

Gaining Experience

The more experiences you have outside of the classroom, the more likely you are to be a competitive job applicant when you graduate. Each experience you have helps you develop skills and/or obtain knowledge. You can begin as early as your first semester in college. Listed below are common types of experiences, knowledge that you might acquire and skills you might develop. Because these experiences may be listed on your resume it is important to know how employers interpret them. Review the “Employer’s Perspective” and learn what these common experiences mean to employers.

Informational Interviewing			
	Probable knowledge acquired...	Possible skills developed...	Employers Perspective
<p>In an informational interview the student contacts a professional and interviews them. The goal is to learn more about a specific profession or career area.</p> <p>For more information on how to contact and interview a professional refer to the Career Services handout Informational Interviewing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General and specific industry knowledge <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basic information about the position or career <p>Because this experience is an interview, the knowledge acquired can be directed in advance by the student’s questions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <p>Because the interviewing process is mostly to gain knowledge there is minimal skill development.</p>	<p>Employers are usually open and encouraging to students who have prepared well and are considerate of their time. Occasionally, the meeting may lead to other opportunities. However, it is important to remember that the purpose is to gain information and network – not to ask for a job.</p>
Job Shadowing			
	Probable knowledge acquired...	Possible skills developed...	Employers Perspective
<p>This is a good way to become familiar with a particular type of career or industry. Students contact a professional in a field of interest and inquire about “shadowing” him/her. A shadowing experience can be as short as a few hours or last several weeks.</p> <p>For help identifying a shadowing experience, contact Career Services. Call 405-744-6350 to schedule an appointment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learning industry specific language <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Familiarity with the environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness of the types of interactions related to the position. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Possible understanding of policies, procedures and techniques related to the position. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Listening skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Observational skills <p>Because shadowing is mostly observation there is minimal skill development.</p> <p>Long term shadowing may present more opportunities to learn specific industry related skills.</p>	<p>Employers, or graduate/professional school committees, recognize that this experience helps students to gain a general understanding of the profession and that they have taken their career development seriously.</p> <p>Several hours of shadowing shows a sustained interest in and commitment to a particular career.</p>
Volunteering / Community Service			
	Probable knowledge acquired...	Possible skills developed...	Employers Perspective
<p>Community service projects or volunteering allows the participant to become familiar with types of environments, to network with others and/or develop specific skills.</p> <p>For more information about volunteer opportunities at OSU contact the Service Learning Volunteer Center</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learning industry specific language <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Familiarity with the environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness of types of interactions related to environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Understanding of policies, procedures and techniques of the project or organization 	<p>Basic involvement such as participating in canned food drives or mowing a lawn...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interpersonal skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team work skills <p>Advanced involvement or a leadership role...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Management skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teaching skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organizational skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills 	<p>Participation in several projects can help students stand out as someone who values community. Employers with strong community ties will be interested.</p> <p>Participation in specific types of projects or environments related to an employer’s industry can also be of interest.</p> <p>Listing random volunteer projects with little involvement does not have much impact on an</p>

			employer.
Clubs and Organizations			
	Probable knowledge acquired...	Possible skills developed...	Employers Perspective
<p>Being part of a club or organization has career benefits such as networking with peers (future professional colleagues) and learning more about a particular interest area.</p> <p>For more information about clubs and organizations on campus visit Campus Life in 060 of the Students Union.</p> <p>For a list of major related clubs in the College of Education Student Organization Listing</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific knowledge related to organization or club purpose.	<p>General involvement...</p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific skills related to club activities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Networking skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interpersonal skills	<p>Participation in a club or organization as a member shows the employer what you are interested in and choose to learn more about.</p> <p>A more active role shows commitment and the development of transferable skills that may be of interest to an employer.</p>
Leadership Positions			
	Probable knowledge acquired...	Possible skills developed...	Employers Perspective
<p>Leadership roles can be found in clubs, organizations, volunteer projects, Greek life, sports, the classroom and many other types of experiences.</p> <p>Those seeking assistance with the development of leadership skills should visit the Leadership Development Office</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An understanding of leadership principles and techniques. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May also learn ethical principles of leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motivational skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Management skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organizational skills	<p>Employers view student leaders as self-motivated individuals who do not require a lot of guidance.</p> <p>They presume that these individuals have a more developed set of transferable skills and knowledge.</p>
Internships			
	Probable knowledge acquired...	Possible skills developed...	Employers Perspective
<p>An internship is a meaningful experience related to your area of study. Students can gain practice in their field of interest, network and determine if they are pursuing the right career path.</p> <p>Some students may receive academic credit or it may be a requirement to complete a degree program.</p> <p>Career Services recommends that ALL students participate in some type of meaningful career related experience.</p> <p>Find out more on our website...</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learning industry specific language <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Familiarity with the environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness of types of interactions related to environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Understanding of policies, procedures and techniques related to the position.	<p>Skills developed during an internship are most likely directly related to the type of internship.</p> <p>For example, if you participate in an internship at a wellness center you might learn how to take persons blood pressure or how to develop a personal training program.</p> <p>Another example is student teaching. Here students learn specific skills in managing a classroom, teaching lessons and sometimes preparing lesson plans.</p> <p>The types of skills you will develop can be discussed</p>	<p>Many employers host internships so they can develop and screen future applicants.</p> <p>Some internships can turn into full time positions.</p> <hr/> <p>An employer in a related field (not the internship host) who views an internship on a resume will see the development of relevant knowledge and skills.</p> <hr/> <p>An employer in an unrelated field will look for transferable skills that may be relevant to them.</p>

		with your intern supervisor or faculty advisor before you begin.	
Research			
<p>Participating in a research project provides students with the ability to become familiar with research techniques and the environment.</p> <p>Students contemplating graduate school or teaching at the university level may be interested in this experience.</p> <p>Visit with professors in your area of interest to discover opportunities.</p>	<p>Probable knowledge acquired...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific knowledge related to the research project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research techniques 	<p>Possible skills developed...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organizational skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detail skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Analytical skills 	<p>Employers Perspective</p> <p>Research experience can be valuable to employers who are looking for people to collect data, analyze situations and/or make recommendations.</p> <p>Graduate and professional school committees see this experience as evidence of the ability to complete research.</p>
Sports			
<p>There are several ways to be involved in sports at OSU. Joining a sports club, participating in intramural sports, being a member of the adaptive sports program or being an official OSU athlete.</p> <p>For more information visit Campus Recreation or the official website of Oklahoma State Cowboy and Cowgirl Athletics</p>	<p>Probable knowledge acquired...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific knowledge about the sport. 	<p>Possible skills developed...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interpersonal skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teamwork skills <p>Leadership roles in sports can help develop...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teaching skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coaching skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Management skills 	<p>Employers Perspective</p> <p>Employers perceive sports participants as individuals who have the ability to be part of a team, know how to set goals and work towards them, and understand competition. These are very significant characteristics in business. Having experience as a sports leader translates into additional skills and abilities.</p>
Military / ROTC			
<p>Participation in an ROTC program is an excellent way to gain additional skills and knowledge.</p> <p>For more information visit these websites...</p> <p>Air Force ROTC</p> <p>Army ROTC</p>	<p>Probable knowledge acquired...</p> <p>Specific skills relating to the military such as...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Map reading <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Solider tactics <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military history <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> First aid <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military customs and traditions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific career instruction 	<p>Possible skills developed...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Management skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organization skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Delegation skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problem-solving skills 	<p>Employers Perspective</p> <p>Employers recognize that experience in an ROTC program and the military provides individuals with a wide variety of skills and knowledge. Individuals who have self-discipline and goal-setting abilities as well as being competitive can be extremely attractive job applicants.</p>
Study Abroad / Travel			
	Probable knowledge acquired...	Possible skills developed...	Employers Perspective

<p>International travel experience exposes students to different views and ideas. This experience can be “life-changing” for the student and is highly recommended.</p> <p>For more information visit the Study Abroad programs website</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customs and ideas of country(s) visited <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel procedures <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific coursework studied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Foreign language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intercultural communication skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problem-solving skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning skills 	<p>In a global society, experience abroad is highly valued. Employers view students with travel experience as having more flexibility in thought and more open to diverse opinions and ideas.</p>
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Part-Time jobs / Summer jobs

	Probable knowledge acquired...	Possible skills developed...	Employers Perspective
<p>Part-time jobs and summer jobs can be great ways to develop specific and/or transferable skills.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to be selective in choosing experiences that may be related to their career goals.</p> <p>For help identifying career related experiences visit the COE Career Consultant. For an appointment call 405-744-6350.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learning industry specific language <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Familiarity with the environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness of types of interactions related to environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Understanding of policies, procedures and techniques of the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interpersonal skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organizational skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teamwork skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teaching skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creative skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills <p>Many other transferable and specific skills can be developed depending on the type of job.</p>	<p>Employers view part-time and summer jobs as evidence that individuals have developed a work-ethic and understand basic work principles.</p> <p>However, they are likely more interested in the specific and/or transferable skills that have been developed which is why it is important for students, when possible, to be selective in choosing positions.</p>

Unrelated jobs to help finance education

	Probable knowledge acquired...	Possible skills developed...	Employers Perspective
<p>Many students will spend a great deal of time working in unrelated positions to help finance their education. The development of specific skills may be unrelated to their career goals; however, transferable skills can be developed marketable.</p> <p>For help identifying transferable and relevant skills schedule an appointment with the COE Career Consultant. 405-744-6350.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Specific organization policies and procedures 	<p>Many transferable skills can be developed depending on the type of job. Types of transferable skills include...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interpersonal skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organizational skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teamwork skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teaching skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creative skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Management skills 	<p>Employers top ten wanted skills (according to the National Association of Colleges & Employers) are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication skills (verbal and written) 2. Honesty/integrity 3. Teamwork skills (works well with others) 4. Interpersonal skills (relates well to others) 5. Motivation/initiative 6. Strong work ethic 7. Analytical skills 8. Flexibility/adaptability 9. Computer skills 10. Organizational skills <p>Employers also rated the importance of different types of experiences. “Any Work” came in third (behind “Relevant Work” and “Internship”).</p>

