

PREPARING TO STAND OUT AS A JOB APPLICANT
THE FUTURE STARTS NOW

Dear STEM Girl of Promise,

Your undergraduate years will fly by. Near graduation, you will need to decide whether to apply for a job or take advanced studies. If applying for a job, these suggestions, offered from a member of our STEM team who worked as a manager in charge of reviewing many applications for STEM positions, can help prepare you to be ahead of the game.

Hiring managers will be looking for factors other than your GPA that draw their attention to you, specifically. It is never too early to take advantage of your time on campus to focus on developing these skills and abilities that are especially sought by employers.

ACCUMULATE RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Experiences like part-time work, summer jobs, an internship, or a volunteer assignment will show that you are task-oriented and able to meet the expectations of your employer.

ACCEPT LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Look for opportunities to help others succeed by accepting leadership responsibilities: in the classroom, on a sports team, or in a sorority or club. Think about serving in an organization such as Student Senate. Even coaching a team or tutoring other students involves leadership skills.

DEMONSTRATE TEAMING AND COLLABORATION

If available, participate in a senior project, in which multiple students collaborate. When you work with others, be the person others want to work with. As you enter the job market, be prepared to describe the challenges of your group project and your role in meeting them.

DEVELOP STRATEGIES FOR CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Critical thinking is the ability to analyze problems, weigh possible solutions, and apply the most appropriate one. Make note of the ways effective professors demonstrate problem solving and the ways other students overcome challenges whether through innovation, experimentation, or soft skills such as resilience and persistence. Adopt what works for you.

STRENGTHEN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Effective writing and speaking are more important than you may realize. You will have to write clear, accurate emails, reports, presentations, and proposals. You will need to feel confident in speaking in various areas. Seize opportunities to develop these skills. You may add a course in writing or speech to your list of college courses.

UPHOLD INTEGRITY AND A STRONG WORK ETHIC

In college, you have a good opportunity to develop your work style and time management skills. When you are ready to apply for a job, resist the urge to overstate your accomplishments. Honesty, accountability, and respect for others establish a standard of ethical behavior that will take you far in your professional career.

FINALLY, CHECK OUT THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE ON YOUR CAMPUS, EVEN IN YOUR FIRST YEAR.

Best wishes for your future,
AAUW Ballwin-Chesterfield STEM Committee