

IEEE Sections Congress Career Management



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2002 IEEE President



Issues

How does IEEE membership map into various career phases from pre-college through retirement?

In a competitive environment and with a changing economy, what are the skills needed to further a member's career?

What can the Section do to provide programs to assist its membership in career development from Student to Life Member?

Pre-college: deciding on a career

- What can the Section do?
 - Help students to make informed decisions about their career choices.
 - Establish a career website
 - Provide speakers for career days
 - Invite the junior class to a workshop/reception

Example

- **Tell them how to *get the job they want!***
 - **Step 1: Decide what you like doing, then make that your vocation!**
 - **Step 2: Document the skills and abilities you have, both technical and interpersonal; note your best strengths and worst weaknesses; include your core workplace competencies: learning skills, basic skills, interpersonal skills, creative thinking and problem-solving, leadership skills, and self-management skills.**

Invite the junior class to a workshop/reception

Work with the guidance counselor or a teacher at the school to set up an evening of interaction between the students and members.

Aim to inform them about the various aspects of the profession.

Highlight IEEE involvement,

University

Interact with the Student Branch: discuss issues with the Student Branch executive.

Arrange joint workshops with the Student Branch on emerging technologies (some students make great lecturers!)

Establish an IEEE scholarship at the University, perhaps dependent on IEEE membership and accomplishment within the Branch.

Preparing for Career Opportunities

Assist in establishing a career fair at the University.

Hold workshops to inform graduating students on how to get a job. (I have found that the generic university program is not appropriate for engineering students.)

Ask the Section members for leads on local career opportunities for entry-level positions.

Create a website to advertise positions within the local community.

Examples of topics for career workshops

Have a member who is involved with human resources offer to give an employment workshop for the Student Branch.

I suggest covering resumes, cover letters, interview skills, image, etc.

Remember to include the IEEE job site (US members) @ careers.ieee.org

In Canada we have teamed with the Engineering Institute of Canada to provide a job site

@www.engineeringcareers.ca

Also consider generic sites: in Canada @workopolis.com there were 314 engineering postings on 5 August 2008.

Résumés

- A résumé is an information transfer document designed to match you to the job you want - period!
- Most résumés are boring. They put personnel managers to sleep. Make sure yours isn't boring!
- Résumés are used to screen the number of job applicants down to manageable size. If there is any chance at all that the applicant may not suit the job or the company, the applicant will be rejected immediately.
- Your résumé is your commercial to get the job you want.

Applying on Line

- If you have a choice, don't apply on line!
- Why? Because you must follow a prescribed format that leaves little room for distinguishing your great abilities from everyone else's!
- If you have no choice, make yours special by the use of action words, and quantitative comments.
- Usually there is room at the end for additional information: use it as a special skills section to draw attention to how your skills match the company's needs.

What Do You Wear To an Interview?

- First research company literature! Find out what the company wants its image to be.
- Generally, it is best to be very conservative: dark suit (blue), light coloured shirt for men suggest light blue; blouse for women, generally a pastel shade. Men should wear a conservative tie, maybe maroon, or dark blue with a touch of sparkle. A scarf around the neck for women, maybe with a gold catch. Wear a minimum of jewelry. Avoid perfume or after-shave.
- Black shoes: oxfords for men, low heels for women.
- Conservative hair style. (A nicely trimmed beard is now acceptable. Avoid outlandish styles, though.)

- Remember that the interviewer will likely decide on your suitability for the post within the first 15 seconds or so. First impressions count!
- Be interested and enthusiastic, show it.
- Let the interviewer control the flow of information.
- You should control the content.
- Don't volunteer information unless asked.
- Think like a winner.

And after you get that dream job (or at any rate, find an acceptable job!)

- If you want to have a great career, be prepared to put in twice as much time as you did for your undergraduate education.
- Go beyond what is asked
- Smile (especially when you don't feel like it!)
- Ask yourself what a winner would do, then do it.
- You are solely responsible for your career: so, keep your résumé up to date.

- Always be prepared to change employers: there is very little employer loyalty to employees in this world. If the situation looks bleak, change employers!
- Do not compromise your ethics! If your employer does not live up to ethical standards, change employers! (Even if you need to make a sacrifice to do it. Don't get caught by regulators in a compromising situation!)
- If your employer asks you to do something dangerous, illegal or unethical, DON'T! It is your professional responsibility as an engineer to ensure professional standards.

Do you Want to be King of the Jungle?

What will get you there?

- Your technical ability
- Your formal education
- The ability to communicate
- Your interpersonal skills
- Your confident attitude
- Your management ability
- Your leadership ability
- Your professional integrity

It is Important to tell your fledgling members:

Retain your IEEE membership throughout your career. It is your professional network.

It is your main source of technical information.

It can provide leads on solving problems through technical societies and through the experiences of other members,

It can be a social network for both you and your spouse.

Get involved! Then take advantage of the management and resource opportunities that can be had at no cost to your company. Be a leader!

What's next?

Work on a committee in your technical area.

Volunteer within the Section and Region.

Share your experiences with younger members: be a mentor!

Involvement with IEEE becomes its own reward!

Retirement

Time for fun!

Get out and participate in local activities.

Volunteer!

Keep your mind active!

Help students to take part in science fairs.

Get in touch with your local Student Branch – offer to help.



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