



College is going to be one of the most exhilarating times of your life. There is so much to learn and explore! For most of you, it probably feels like time is racing by and you never have enough time for what you want to do. However, in just a few years when you look back on your college experience, the amount of time and opportunities you currently have at your fingertips will seem to be endless. To that end, we have developed a “playbook” intended to guide you down a path of academic and professional success at the end of your college tenure while embracing and utilizing the opportunities available to you.

Many students enter college having little to no idea what career they want to pursue. An estimated 70% to 80% of college students change their major at least once during their academic career. Chances are that you were not an accounting major when you first started out at WVU; however, at some point you made a life-changing decision and enrolled in the accounting program at the College of Business & Economics. How each student in the accounting program came to this decision is different, but ultimately you all landed in the same program, with the aspirations of obtaining your first career-defining, full-time job. Although the processes of obtaining internships and full-time employment in today’s competitive job market can be challenging for most university graduates, you are fortunate enough to be enrolled in a program with a clear career development path, which if followed, will help you secure a job well in advance of graduation. This playbook will guide you through the process and provide the tools you need to be successful in landing that all-important first job.

We suggest reading this from beginning to end in order to understand how these small steps in your professional development can ultimately have a profound effect on your career in the future. Meeting with the Center for Career Development, B&E Administrators, Accounting Faculty and other upper-classmen within the accounting major, will be important steps to compliment this playbook. These resources are going to provide invaluable information and advice as you progress through your academic career. We cannot emphasize enough that you must start building your plan by your sophomore year. The recruiting process is rapid and highly competitive. Those late to the game generally end up in last place.

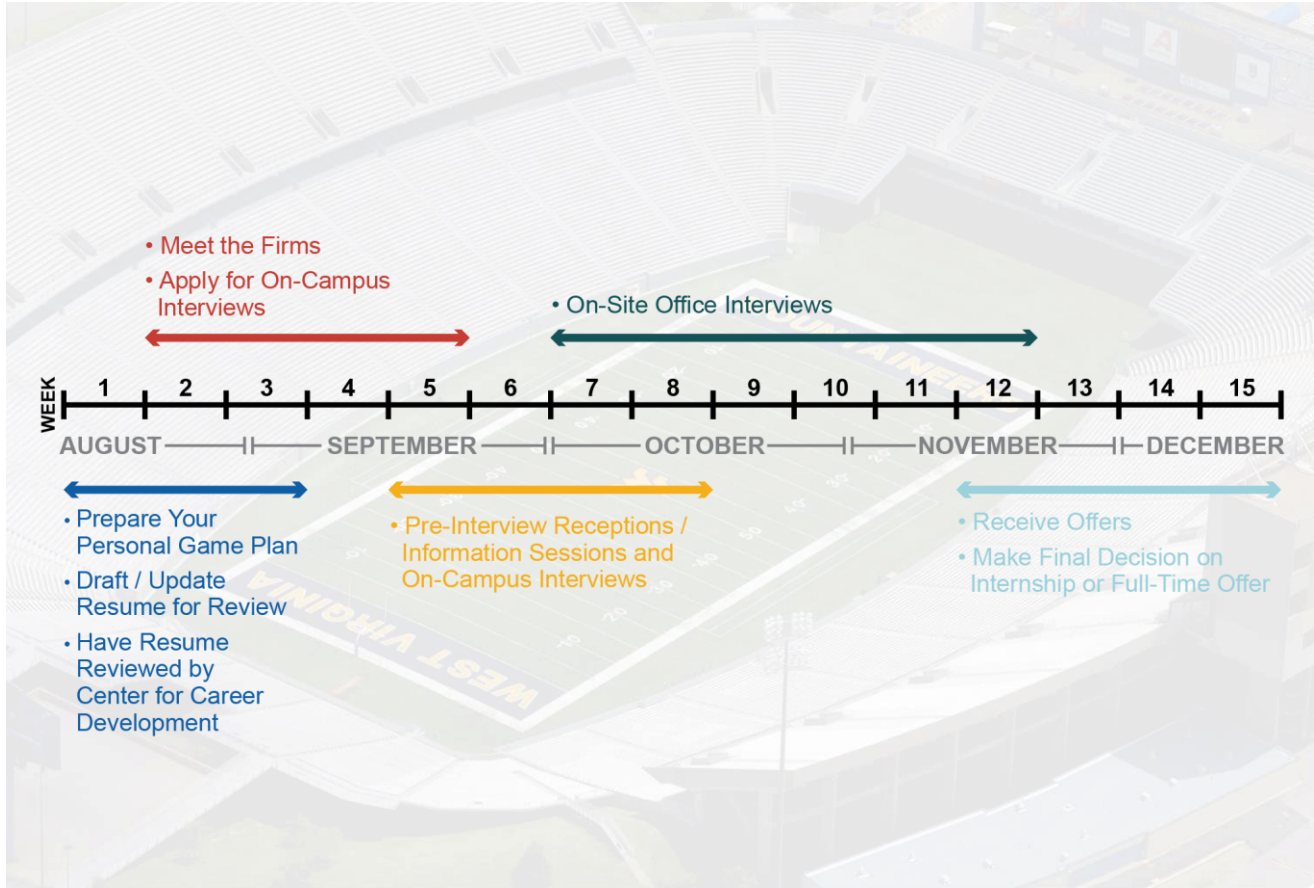
The authors of this playbook are experienced public accountants with a combined 30 years of experience. We have leveraged our public accounting, campus recruiting, and university relations experience in developing this guide. We have seen many pitfalls and wanted to provide a concise resource for accounting majors to have at their disposal. Although the tools provided in this playbook are designed to create an overview of your path to career preparedness, it is up to you to prepare, develop your tools and resources, and execute this plan.

We hope you find the information in this playbook to be relevant, helpful, and motivating. Use this tool to clarify your path in achieving the ultimate goal of having a rewarding full-time job opportunity upon graduation. Our team wishes you all the best in your journey to finding a challenging and rewarding career utilizing your accounting degree.

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The Game Clock



Section 1: Game Plan for Success

You may be in the beginning phases of studying accounting, but now is the time to put together a plan that will help create a successful path to the first steps of your career. Like any successful sports team, you too need a game plan. Most accounting firms conduct their recruiting for both full-time and intern candidates during the fall semester. The recruiting process will move very quickly, especially if you happen to be searching for employment starting in the spring semester. Accounting firms plan multiple events and have multiple interviews, including visits to their offices. Events to kick off the recruiting season may begin as soon as the second week of classes and the entire process is generally completed by the end of the fall semester. If you are interviewing with multiple firms, this means multiple on-campus interviews and several office visits. Staying organized and knowledgeable about the process will give you an edge and ensure you're not left behind.

Let's get a Game Plan together. This has to work for you, so however you think best to get information down and into an easy-to-use format will work. Your Game Plan will be a living document, updated as you begin to interact and learn more about various accounting firms. To start, be sure to include the following:

- **Top Draft Picks:** Begin by researching firms you are already interested in, as well as other firms who will be visiting campus during the semester. Learn about what locations they are in, especially if they are in your target city. Determine if they specialize in industries that might be of interest to you. If you are looking for an internship, figure out when their internship program takes place. You may also be interested in employee recognition awards, size of the firm, corporate social responsibility or diversity & inclusion. Focus on areas that are important to you. As part of your Game Plan, make an initial list of firms of interest and why. This will begin to narrow your focus and give you some key factors to think about and prioritize.

Supplemental Resources for selecting your Top Draft Picks:

- *Accounting Today* publishes their list of top 100 firms annually. Generally ranked by revenue, these rankings will give you an idea of the firm size including revenue, partners and total staff.
 - *Accounting Today* also publishes an annual listing of "Best Accounting Firms to Work For." This survey and recognition program is dedicated to finding and recognizing the best employers in the accounting industry. The rankings are broken down by small, medium and large firms.
 - *The Business Journals* publishes regional Business Journals in over 40 major U.S. cities, including Washington, D.C., New York, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Houston, just to name a few. Each one performs an annual survey and recognition program dedicated to "Best Places to Work" for area businesses. Inevitably, a few accounting firms end up on the list. Check your targeted region's most recent results.
- **Get to Know Your Picks:** Incorporate other firm-specific information that is important to you. This might include philanthropic efforts, firm values or initiatives to support diversity groups. These initiatives allow you to better understand firm beliefs and the amount of support they will be willing to provide employees in leadership development and community activities.

Additional Topics to Research about your Top Draft Picks:

- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) isn't about giving money to a charity or asking people not to print emails in order to save trees. Organizations don't operate in isolation; there is interaction with employees, customers, suppliers and stakeholders. CSR is about managing these relationships to produce an overall positive impact on society. As you look for firms that align with your personal values, think about how CSR activities sponsored by firms can add to your overall experience as a professional and steward of the community you live.

"Through our HERO (Helping Enrich Relationships through Outreach) program, we offer annual time off with pay to employees who volunteer for community service. This is really important as it lets our team members give back to causes that are most important to them. In our last fiscal year alone, Baker Tilly team members gave back thousands of hours to community involvement and HERO time."

-Karleen Mussman, Chief Human Resources Officer,
Baker Tilly

"At EY, we feel a responsibility to help address these issues and demonstrate that business is an important part of the solution. So we ask ourselves important questions, such as what can we do to make the global economy more equitable, sustainable and inclusive? What can we do today that will change peoples' lives for the better and applying it to where we can make the largest possible impact on the livelihoods of people in our communities." -Mark Weinberger,
Global Chairman and CEO, EY

“Rubin Brown encourages team members to be active in their local communities, through charitable giving and volunteer service. In the past year, more than 300 Rubin Brown team members served 200+ organizations by volunteering for service projects. In addition to team members volunteering outside of the workplace, each year the firm reserves a day on which team members in each office are encouraged to be their best for their communities by volunteering for service projects. Rubin Brown’s Outreach Day is an opportunity throughout our local communities.” -Rubin Brown, 2017 Charitable Foundation Annual Report

- Diversity & Inclusion is good for business, and evidence continues to mount, both anecdotally and by the numbers, that diversity and inclusion is a profitable business strategy. Firms that are diverse have access to a wider array of clients which can lead to more revenue, and diverse teams are more innovative. That’s why top candidates look for firms with active diversity programs.

“We are all unique. Each one of us is different from anyone and everyone else. All those differences that make each of the individuals working at Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited and the member firms unique represent many dimensions of diversity—and this diversity is Deloitte’s greatest strength.” -Deloitte

“Achieving Baker Tilly’s vision relies on the cultivation of a diverse, engaging and inclusive environment in which exceptional people thrive. Our firm has established a national diversity and inclusion committee, chaired by our CEO Alan Whitman, that is committed to drive results and communicate progress in embedding diversity and inclusion into our culture – and in everything we do.” -Baker Tilly

“With an abiding sense of responsibility for our client, our colleagues, and the future, we’re committed to delivering the highest level of professional integrity. That’s why having women represented in leadership is important for driving our success at Moss Adams. It’s also why our commitment to Forum W—the firm’s effort to attract, retain, develop, and advance talented women—is unwavering.”
-Moss Adams

- **Game Time:** Be sure to make a personal schedule that includes all the important events. This should include the career fairs, Meet the Firms, on-campus interviews, pre-interview receptions/information sessions and office visits. Most professors are willing to work around your recruiting schedule (after all, their ultimate goal is for you to find a job, too!), so include quiz, test and project due dates and communicate early with professors about potential conflicts. The Center for Career Development is a great resource to help you figure out what firms are on campus and when.
- **Key Players:** As you begin to interact with firms, it will be important for you to keep in contact with those key recruiting players. They may be full-time recruiting professionals, accounting staff, managers and partners, some of whom may be WVU alumni. Make sure to have their contact information readily available and reach out in a professional way as you have specific questions.

Section 1: Game Plan Checklist

- Research firms/companies
- Build your schedule for the semester
- Identify key contacts

Section 2: Game Wear

The old saying “You only get one chance to make a first impression” continues to hold true. For you, the first impression you make on *Key Players* will likely be made at Meet the Firms or Career Fairs where you’re pitching yourself and handing off a resume in a fast-paced, competitive atmosphere — doing your best to stand-out from your peers. That means you and your resume need to be well put together and polished. The way you dress is a statement of who you are before you even get an opportunity to say a few words. Make sure your attire says that you’re professional and serious about the opportunity in front of you.

Proper Attire specific to Men

- Suit: black, navy, or dark grey
- Long sleeved shirt: white or light blue only, no dark colors, properly pressed
- Modest tie: no busy patterns or distracting colors
- Belt
- Leather shoes and dark socks
- Little to no jewelry
- Limited or no aftershave and cologne
- Neat, professional hairstyle

Proper Attire specific to Women

- Suit: black, navy, or dark grey
Suit skirt should be long enough to comfortably sit and should not hit any higher than just above the knee
- Coordinated blouse: no busy patterns or distracting colors
- Closed-toed shoes
- Limited jewelry: earrings and necklace should be small and professional
- Light make-up and perfume
- Professionally-styled hair: simple up-do’s such as a bun are acceptable

At some events you attend, nametags will be provided. These should be considered part of your *Game Wear*. Be sure to properly display it below your right collarbone. At this location, it will be easy for contacts to see your name while shaking your hand.



Section 2: Game Wear Checklist

- Buy suit and accessories, if needed
- Get haircut (Men)
- Have suit dry-cleaned and pressed
- Have shirt laundered and pressed (Men)
- Have blouse dry-cleaned (Women)
- Polish shoes

Section 3: Resume

Aside from a brief discussion during Meet the Firms, your resume is your initial pitch to persuade an accounting firm to hire you. It is also a leave behind for the recruiter after your initial discussion and will be submitted as your plea for an on-campus interview.

Your resume needs to stand on its own and be a reflection of you and all your hard work, so be sure it does not have any errors or typos and have it reviewed by the Center for Career Development prior to submitting it to employers. All career services centers, either provided as a service through the business school or university, have someone that can help you. Use them! Your resume is on its way to multiple accounting firms and multiple recruiters in a pile of your peers' resumes - not just from your college, but colleges all over the country. Give yourself the best chance to impress.

Every resume is different and should be, but there are some key things to make sure are included and some things that should be excluded.

Preparing to Write or Update Your Resume

Before sitting down to write or update your resume, reference your *Game Plan* for your top employers and the company/culture you're striving to be a part of. Remember, a title or salary can seem appealing, but long-term success comes when you can align yourself with a culture in an organization where you are inspired to be your best.

Further research these companies and the relevant job descriptions to determine what makes you uniquely qualified to help them meet their current challenges, for market intelligence, and to uncover relevant keywords and phrases. Use this information to create customized content for your personal brand messaging (resume, LinkedIn profile, cover letters, etc.) so that it will resonate with prospective employers.

Highlight Your Achievements

Ensure your resume demonstrates how your achievements are in alignment with results desired by the hiring organization. Do not limit yourself to job-related achievements.

Don't...

- Include High School accomplishments
- Go into extensive detail on experience not related to accounting
- Use differing fonts or use ink colors other than black.

Do....

- Be prepared to discuss what is listed on your resume and keep this in mind when you're deciding what to include.
- List GPA (if 3.0 or higher), degree in progression, future degrees planned (only if admitted), expected graduation date and date expected to obtain 150 credits* (if planning to pursue CPA certification, have a plan for how you will get to 150 credits).
- Differentiate yourself by including leadership roles and outside interests. Demonstrate you can juggle more than just school, and show you are involved in the community or college organizations.
- Print on resume paper with black ink.
- Be specific when describing your work experience, and quantify as many items as possible.

To give you an example, below is a **before** and **after** of a typical accounting internship listed as experience on a resume. Note that the **after** includes expanded descriptions and detail, proper terminology and clearer communication of activities:

Before

XYZ Corporation

Accounting Intern, May 2018 to August 2018

- Managed 3 separate accounts
- Input all data into the general ledger for debit & credit accounts
- Reconciled all accounts to the bank statements utilizing software
- Reported to the Director of Operations for the firm

After

XYZ Corporation

Accounting Intern, May 2018 to August 2018

- Processed cash receipts and disbursements for 3 separate entities with monthly transactions totaling approximately \$500,000
- Prepared and posted journal entries for monthly close
- Performed monthly bank statement reconciliation utilizing QuickBooks accounting software

- Prepared financial reports including monthly, annual, budget and flux analysis for review by the Director of Operations

Specialized Skills: Proficient with QuickBooks; experience preparing flux analysis and posting journal entries; performing reconciliations.

***CPA Requirement: Meeting the 150 Credit Rule**

Only applicable to students pursuing a career in public accounting

For those of you pursuing public accounting, after graduation and obtaining a coveted position with a public accounting firm, your next big milestone will be obtaining your CPA certification. Each CPA candidate applies for and “sits” for the exam under their state society’s rules. The actual test is administered by NASBA (the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy), but only after the candidate is approved to take the test by the state. If you pass the CPA exam, the state issues you a CPA certificate and you are required to comply with the state’s rules going forward to maintain the license.

All states now require each CPA candidate to have 150 semester hours of education. Some states allow candidates to sit for the exam prior to earning all 150 credits but require them before issuing a certificate and license. 150 hours is generally more than what is required to obtain a bachelor’s degree.

Many colleges offer bachelor’s and master’s degree programs in accounting. To obtain 150 semester hours of education, you do not necessarily have to get a master’s degree - taking some graduate level courses, transferring Advanced Placement credit from high school, or taking some courses in the summer may get you over the hump. Or consider the following:

- Combine an undergraduate accounting degree with a master’s degree at the same school or at a different one
- Combine an undergraduate degree in some other discipline with a master’s in accounting or an MBA with a concentration in accounting;

It is important to have this in mind early. Consider states where you may want to obtain a license and evaluate their requirements. Regardless of the state, you will likely need 150 credit hours to become eligible to obtain a full-time offer from a public accounting firm. Additionally, many internship offers are contingent on obtaining 150 credit hours within one academic year following the internship program.

Section 3: Resume Checklist

- Prepare resume
- Proofread resume
- Have resume reviewed by Center for Career Development
- Prepare for potential interview questions about listed experience or topics
- Print on quality paper
- Include 150-credit-hour achievement/plan in resume if pursuing public accounting

Section 4: LinkedIn

LinkedIn has become the world's largest professional network. With more than 450 million members, LinkedIn allows you to build a professional identity and connect with others through a professional network of colleagues. The site allows you to enter work experience, educational experience, upload a photo and send networking requests. Now that you have your resume together, this is a great time to replicate that content on your professional profile on LinkedIn. As you connect with recruiters and professionals, having a LinkedIn profile will allow you to connect with them in another way. They will get another chance to review your credentials and provide an increased chance of them remembering you. Be sure to send a personal note to all recruiters and professionals you request to connect with!

Also, take this opportunity to check your privacy settings on your other social media accounts. Make pictures and profile information private. You want to control your message and how you are presented to potential employers. Taking status updates, personal pictures and what your friends tag you in out of the equation allows you to better control what information accounting firms receive about you.

Update your LinkedIn Profile to Reflect Your Resume

Employers will likely review your social profile, so be sure it is up to date and is consistent with your resume. You can also include your job information on Facebook and Twitter. With these updates, when employers search for you online it will be easy for them to find the same information confirming what they're reading on your resume.

For more information, visit [Building a Strong Linked In Profile](#), [Social Media in Your Job Search](#) or [Make the Most Out of Your Network](#)

Section 4: LinkedIn Checklist

- Use a professional headshot for your profile photo
- List your name as you would like to be known by professionals
- Provide a summary that includes your year in school, major, and graduation date
- List work experience with a 2-3 sentence description of the role and responsibilities
- List relevant skills (no more than 12)
- List leadership positions held within the last 5 years
- List relevant honors and awards
- Connect with representatives after you have met with them on campus, and stay in touch with them periodically throughout the year

Section 5: Meet the Firms / Career Fair

Meet the Firms and Career Fairs are typically the first opportunity to interact with firms/companies that will be interviewing on campus. It is fast-paced and all about first impressions. Recruiters will be looking to identify you as either someone with potential who they want to learn more about or someone they will be passing on interviewing. Miss this chance to make a great first impression, and it will be hard to overcome. So plan ahead, be prepared and execute.

Plan

- Identify the firms/companies that will be on campus for Meet the Firms / Career Fair.
- Make a target list of those you plan to meet with during Meet the Firms / Career Fair based on your *Game Plan*.
- Do your research and come prepared with questions to help facilitate a conversation. This might include gaining more information about the company's internship opportunities, experience as a staff, hours, expectations, turnover, firm awards, etc.
- Understand that most of the individuals at the career fair are partners, managers and seniors who practice public accounting. While there are often recruiters there to support and answer questions, the representatives in attendance are making a lot of decisions about who to interview; and they do the actual interviewing. Be prepared to have a conversation with them and remember that they are evaluating who they'd like interfacing with their clients.

Prepare

- Apply to positions of interest in advance of Meet the Firms / Career Fair via the employer's career site. This is often a follow-up step after a career fair, but you can show your interest and proactivity by completing in your application in advance.
- It is important to bring ample copies of your resume, as potential employers will ask for and use it as a way of remembering they spoke with you. Print on quality resume paper and be prepared to hand the recruiter your resume during your discussion. At this point, your resume should be finalized and the content should make an impact. Don't get creative trying to differentiate yourself with unusual colors or putting your resume in folders or plastic sleeves.
- Use a leather portfolio to hold all your resumes and collect handouts. This will help keep you organized and allow you to take notes - like writing down key dates for the interview process.
- Its *Game Time* so dress appropriately. Although it is a career fair and some firms will be in firm-branded apparel, you should be dressed professionally.

Execute

- Each firm has invested time and money in attending for the specific objective of meeting you. Be confident in approaching them during the event.
- There will be several handouts. Make sure to collect and take them home with you. They will be good for reflecting on your discussion with the firm and will provide greater details about the position than what is on the firm's website, such as important dates and specific instructions to apply, if you haven't done so already.
- Leave your friend at the door. This is a chance for you to make an impact and present yourself. Talking to recruiters using a friend as a crutch might make you feel better, but it takes away from connecting one-on-one with a potential employer.
- Collecting business cards and taking notes in between speaking with employers will allow you to remember exactly who you talked to and how to make an impact. If a recruiter has provided you with a business card, they are welcoming you to contact them - usually a very good sign. Send a thank you email for their time, connect with something that you discussed and express your interest in the firm.
- Consider having some business cards printed for yourself. It will differentiate you from others.

Section 5: Meet the Firms / Career Fair Checklist

- Do additional research on firms/companies you'd like to connect with at Meet the Firms / Career Fair
- Print copies of your resume on quality paper
- Apply for positions of interest in advance
- Engage with employers at Meet the Firms / Career Fair
- Follow up with employers via email
- Apply to any new positions of interest

Halftime

You have developed a *Game Plan*, completed your research, passed along a resume to potential employers and gone through initial introductions with potential firms. This is the perfect time to update your *Game Plan*.

- Add key players for the firms/companies you are most interested in.
- Identify any new top firms/companies. What did you learn that you liked and didn't like? Maybe there are some firms that should be added or some that should be dropped.
- Your time investment increases from here on out so narrow your list to realistic options and get ready for the second half.

Section 6: Submitting Resumes, Interview Preparation and the Interview

Most firms/companies will require that you apply through their website in addition to MountaineerTRAK in order to receive an on-campus interview. If you planned well, you've already completed this step but be sure to follow-up where necessary. Keeping your *Game Plan* updated will help you stay organized so you do not miss any important deadlines.

Continue to follow up with contacts you met from Meet the Firms and other Career Fairs. Thank them for taking the time to speak with you. Let them know you have applied for their on-campus interviews and that you look forward to the opportunity to interview with them.

The time between selection for on-campus interviews and the actual interview date is the perfect time for preparing for the interview. Most accounting firms will use behavioral-based interview questions as the basis for a discussion. It might start with you talking about yourself or the interviewer asking about something on your resume, but before you know it, you are talking about something you did in the past. Behavioral interviews are interviews based on discovering how you acted in specific situations. The logic is how you behaved in the past will predict how you will behave in the future (i.e. past performance predicts future performance).

Pre-Game

Some firms host a pre-interview reception or information session. It is generally the night before interviews. If you have a class that night, talk with your professor. It is our experience that most professors will make accommodations. They know it is an important part of the process, and their goal, like yours, is for you to get a job after graduation. The pre-interview reception is generally informal with no set program and business casual dress. That means a collared-shirt and dress pants for men and a professional blouse with dress pants or knee-length skirt for women.

Take this time to get to know your interviewer. It will make the conversation the next day much easier and calm your nerves. Get to know the other recruiters in the group. Making an impact on them will go a long way as your interviewer will look to them for their thoughts. Although every pre-interview setup is different, be ready to eat (accounting firms are notorious for feeding their recruits well), do not accept alcohol, even if offered, and make every attempt to connect and differentiate. If you don't want to eat, just order something very light and eat some of it. It may appear rude or awkward if the rest of the group is dining and you're not.

The firm/company representatives will debrief on the evening interactions and talk about each candidate. They use this setting to evaluate how well you will do in a social setting and dealing with clients in a dinner atmosphere. A large part of business is lunch and dinner meetings, so they want people that are comfortable in that type of setting. Work hard to get comfortable.

The Interview

You have two goals during the 30 to 45 minutes in the interview room whether it is an on-campus interview or office visit interview for a full-time offer or internship - (i) present yourself positively and in a polished manner as you describe a well-defined plan and (ii) present yourself as having the qualities and characteristics that the firm is looking for and that align with their culture.

Too often candidates do not provide definitive answers about their coursework and completion plan. The most common concern is regarding how students will acquire the required 150 credits for the CPA exam or when they plan to sit for the exam. Whether the plan is obtaining your master's or taking additional coursework after graduation, it is important to provide this clear plan in the interview to show the interviewer you are committed to earning the CPA designation and have put some thought into how you are going to enter the workforce well-prepared to work.

Weak Example - "I'll have 140 credits at graduation. I haven't decided if I will complete the master's program or just take a couple extra classes over the summer. What would you recommend?"

Strong Example - "I will have my 150 hours prior to starting work at your firm. I plan to take additional course work as part of a study abroad program this summer to obtain those hours. I also plan to sit for at least one part of the CPA exam prior to starting full time."

An interviewer will not move you forward to an office visit interview if there are questions about whether you meet the qualifications for the job (most firms require their full-time offers to have 150 credits or a plan to obtain 150 credits shortly after being hired). You should have that figured out and be able to clearly communicate that plan to the interviewer.

Be prepared for the behavioral interview and have a few situations in mind that you feel comfortable sharing. Many times these situations will be times you found yourself dealing with a difficult situation and how you handled it. When responding to interview questions, remember to form your answers in the "STAR" format:

- Situation – describe the situation
- Task – communicate the task that needed to be accomplished
- Action – describe the action taken
- Result – describe how the actions resulted successfully

The posed question and your response are intended to determine whether or not you exhibit a particular behavior. Below are some behaviors an employer may want to see from their employee. Tailor your responses to best highlight these and how you reacted positively in a situation. It's always best to reference examples from academic projects, prior work experience or extra-curricular/volunteer activities.

- Initiative
- Adaptability
- Teamwork
- Taking Ownership
- Assertiveness
- Effective Communication
- Critical Thinking

When the interviewer is done questioning you, be sure to ask any questions you have at the time. This is a good way to show your level of engagement. Get an understanding of next steps such as an office visit interview and when and how you will be notified. After the interview, be sure to thank the interviewer and any greeters. Always send a thank you email to the interviewer and once again express your interest in the firm/company. Be sure to customize this email to incorporate something that you learned about the interviewer or their firm that was of interest or to show you had a connection.

If you are invited for a follow-up office interview, you will likely be interviewed by an entirely different group of people than you met through campus recruiting. Let your on-campus interviewer know when you will be in the office. You are invited to the office because they felt positively about your credentials and interview. Use them to project a sense of confidence while in the office.

Section 6: Interview Checklist

- Be able to provide a succinct overview of yourself if asked at the beginning of the interview
- Prepare scenarios to reference in the interview
- List some questions you have for the end of the interview
- Schedule a mock interview with the Center for Career Development to practice
- Thank the interviewer
- Understand next-steps for follow up from employer
- Update Game Plan for on-site interview dates
- Take time to reflect on your performance during the interview and how you can improve

Power Play

Now that you have had several interactions with individuals from various firms, request them as a professional connection on LinkedIn. This gives you another touch point and allows you once again to present your credentials and differentiators through your LinkedIn profile.

Section 7: Decision Time

Assuming all goes well with your office visit, firms will usually respond with an offer for an internship or full-time position within two weeks of the office interview. Generally, firms request you respond in a month with your acceptance decision. Take this time to plan and answer some personal logistical questions. For example, where will you live? Build a budget based on your projected earnings and lifestyle. If you are an internship candidate, talk to the firm's recruiting department to evaluate and discuss what interns usually do for short-term housing, if needed. Put some thought into start dates and other benefits. You are making a decision on where you plan to start your career and live. Carefully weigh the factors most important to you.

Once you decide on a firm, all that is left is to accept the offer and politely decline others. Although it might seem like a long process, the time will pass surprisingly quickly and hopefully, by the end of the fall semester's recruiting season you will either have a summer or spring internship or a full-time position. Take a little time to celebrate on such a big accomplishment and life-decision. You deserve it! However, be sure to keep in mind that most offers are contingent on successful completion of the remainder of your coursework.

Keep up the hard work and good luck!

