailored to each position, so include the experiences and skills most related to the job listing and company.
John Holland  
100 State Street • Framingham, MA 01701 • 555-555-5555 • jholland@provider.com

**Education**

**Framingham State University**, Framingham, MA  
*Candidate for Bachelor of Science in Business Administration*  
*Expected May 2015*

**Massachusetts Bay Community College**, Wellesley, MA  
*Associate of Science in Business Administration*  
*May 2013*

**Experience**

**Framingham State University**, Framingham, MA  
*August 2012 - Present*

*Resident Assistant - Residence Life & Housing*

- Manage a college residence hall floor of 25 - 30 ethnically diverse undergraduate students to enhance the sense of community and interpersonal development.
- Run monthly floor meetings and visit residents’ rooms frequently to ensure students are kept updated on relevant information.
- Recipient of *RA of the Month* recognition for outstanding teamwork and leadership.
- Serve as a Student Desk Attendant (SDA) 4 hours per week, maintaining safety and security, signing in residents and guests, answering questions, and contacting Campus Police for emergencies.
- Enforce university and department policies to ensure a safe, orderly and enjoyable living environment.

**Old Navy**, Framingham, MA  
*August 2009 – Present*

*Sales Associate*

- Increase sales by assisting customers with product selection and offering additional merchandise.
- Exceed monthly goals regarding new credit card applications on a consistent basis.
- Organize store displays and stock merchandise promoting an appealing presentation.

**Framingham Parks and Recreation**, Framingham, MA  
*June 2008 – August 2009*

*Recreation Supervisor*

- Managed town pool serving 100 - 150 residents on daily basis.
- Supervised 4 - 6 lifeguards daily, increasing familiarity with operational procedures.
- Provided on-the-job training for more than 15 new staff in areas from lifeguarding to front desk service.

**Leadership Activities**

**Framingham State University**, Framingham, MA  
*Fall 2012 – Present*

- Member of NCAA Baseball Team
- Culture Club Treasurer

**Massachusetts Bay Community College**, Wellesley, MA  
*Spring 2011 – Spring 2013*

- Business Club Member
- Marketing Club Member

**Skills**

- Fluent in Spanish and English. Basic knowledge of French and Mandarin.
- Proficient in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Adobe Photoshop.
Isabel Briggs Myers  
100 State Street • Framingham, MA 01701  
555-555-5555 • ibmyers@provider.com

EDUCATION
Framingham State University, Framingham, MA  
May 2014

 Bachelor of Science in Biology, GPA: 3.75/4.0
Minor in Psychology

 Related Courses: Biochemistry, Abnormal Psychology, Genetics, Cellular and Molecular Biology
 Undergraduate Honors Thesis: The changing world of ethics in biological research.

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES AT FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY
Student Government Association  
August 2012 – May 2014
Assistant Treasurer and Senator
• Managed $300,000 budget for over 50 clubs and organizations with team of four.
• Reviewed, enforced, and recommended updates regarding college policies to monitor club expenditures.
• Increased “likes” on SGA Facebook page by 50%
• Represented students’ ideas and opinions to campus administrators and state legislators.
• Served as liaison between students and administrators to discuss concerns that arose.

Class of 2014  
May 2012 – May 2014
Treasurer
• Developed educational and recreational activities to meet students’ interests.
• Expanded attendance through various advertising and marketing techniques. Introduced an Open Mic Night, which raised $750.
• Achieved fundraising goal of $500+ for Senior Week trips.

March of Dimes Walk America  
June 2011 – June 2013
Team Captain
• Raised over $500 each year for premature infants with a team of five.

WORK EXPERIENCE
Stop & Shop, Needham, MA
Shift Supervisor  
November 2012 - present
• Lead future leaders mentor program to assist prospective new supervisors.
• Supervise courtesy booth and 10-12 front-end employees daily, serving more than 400 guests per shift.

Customer Service Representative  
October 2009 – November 2012
• Served 140-150 guests to assist with concerns, exchanges, and purchases on a daily basis.
• Trained 4-5 new employees per month on registers and store procedures.
• Promoted to supervisor position based on customer feedback and performance reviews.

Follett Bookstore, Framingham, MA  
September 2010 – May 2014
Shift Manager/Sales Assistant
• Created merchandise displays to maintain overall store appearance.
• Assisted customers with concerns, transactions, and product selections to increase sales.
• Stocked store weekly to ensure accurate selection of products.

COMPUTER SKILLS
• Social Media savvy: Platforms include Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Tumblr, Instagram
• Proficient in Microsoft Office, familiar with Adobe Photoshop
Sunny Hansen  
508-555-5555 • suhansen@provider.com  
100 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06101

EDUCATION

Framingham State University  
*Bachelor of Science in Fashion Design and Retailing*  
Framingham, MA  
G.P.A. 3.43/4.00 Dean’s List (4 Semesters)  
May 2014

Lorenzo de’ Medici  
*Fashion Design Study Abroad Program*  
Florence, Italy  
Spring 2013

Courses included:
- History of Italian Fashion, Fashion Consumer Behavior, Collection Development, Luxury Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**The Rugged Bear (Corporate Office)**  
*Assistant Fashion Buyer - Children’s Retail*  
Norwood, MA  
May 2014 - Present

- Establish new client and vendor relationships with supervisor, increasing range of industries served
- Develop store relationships and distribute product information to all store sections
- Manage gross margin, OTB, markdown and pricing strategies for increased reporting mechanisms
- Analyze trends and participate in competitive research to meet the on-going customer needs and wants
- Arrange order sheets with senior fashion buyer for product, size, UPC code and discount
- Purchase re-orders, accessories and quality clothes with buying team for RB customer
- Compare more than 10 style-selling reports to previous seasons

**Collective Brands Performance + Lifestyle Group (Stride Rite)**  
*Product Development/Retail Merchandising Intern - Children’s Group*  
Lexington, MA  
July 2013 - April 2013

- Organized and maintained more than 10 brand shoe samples to enhance store look
- Catalogued & developed ideas for Spring and Fall 2010-2011 seasons
- Categorized all first-case shoe samples with corresponding confirmation samples
- Completed 8 Monday morning Style Selling reports for regional manager to use during inventory
- Compiled buy sheets for accurate product, size & historical data
- Executed promotional events and pricing uploads resulting in 20% increase in sales

**Aardvark Shoes (formerly Reptile Apparel)**  
*Sales Associate – Retail*  
Natick, MA  
May 2010-June 2012

- Provided excellent customer service while completing cash and credit transactions
- Organized visual merchandise with manager to maintain floor sets and store displays
- Audited merchandise and analyzed inventory with more than 400 items to assist supervisor

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Big Brothers Big Sisters**  
*Mentor*  
Framingham, MA  
May 2010 - present

- Mentor two students, ages 9 and 12, through recreational and educational activities to increase social and educational adaptability

PROFESSIONAL & COMPUTER SKILLS

- Fashion Design Sketching & CS4 Adobe Illustrator
- Clothing Construction and Pattern Draping
- JDA & Retail Ideas Software
- Kleigerwiess & Cognos selling reports
**Resume action words**

Use to vary the start of your accomplishment statements. An online thesaurus is also helpful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Administrative</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Creative</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Technical</th>
<th>Research/Analytical</th>
<th>Plan/Organize</th>
<th>Help/Teach</th>
<th>Administration</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>accelerated</td>
<td>arranged</td>
<td>addressed</td>
<td>authored</td>
<td>allocated</td>
<td>adapted</td>
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<td>invented</td>
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**Lead/Manage**
- acquired
- administered
- approved
- assigned
- chaired
- contracted
- controlled
- decided
- delegated
- directed
- enlisted
- governed
- handled
- initiated
- instilled
- managed
- motivated
- recruited
- retained
- reviewed
- selected

**Financial**
- allocated
- analyzed
- appraised
- audited
- balanced
- budgeted
- calculated
- compiled
- computed
- controlled
- delegated
- determined
- designed
- executed
- expanded
- expected
- expressed
- executed
- arranged
- executed
- addressed
- arbitrated
- articulated
- briefed
- communicated
- conducted
- contacted
- conveyed
- corresponded
- delivered
- demonstrated
- edited
- entertained
- interviewed
- informed
- lectured
- mediated
- negotiated
- persuaded
- presented
- promoted
- proposed
- publicized
- reported
- represented
- responded
- suggested
- translated
- wrote

**Technical**
- adapted
- adjusted
- applied
- built
- computed
- constructed
- designed
- diagnosed
- engineered
- experimented
- maintained
- modified
- operated
- prescribed
- programmed
- proved
- reinforced
- repaired
- resolved
- restored
- solved
- specified
- systematized
- tested

**Research/Analytical**
- assessed
- compared
- critiqued
- defined
- derived
- detected
- determined
- discovered
- evaluated
- examined
- explored
- found
- inspected
- interpreted
- investigated
- located
- measured
- observed
- rated
- recommended
- reviewed
- searched
- studied
- surveyed
Resume writing frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Keep in mind that the answers to these questions are somewhat generalized. If you have a specific issue or question, it is recommended that you schedule an appointment with a career counselor to discuss your individual concerns.

**Should I include my high school education on my resume?**
We do not recommend including high school education on your resume. Activities, leadership roles, and employment in high school have a longer shelf life for inclusion on your resume. First-year students and sophomores may include high school activities or leadership positions. For current college students, part-time employment during high school is also acceptable to include on your resume.

**Should I have two separate resumes if I am interested in two career paths?**
If the two career paths are distinctly different fields and your job search is in two separate areas with little cross over, it may be in your best interest to craft two resumes with each resume emphasizing the experience and/or academic work that you have in each of the two career paths or industries.

**Do employers care if I have a job during the school year that is unrelated to the career I am pursuing?**
Employers are interested in information that sets you apart from others and shows preparation for the workplace. If you are able to maintain a strong GPA and participate in a number of activities as well as work 20 hours a week, you send a strong message to a prospective employer that you can manage your time effectively, multi-task and have good time management skills. Employers also want to know that you have taken initiative and have developed transferable skills, such as leadership, communication skills, problem solving, conflict management, and a good work ethic.

While these may not be specific technical skills required for the job, they are transferable skills that you will take into any workplace at any time. Regardless of the type of position, it is important that you consider what you have learned in the role and how you will effectively communicate your skills, knowledge and contributions in your resume.

**Can I list unpaid jobs or volunteer experience on my resume?**
Absolutely. You should incorporate recent unpaid experiences into your resume if they relate to the desired skill set.

**Should I include courses and course work on my resume?**
You can and should list courses taken and projects completed especially when relevant and you have little actual experience related to the job you are seeking. Courses taken can demonstrate an academic foundation in a particular industry and course work can show that you have performed a particular skill or activity.
When gathering references, keep these tips in mind:

- Never list references on your resume – provide names when requested.
- Always obtain permission to include references and avoid relatives.
- Select references wisely – you want only positive references.
- Thank your references with a card and/or e-mail.

Example of a references page
(Separate from resume)

John Holland
100 State Street • Framingham, MA 01701 • 555-555-5555 • jholland@provider.com

References
Sarah Smith
Former Supervisor
Team Lead, H & R Block
123 Main St.
Boston, MA  02130
555-555-5555
ssmith@provider.com

(then list the rest of your references as above)
Cover letter overview

Purpose of a cover letter
- To show how you can help the company or organization (NOT what you hope to learn from the experience).
- To show your match with skills required in the position announcement.
- Serves as a writing sample. Should be free from spelling and grammatical mistakes.

How does a cover letter look? (Examples included in this guide).
- Use a professional font that matches your resume, such as Times New Roman or Arial. Avoid script fonts.
- No longer than 3 or 4 paragraphs and no more than 1 page.
- Single spaced and skip a line between each paragraph.
(Keep a record of all cover letters so you can refer to them when following up or interviewing).

Address the cover letter to a specific person (hiring manager or human resources contact)

Two phrases that should NOT appear on your Cover Letter include:
- To Whom It May Concern
- Dear Sir or Madame

You should make every effort to determine a real person to whom you address your cover letter.

Here is how:
- Search the organization’s directory for employees within Human Resources and/or with the hiring department.
- Use LinkedIn, Google, Twitter and Facebook to locate the organization’s employees to see if an HR or department manager can be found.
- Ask Career Services and Employer Relations! We have contact information for a variety of employers.

Cover letter structure (See examples on next pages as well)

**Paragraph one:**
Where did you find the job (specify the position)? (from Ramtrack, through networking (mention contact), at a job fair, etc.)

Why does the job appeal to you?
(1) Something about you that matches the company and its mission
(2) Something particular about the company

**Paragraph two:**
Why they should hire you. How you match the position requirements.
Can be: Experience, education, leadership or activities

**Paragraph three:**
Arrange for further contact
(1) Thank employer for his/her time and consideration
(2) Provide contact information and interest in meeting
100 State Street
Framingham, MA 01701

August 27, 2013

Mr. Jim Gaffigan
Recruiter
Department of Youth Services
Sharp Building, P.O. Box 1380
Westborough, MA 01581

Dear Mr. Gaffigan:

I am writing to apply for the Youth Services Coordinator opportunity, which I found on Ramtrack, Framingham State University’s job posting website. Working with teens from diverse backgrounds is a passion of mine. My experiences and values match your company’s mission statement, which stresses equal treatment and hope. I have outlined my fit with this position below, including concepts learned in related experience and courses.

My internship with at-risk youth at the YMCA in Framingham allowed me to put my education into practice and solidified my desire to help teens grow and become productive individuals. In addition, being a Resident Assistant during my junior year at FSU helped me develop strong communication, listening and advising skills. This provides me with the tools to be a capable Youth Services Coordinator and to make a meaningful contribution to your organization. In addition, as a Framingham State University senior majoring in psychology, I have taken a rigorous course load studying theories and principles of human behavior. Many of my classes have involved detailed written presentations. This experience has prepared me to assess situations that are presented with clients at the YMCA.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss my experiences and your position in further detail. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at wthomas@provider.com or (123) 456-7810.

Sincerely,

Wendy Thomas
100 State Street  
Framingham, MA 01701  
October 13, 20XX  

Ms. Samantha Jones  
Recruiter  
Department of Youth Services  
Sharp Building, P.O. Box 1380  
Westborough, MA 01581  

Dear Ms. Jones:  

“Helping people and promoting understanding.” These words stood out to me from Peace Corps recruiter Betsy Smith at the Framingham State University information session on October 16. It is this reason that I wish to be considered for the Peace Corps, which I saw listed with the Framingham State University Career Center. My experience in human services has prepared me to serve in this vital role for an organization where there is passion to help others.

Assisting others has been a theme throughout my work experience and club involvement at Framingham State. During the past two years, I have been the president of the Culture Club. Since our inception, we have grown to more than 20 members and have provided discussions about the impact of culture. Building club membership required a keen awareness of student needs and interests. Through our events, students were able to promote the understanding of various cultures and lifestyles.

Serving others has also been a passion of mine since I volunteered at a soup kitchen while growing up. Since that time, I have served as Peer Mentor with my school and as a Big Brother with Big Brothers/Big Sisters. I have also had the opportunity to serve others during two Alternative Spring Break Trips, one where I led our team to the Smoky Mountains in Tennessee.

Thank you for considering me for the Peace Corps. It would be an honor to join the more than 210,000 volunteers and trainees that have served in this program. Please feel free to contact me at (617) 555-5555 or jkennedy@provider.com, and I look forward to the opportunity to meet face-to-face.

Cordially,  
John Kennedy
Interviews: Prepare for these frequently asked questions

Approaches to common questions in an interview

Tell me about yourself. Some suggested topics:
- Your year and major. For alumni: a summary of your experience.
- Highlights of yourself, experiences you are currently involved in or have done in the past that are relevant to the position.
- Interest in being interviewed and why you are pursuing the opportunity. How you can add value to the position.

Why are you interested in this particular field/industry? Be specific with a focus on how you can benefit them.

Why are you interested in the organization?
- Be specific to show you did research on the particular company (and not just the industry in general).
- Set Google alerts, read company press releases and utilize resources such as asking classmates, alumni and professors to gain an insight into the organization.
- Match your research by personalizing it to why you want to work there.

What is your greatest strength?
- Choose something that is relevant to the position and provide an example.
- Tie it back to the position and why this strength matches the position.

What is a weakness of yours?
- Choose something that is an area of professional development and growth.
- No one is perfect. Convey self-awareness and show how you are specifically working to improve this area.

Behavior-based questions: Use the Situation-Task-Action-Result (STAR) approach (See following pages as well for strategies with these questions)

Sample behavior-based questions
- Tell me about a time when you had to make an important decision.
- Tell me about a time when you handled a difficult situation.
- Tell me about a time when you demonstrated leadership.
- Tell me about a time when you worked on a team. What was the team goal and your individual role on that team?
- Tell me about a time when you did something innovative/came up with a creative idea.

Closing questions
- Why should we hire you? Recap and highlight your fit with the position and skills you bring.
- Is there anything else about you that you would like to share? This is your opportunity to highlight something unique or share something you did not get a chance to emphasize.
- What questions do you have for me (about the position)? Always have 3-4 thoughtful questions to ask the interviewer at the end. (Do not ask questions about pay and benefits). Prepare several questions because some may be answered by the interviewer during the course of the interview. Question examples: How would you describe the department’s culture? What is your management style? What are the characteristics of successful interns or employees in this role?

How to effectively end the interview
- Ask the interviewer(s) for his/her business card, what the next steps in the hiring process will be, and reiterate that you are very interested in the position.
- E-mail a tailored, well-written thank you note within 24 hours of your interview. Reiterate what you bring to the position.

Mock interview service and interview preparation--Interview preparation and mock interviews can be scheduled with a Career Services and Employer Relations career counselor. The purpose of the mock interview is for you to practice and feel more comfortable about interviewing. Feel free to bring any questions and concerns.
Interviewing: Three main areas to prepare
Why you? Why them? Why now?

**Why you?**
- Know your skills, talents, interests and how those can help the organization.
- Be prepared with a mental list of what skills you have to offer.
- Know accomplishments you have made and goals you want to achieve.
- Create numerous examples using STAR format to address position requirements.

**Why them?**
- Research the organization and opportunity using the Career Services and Employer Relations office, organization website, news services, library, faculty and friends.
- Know at least three specific reasons why you want to work with this organization (can be its mission, values, service or other areas).

**Why now?**
- Show your fit with the organization.
- Show why this specific position fits with your career path.
- Help the employer connect why this position is of interest to your long-range plans and career.
What You Wish You’d Known Before Your JOB INTERVIEW

Common nonverbal mistakes made at a job interview
From a survey of 2000 bosses

- 21% Playing with hair or touching face
- 47% Having little or no knowledge of the company is the most common mistake job seekers make during interviews

In a survey of 2000 bosses claimed that they know within the first 90 seconds of an interview whether they will hire someone

- 33% The average length of an interview is approximately 40 minutes

Statistics show that when meeting new people the impact is:

- 67% From what we actually say
- 38% The quality of our voice, grammar and overall confidence
- 38% The way we dress, act and walk through the door

Clothes

- Bright colors are a turnoff
- 70% Employers claiming they don’t want applicants to be fashionable or trendy.
- 65% Of bosses said clothes could be the deciding factor between two similar candidates.

Infographic Author: Patrick Ritter from Classes and Careers
Interviewing: S-T-A-R method approach

*Use this format to prepare examples and highlights that match the position and answer behavior-based interview questions.*

| Company Name: ___________________ | Position: __________________________ |
| Example stories should be 1-2 minutes total |

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<thead>
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<th>S = Situation</th>
<th>T = Task</th>
<th>A = Action</th>
<th>R = Result</th>
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<tr>
<td>Create examples that address the job description</td>
<td>Set up <em>briefly</em> the stage/context of the situation</td>
<td>What did you decide to do?</td>
<td>What literally did you do?</td>
<td>What was the result of your actions?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Common pitfall: Talking too long about the situation</td>
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<td>Common pitfall: Be sure to report what you did specifically (not the organization or team)</td>
<td>Common pitfall: Forgetting to report the result</td>
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<td>Examples: Leadership</td>
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<td>A time when you went above and beyond the call of duty</td>
<td>I am extremely interested in working for an NFL team. In exploring this interest, I realized that students did not have a way to connect with others who were interested in working in sports.</td>
<td>A time when I showed leadership was when I decided to start a new club on campus to address this need.</td>
<td>I wrote a new student club constitution, completed required paperwork for a new student group, and led marketing efforts for recruitment and group officers. This included social media campaigns and outreach tables in our student union.</td>
<td>The group I founded is now recognized as a student organization on campus with more than 15 students joining the club initially. More than 25 have expressed interest for the next year, where we have company visits and panel discussions planned.</td>
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<td>Addressing a difficult customer or team member</td>
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Internships: Essential in trying a career path

What is an internship?

An internship is a learning experience that occurs outside the classroom and enables you to develop skills related to your academic or career interest. It is a test run to see if you like or do not like an industry or work area. It is also a tryout for the company to see how you perform. If your schedule allows, plan on doing more than one internship. You will get a chance to try different work settings and responsibilities, which can give you a better understanding of the type of work that will be right for you. Both experiences can be listed on your resume. The additional experience will help you stand out when you are looking for a job after graduation.

Internship overview:

- Hands-on professional training in your field of interest.
- Complement your career-related academic interests.
- Can be paid or non-paid.
- Can be arranged on your own or through your academic department.
- Can be for academic credit or non-credit.
- Are offered by a wide range of corporate, government and non-profit organizations.
- Are usually part-time and between 10 and 20 hours per week.
- Are available during the fall and spring school semesters, summer sessions and sometimes the winter intercession.
- Get your foot in the door for a try out, develop networking opportunities and potential job leads.

Do I get academic credit for an internship?

Many academic departments require and give credit to students in their majors to complete an internship. Some departments will grant academic credit even if an internship is not required. Talk to your academic department or advisor to find out about receiving credit (the office of Career Services and Employer Relations cannot grant academic credit of any kind).

Why should I take on an internship?

An internship can:

- Lead you to explore potential career fields, learn about different work environments, or spark interest in other occupations.
- Help you develop work-related skills and gain practical experience.
- Expose you to the latest technologies and advances in your chosen field.
- Help you build valuable contacts in your field; they can provide references and news of other job opportunities.
- Make finding employment easier after graduation because you will be an experienced candidate!

Do employers care about internships?

Many employers recognize the value that internships bring to the student and to their company. According to a recent Experiential Education Survey, which was conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), employers say:

- 82% consider their own internship programs as the most effective method for recruiting new college graduates for full-time, permanent positions.
- On average, they find nearly 92% of their new college hires from their own internship program.
- Career fairs were ranked as the most effective activity for hiring interns, while on-campus recruiting efforts were also very effective in finding candidates.
How do I prepare for an internship?

- First, assess your VIPs--Values, Interests, Personality and Skills. (See Page 3)
- Use this information to target professional settings you would like to investigate for internship opportunities.
- Research those industries and careers you have identified. If you are not sure what to do with this research, the staff at Career Services and Employer Relations can help you get started.
- Talk to people who have jobs in industries that interest you (this is called “informational interviewing”).

Internships usually require some type of formal application process. This could mean a resume, cover letter, personal interview, and occasionally, an essay, transcript, or letter(s) of recommendation. Be aware of application procedures and deadlines. Some deadlines can be months before the internship actually starts. This is especially true with government and highly competitive Internships.

Where do I look for internships?

- Professional associations state that 80% of all Internships are hidden; meaning they are NOT advertised.
- Information about specific internships for FSU students can be found online at our employment-listing site, RAMTRACK. Visit the Career Services and Employer Relations website, www.framingham.edu/careerservices, and click on RAMTRACK, or go to https://www.myinterface.com/framingham/student/.
- Professors can be a valuable source of information. Some departments have their own internship listings.
- Many companies list their own internship programs through their human resources departments. If you are interested in a particular organization, call them directly or visit their website to inquire about opportunities.

How do I find an internship?

GO FOR THE BEST FIT
What skills are you looking to learn? Larger companies might offer you their name recognition, but smaller companies will usually offer more experience because they have less people to do all of the work. Consider what will get you further in your quest for a job, and target the employers that offer the best fit.

FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF—DO RESEARCH
Use the Internet and employer directories to find the companies you want to approach. Check with relevant professional associations to see if they have listings as well. Call the employer and ask who coordinates internships; if no one does, ask to speak with the manager of the department. Sell yourself!

START EARLY
Although there are internships available throughout the semester, slots can fill up quickly, so apply early. If you are planning on doing a summer internship, contact the employer as early as possible during the spring semester because there may be a deadline for applying. Some of the more competitive summer opportunities have deadlines as early as January.

GET YOUR RESUME AND COVER LETTER READY
Put together a professional resume and cover letter. Even if you have limited work experience, we can help you create a resume!

NETWORK
Networking does not require you to know dozens of influential or powerful people—it is simply the process of contacting people who can help you in planning your career or looking for internships. Anyone from your everyday life—friends, family, even your hair stylist and mechanic—can directly or indirectly guide you to the right people. Talk with everyone about what you are doing and the type of position you are interested in. You can also bring up your search casually during conversations with family, friends and other connections. This will allow others to know about your search and possibly assist you.
How do I know if this is the right internship for me?

During the interview, ask questions that will help you decide if the internship seems like a good opportunity. You may want to consider these sample questions:

- What kind of supervision will I have? How often will I meet with my supervisor to review my work? What type of training is provided?
- What responsibilities and duties will I have? What tasks and projects will I be involved in?
- What are you (the employer) looking for in an intern? What would you like to see me contribute to your organization?
- I am very interested in working on/gaining experience with ______. Will I have the opportunity to do that here?
- Will I be assigned to one department, or will I work in various departments?
- What has been your experience with past interns? What made them successful?
- Will I be able to receive class credit? Is it paid or unpaid?
- Do you offer job opportunities to your interns? If so, what entry-level positions are available?

Advice from FSU alumni & students in their own words

How did you locate your internship?

- I called to ask if one was available in the line of work I was interested in
- I searched the websites of local media companies
- Through a friend
- At a job fair
- Through my current job
- Through my major’s department

What tips or advice would you give an FSU student who is entering the world of internships (considering whether to do one, looking for one, or starting one)?

→ Research, research, research! And do not be afraid to call and ask a particular company you are interested in (sometimes internships are not posted).

→ Use your professors! I was selected as one out of a pool of 70 applicants because my professor was well known where I interned. Professors often know of opportunities that may not be published. If you are starting an internship, my advice is this:

1. Be prepared to do grunt work as you will often be assigned the work professionals don’t want to do.
2. Keep an open mind and take advantage of all possible opportunities.
3. Begin to establish a professional network.
4. After your internship ends, keep in contact with the people you worked with—this will aid you in finding a job.
5. Ask your supervisor if you can use them as a reference.
6. Work hard. Not only is your professional reputation on the line, but you have an obligation to open doors for future Framingham State students.
I would encourage all students to do an internship. It really helped me to see what I wanted to do and avoid doing after graduation.

→ An internship, in my opinion, is the most important step in landing a job post-college. Whether or not a specific major requires an internship, all students should find internships or volunteer work in their desired fields. Do not rule out the "second-tier" or "smaller" organizations. I remember being closed-minded about companies. (I wanted to intern at a specific Boston-based communications firm and would not even consider a firm in Metro West). However, I have learned that while smaller companies may lack name recognition, they often offer the chance to learn more and acquire more skills.

→ Internships are the best way to apply what you are learning in college to a real-world environment. The internship gives you a sense of connection with what you are learning and how it fits into the grand scheme of things outside of school. My internship has done two things: it has enhanced my college classes because I learned skills at my internship that I can apply in class; and it also helped me see the connection between the "real-world" and the "world" of my classroom. But most of all, it helps my professional prospects after I graduate.

→ Find one doing what you like and do it well. Do above and beyond and make all the contacts you can.

→ An internship is your chance to “test-drive” what you want to do with your life. It is a good idea to “test-drive” more than one before choosing a career path. But completing two or three internships will not only help you decide - it will give you a competitive edge in today’s competitive job market.

What is the most important thing you learned from your internship?

→ I got a glimpse of a different area of my major than the one I was focusing on in my education. It opened my eyes to other ways I could implement my degree once I graduated.

→ Give your all to every task that you are given. Your attention to detail on small, mundane tasks will give your supervisor the confidence to give you more challenging tasks. Also, always ask if there is more that you can do or assist with. Lastly, one month before your internship concludes, talk with your supervisor about a written letter of recommendation and future references. It is important to have these details sewn up while you are still working and fresh in the employer's mind.

→ The most important thing I learned from my internship is the skills I acquired. I learned a lot of new things from putting my skills to use. I also learned how to cooperate with people who have been in that field for a long time. They can give you tips and tell you what the job is really like.

→ I learned how to manage myself in the real world. I treated my internship like a job and wound up getting hired by the same company.

→ I am ahead of those in my field who do not have an internship. You learn whether or not the particular aspect of your field you are interning in is the one you want to pursue in life.
Career changing: Utilizing transferable skills

Changing a career can be a scary and frustrating process. Using the approaches below and answering key questions can help with this process.

**Key Questions**
What have you liked about your past workplaces? What have you not liked?

What skills have I used that I want to continue using?

What tasks have I done where I lose track of time? (This often indicates interest in this skill).

**Strategies**
1. Write down a list of your skills. (Do not worry about the length of the list). What skills can be used from previous experiences that may help in your new career?

2. Conduct Informational Interviews: See recommendations earlier in this guide for this process.


**Resources if you are unsure of a career path or major**

**MassCIS**: This is a free resource which combines occupational, labor market, and educational information in order to help you further explore potential careers. You do not need a username and password. Simply enter Framingham for the city and 01701 for the zip code and press sign in.

Go to: [https://masscis.intocareers.org/](https://masscis.intocareers.org/)

**FOCUS-2®**: This is a self-paced career guidance tool that assists students and alumni in making decisions related to major and/or career choices through self-assessment and occupational exploration. This is a good starting point to explore career paths that match you. You will have the opportunity to explore your interests, skills, leisure activities, values and personality.

Go to: [https://www.focuscareer2.com/Portal/Login.cfm?SID=368](https://www.focuscareer2.com/Portal/Login.cfm?SID=368)
The Access ID is: rams

**What Can I do with a major in ____?** Learn about the typical career areas and the types of employers that hire people with each major, as well as strategies to make you a more marketable candidate. [http://whatcanidowiththismajor.com/major/majors/](http://whatcanidowiththismajor.com/major/majors/)

**Meet the Staff**
Dawn Ross, Director

Dawn is a proud veteran of the US Navy and joined the career services team in 2006 where she has provided 13 years of exceptional services to the Framingham State community in a variety of roles. Her career services philosophy is that the office is at the epicenter of the university’s mission to cultivate thoughtful and responsible citizens, to prepare students for a career, and to position students for successful lives.

Sarah Falber, Career Counselor

Sarah has been with Framingham State University since 2010. Having worked as an attorney for several years, she successfully underwent her own career self-evaluation process and made the professional change to Career Counseling. Her favorite part of her job is helping students with their resumes and advising them with their general job search strategies.

Wendy Davis, Office Manager

Wendy has over ten years’ experience in the communications industry and is thrilled to be part of the CSER team, as Office Manager. Formerly the Administrative Assistant for The Gatepost, (the FSU independent student run newspaper,) Wendy combines her communication skills with her administrative abilities to assist all visitors.

Eileen O’Brien, Career Counselor

Eileen O’Brien has decades of counseling experience and is especially adept at working with diverse populations in varied career transitions. Thirty years directing nonprofit departments offered vast opportunities to mentor bachelor-P.h.D. candidates, underemployed, career changers, military affiliated and veterans, regarding career and job development skills.

Jill Gardosik, Internship Coordinator

Jill joined Career Services & Employer Relations in August 2014. She has been serving the Commonwealth since 2012 in the Department of Workforce Development. Jill earned a BA in Corporate Communications from Framingham State University, and a MS from Suffolk University in Adult and Organization Learning. Additionally, Jill is a Certified Professional Resume Writer.

Norma Herzlinger, Career Counselor

Norma has over fifteen years of experience in career services at the college level. Prior to joining Framingham State in January 2014, she held positions as Assistant Director and Cooperative Education Coordinator at Merrimack College. Norma is especially enthusiastic about helping students with all aspects of the job search, including resumes, cover letters, networking, and interviewing techniques.

JoAnne Amann, Career Counselor

JoAnne has worked in career services in higher education since 2007. She joined Framingham State University in September 2014. Prior to working in college settings, she worked for an international outplacement firm conducting job search workshops and providing individual counseling for professionals experiencing a job loss. JoAnne enjoys working with students on resumes, cover letters, networking strategies and demonstrating how to create a professional profile on LinkedIn.
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Monday and Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Tuesday - Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
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