Transitioning to a New Job

Engineering Career Services

Engineering Career Services
3200 Marston Hall ● 515-294-2540 ● ecs@iastate.edu ● www.engineering.iastate.edu/ecs
Our Goal:
Provide resources and opportunities to help engineering students develop professional skills and obtain full-time employment upon graduation.

We Are Here to Help YOU!

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What Will We Discuss?

- Preparing before your 1st day
- Developing a professional network
- Finding a mentor
- Building trust with management & colleagues
- Developing a broad knowledge of your company/industry
- Keeping notes
- Taking ownership for your work
- Teamwork
- Setting goals
- Being positive & professional
- Maintaining a personal/professional life balance

Feel free to ask questions at any time!
Ways to Prepare for Your 1st Day

- Know general policies (schedule, dress, etc.)
- Have realistic expectations
  - You will likely be given fairly minor tasks to begin
    - Volunteer for additional tasks
  - You will often be asked to work as part of a team
  - You will need to be alert and attentive for at least 8 hours
- Be ready to adapt

“We believe in paying our employees as much as they need. Since you’ll be at your desk 90 hours a week, you won’t need much.”
Build a Relationship with Your Supervisor

• Establish expectations
• Be comfortable asking questions
• Get honest feedback
• Huge impact on your professional life and growth of your career
Set Goals

- Importance
  - Provides Focus
  - Increases Motivation
  - Improves Cohesion
- Align personal goals with company’s goals
- Keep track of your progress

“The trouble with not having a goal is that you can spend your life running up and down the field and never score.” – Bill Copeland
Seek Out Opportunities to Network

• Think about who can help you to achieve your goals
  – Starting a new project
  – Ask for ideas/suggestions and build upon them together
  – Initiate meetings to discuss goals, roles, expectations, etc.
  – Casual opportunities

• Develop relationships
Develop a Professional Network

Keep a list of contacts and get to know new people around you

In order to be effective, you need to know who to go to for info & support
How Can Your Network Help You?

• Save you valuable time
• Avoid problems
• Have more fun while accomplishing goals!
• Can help you find a mentor
Search for a Mentor

• What to look for…
  – Experience greater than your own
  – Track record of success
  – Good experiences with past mentees
  – Caring and invested in your professional growth
  – Honest & open communicator
  – Member of multiple teams
Working with a Team

• Efficiency sometimes sacrificed for consensus
  – Provides checks & balances within a company
• Keep the scope and timing of a project in mind
  – May be longer than you’re used to
  – Your grade is not the only thing affected
• Know the culture of your company
• Be sure to contribute, but don’t dominate the conversation
• Have patience
Build Trust with Management and Colleagues

• Be on time
• Meet deadlines
• Volunteer when appropriate
• Don’t just do the bare minimum
• Not only hear colleagues, listen to them
• Be sincere
• Ask for help
Always be Positive and Professional

- **Positivity improves the work environment**
- Disagree in a positive way
  - Use a compliment sandwich to provide constructive criticism
- First impressions are important!
  - Shake hands, be confident, smile, remember names
- Be appreciative and respectful
Professional Communication

• Professional Email Communication
  – 3 C’s: Be Consistent, Clear, and Courteous
  – Think about your audience and purpose before writing
  – Colleagues may form first-impressions
  – Consider face-to-face communication when possible
  – Beware of replying all & forwarding

• Don’t be overly critical

• Stay out of office politics
Take Ownership

• Be responsible
  – Follow through on commitments
  – Perform each job to the best of your ability
• Allow yourself to learn from mistakes
  – Take ownership of your work
  – Be open to constructive criticism
  – Come up with a solution and document what you’ve learned
  – Forgive yourself!

“Success does not consist in never making mistakes but in never making the same one a second time.”

–George Bernard Shaw
Keep Good Notes

- You will receive a lot of new information
  - Don’t rely solely on your memory
  - Colleagues happy to help, but try not to ask for the same info again

- Document your work
  - Your manager will appreciate this
  - Always think about the next person that will doing the task
Explore & Develop a Broad Knowledge of Your Company/Industry

• Look at trends, competitors, and current events influencing professional and personal lives

• Pay attention to what others are doing, in and out of your department

• Look at actual news of events, not just news from friends
Keeping Your Personal Life in Order

• Finances: Benefits, Health Insurance, Personal Finance
  – Kiplinger’s, Bankrate, CNN Money
  – Company’s HR Department!

• Don’t lose your personal life
  – Make time for the things that are important to you

• A satisfying personal life can help to increase your performance at work
Summary

- Make sure to prepare before your 1st day
- Establish a relationship with your supervisor/mentor
- Seek out opportunities to develop your network
- Set goals and keep a good team mentality
- Communicate professionally at all times
- Be Positive!
- Document important information
- Don’t forget your personal life
Questions?
Thanks for Attending!
Please take a few minutes to fill out our survey.
# Student Guide to Employment

**Step 1:** Understand Employers and the College Recruiting Process

**Step 2:** Determine Career Goals and Skillset

**Step 3:** Identify Preliminary Target Employers and Industries

**Step 4:** Develop Effective Marketing Materials

**Step 5:** Search for Specific Employment Opportunities and Research

**Step 6:** Network (at Career Fairs and Otherwise)

**Step 7:** Interview and Follow-up

**Step 8:** Evaluate Offers

**Step 9:** Sign Employment Contract and Celebrate

**Step 10:** Inform Engineering Career Services and Discontinue Your Job Search

See the ECS website for information on all ten steps