

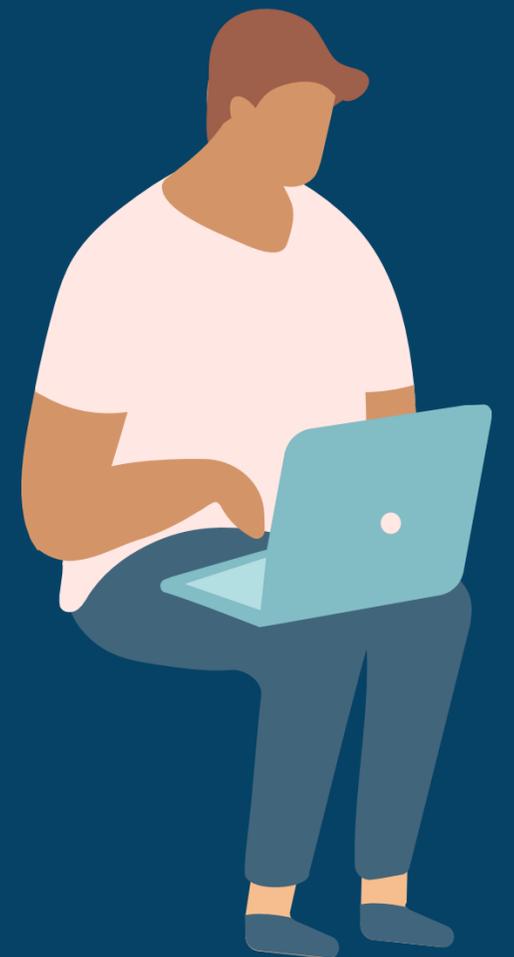
Alumni MasterClass

Using Your Strengths at Work



Quick Poll:

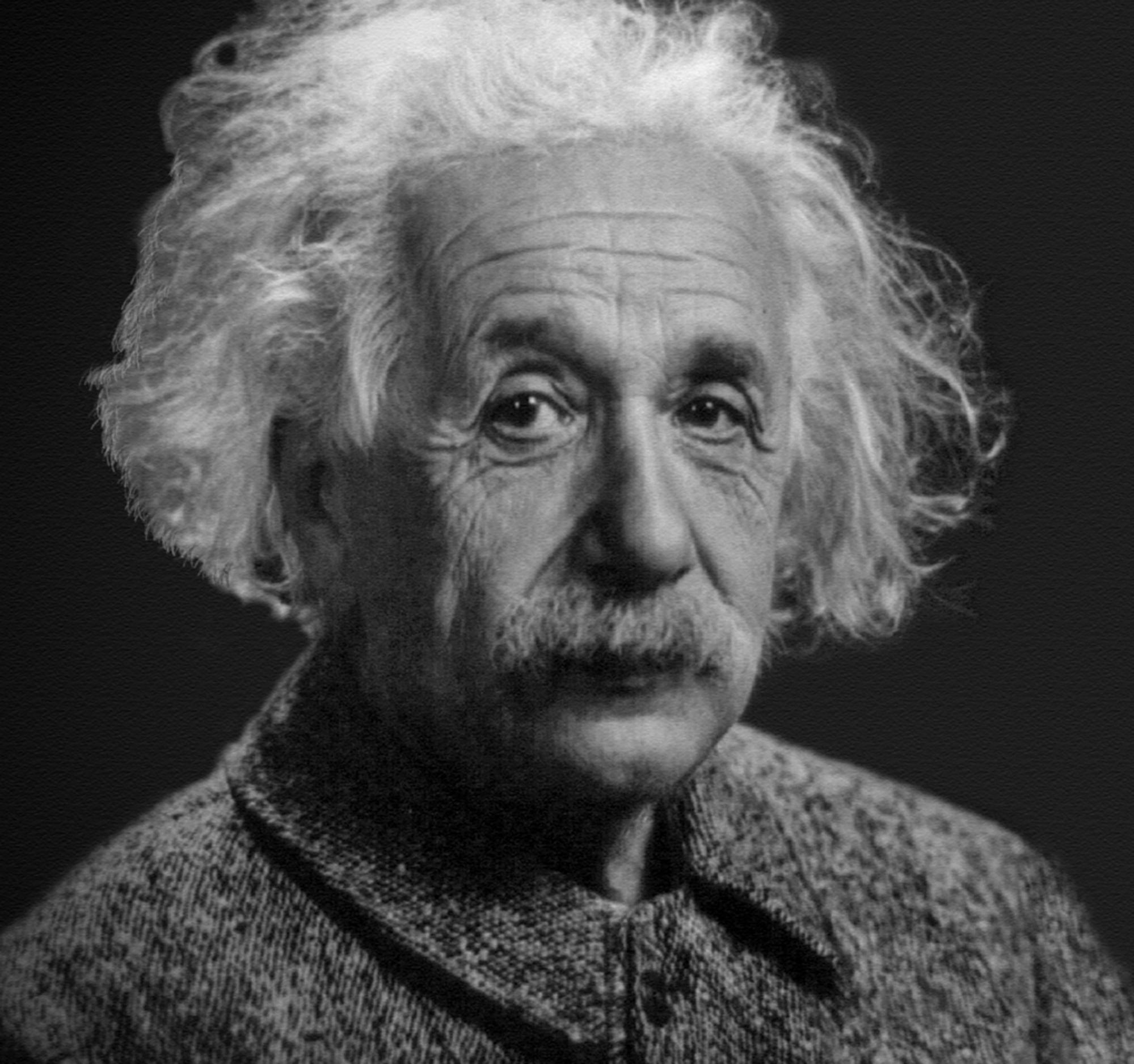
How many of you have taken the CliftonStrengths assessment?



WHAT WE'LL COVER

- 1** What is the CliftonStrengths assessment
- 2** Why focus on strengths
- 3** Strengths-based approach to professional development
- 4** The difference between strengths and skills
- 5** How to spot your strengths
- 6** Strategies to build and apply your strengths





"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

~ ALBERT EINSTEIN

CliftonStrengths Assessment

EXECUTING

People with dominant Executing themes make things happen.

INFLUENCING

People with dominant Influencing themes take charge, speak up and make sure others are heard.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

People with dominant Relationship Building themes build strong relationships that hold a team together and make it greater than the sum of its parts.

STRATEGIC THINKING

People with dominant Strategic Thinking themes absorb and analyze information that informs better decisions.

CliftonStrengths Assessment

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	STRATEGIC THINKING
Achiever Arranger Belief Consistency Deliberative Discipline Focus Responsibility Restorative	Activator Command Communication Competition Maximizer Self-Assurance Significance Woo	Adaptability Connectedness Developer Empathy Harmony Includer Individualization Positivity Relator	Analytical Context Futuristic Ideation Input Intellection Learner Strategic



My top 5 strengths:

Strategic - Relator - Responsibility - Self-Assurance - Ideation

1 in 33 million



People who focus on using their strengths...

6x

as likely to be engaged
in their jobs

3x

more likely to report
having an excellent
quality of life

7.8%

more productive in their
role

People who have the opportunity to use their strengths at work...



look forward to going to work



have more positive than negative interactions with coworkers



treat their customers best



tell their friends they work for a great company



achieve more on a daily basis



have more positive, creative, and innovative moments

Traditional approach to improvement:



Strengths-based approach to improvement:



Strengths **vs** Skills

Innate

STRENGTH: The ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a specific task

Learned

SKILL: What you're good at (the basic ability to move through the fundamental steps of a task)

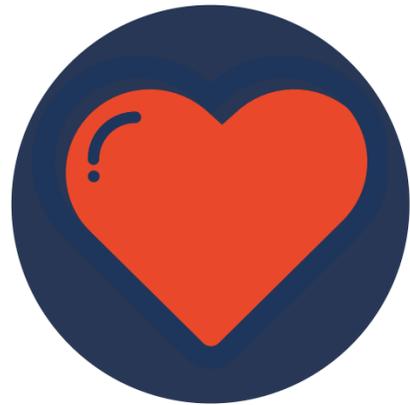




**"Knowing your superpower
changes everything."**

~ **Nadalie Bardo**

Spotting Your Strengths



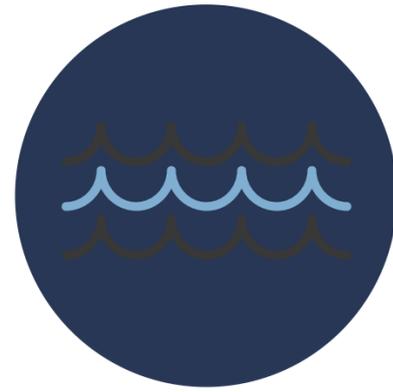
Yearning:

Activities or tasks you are naturally drawn to; when you think "I HAVE to do that."



Rapid learning:

Activities or tasks you pick up quickly - it's almost as if you don't even have to try



Flow:

Activities or tasks that make you lose track of time



Glimpses of excellence:

Activities or tasks that make you think, "How did I do that?"



Satisfaction:

Activities or tasks that energize you and make you think, "When can I do that again?"

Spotting Your Strengths



- *Identify some times in your life when you were at your very best: What were you doing? How did you feel?*
- *Think about the best job you ever had or project you worked on: What exactly were you doing? What skills were you using?*
- *Identify one of your most fulfilling experiences: What made it so fulfilling? How can you get that feeling again?*
- *Think about what you most enjoy doing: What about it do you enjoy?*

Strategies to build and apply your strengths

Recognize when and how your strengths show up. Intentionally and consciously apply your strengths.



Look for opportunities to:

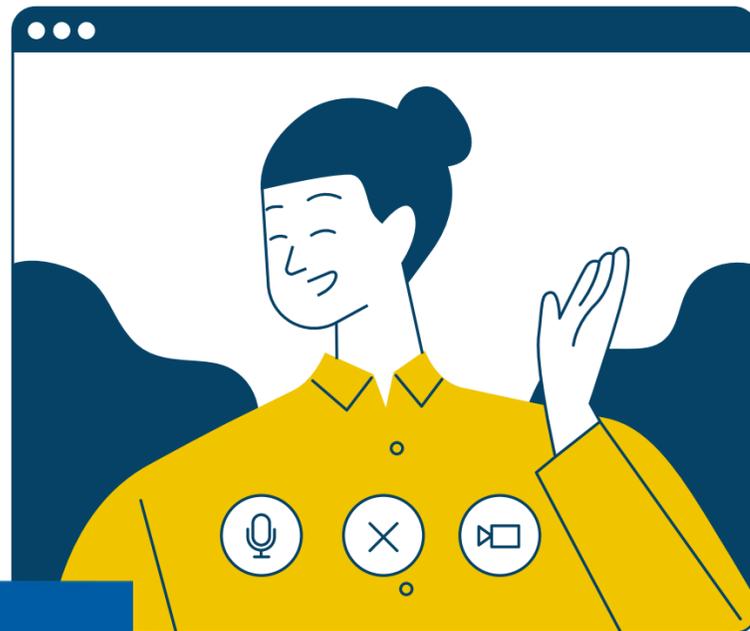
- Observe how you use your strengths in your daily life...in action
- Post your strengths someplace where you will see them regularly
- Concentrate on one strength and consciously and intentionally leverage it
- For each success you have, identify what strengths made it possible
- For upcoming goals and projects, plan how you will actively apply 1-2 strengths to achieve them

A hand is holding a camera lens in the foreground, with the lens's opening showing a view of a lake and mountains. The background is a soft-focus landscape of a lake and mountains under a blue sky with light clouds. The text is overlaid on the image in a bold, dark blue font.

**"Focused attention creates openings
for understanding ourselves, our
situation, and the way forward."**

~ Gallup

WHAT CAN THE CAREER CENTER DO FOR YOU?



- Drop-In Career Coaching (no appointment necessary!)
- Virtual Appointments with Career Community Advisors
- Email Resume Review
- Access a Career Library of 50+ Handouts and Videos
- Search for opportunities on Handshake, our careers platform
- Network with Alumni on (ASK) or Alumni Sharing Knowledge

careercenter.depaul.edu

CAREER SKILLS LABS

These 30-minute workshops offer tactical advice for upskilling at every stage of your career journey! Anyone who RSVPs on Handshake will get a recording of the session with supplemental materials!

SUMMER SKILLS LAB



intro to...

AGILE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

It's Not Just for Software Developers!



RSVP on [Handshake!](#)

CAREER LIBRARY

The DePaul Career Center recently created a library of 50+ handouts and 14 two-minute videos focused on every career readiness topic, ranging from resume basics to exploration to building your brand!

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Informational interviews are a low-pressure, highly productive way to learn about a field, get career advice, build your network and hone your interviewing skills. Reach out! It's easy and fun.

Informational interviews are an opportunity for you to talk with professionals about their career path, profession, organization and industry. These conversations can take place via phone or email, but it's much more fruitful when conducted in person.

Follow these simple steps to get started:



Step 1

LOCATE THE PEOPLE YOU WANT TO MEET

Search for emerging, mid-career and established professionals in roles or organizations that interest you. Recent graduates that are emerging in their careers have first hand knowledge about existing pathways. Mid-level and advanced professionals have large networks and can share their views about how industries are changing.

- Definitely consider targeting DePaul alumni. They are often the most open to speaking with students and recent graduates of their alma mater.
- If you're still in school, DePaul faculty are an excellent place to start—ask your professors if they know of any contacts in your field of interest.
- DePaul's ASK (Alumni Sharing Knowledge) network and LinkedIn are excellent places to find professionals whose pathways align with your passions.
- Don't be afraid to be bold—is there a well-known person in your field of interest whose perspective would be helpful, interesting or inspiring? Reach out to them! You have nothing to lose and much to gain—the worst that could happen is you get a "no."

GRADUATE SCHOOL 101

In many fields, earning a graduate degree or certificate is a benefit and competitive advantage. In some, it's necessary for advancement.

Getting accepted into your preferred program requires research, differentiation and extreme project management skills. Here are some tips:



Selecting the right institution and program

Chances are, you'll want to apply to multiple programs to maximize your options. Which are the right ones? There are a number of factors to consider.

- 1 Faculty** Your relationship with faculty will be a huge factor in the educational experience. Learn the names, departmental positions and academic credentials of the professor or professors you'd be working with.
- 2 Resources** Research can require significant out-of-pocket costs. Find out if there are resources available at the institution that can reduce these costs.
- 3 Community/Location** Take a look at the on-campus and off-campus communities. Is the on-campus culture—faculty access, social life, etc.—what you're looking for? Does the local area have the amenities you want and need? Is it in a city or a small college town? Does the program offer online courses? How would these factors contribute to your quality of life?
- 4 Cost/Funding** The tuition and fees will be an obvious consideration, but you should also take into account living expenses, which can vary widely by region. What sort of stipends and funding programs are available? What are the work requirements?
- 5 Career Outcomes** What are the career outcomes for program alumni and how does the program support students and alumni in professional development?

PERSONAL IDENTITY AND YOUR BRAND

Your identity, whether based on your gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, culture, faith, or another element of your background, is fundamental to who you are. Deciding when and/or how to integrate your identity into your brand and job search can be a meaningful part of navigating your professional life.



In the Career Center, we often work with students and alumni who ask about the risks and benefits of sharing personal details about their identities. Whether it's a recent alum who is non-binary, or a single mother who returned to school to complete her degree after spending years caring for her children, every individual has the power to shape a specific and compelling authentic professional identity that includes (or does not include) personal information.

While we understand that identities are intersecting and not binary, below are some general tips that we hope are helpful in navigating discussions around career development.

Connect who you are to what you do.

If your identity or background links to why you have selected a career path or professional interest, you can differentiate yourself from other applicants with a "why statement," which illustrates your personal commitment to that role or career. For example, in a cover letter, you might include a statement like this:

"As a first generation college student navigating the opaque space of higher education without the insights of parents or a network of college-educated adults, I am passionate about providing support to under-resourced students, helping them succeed academically and thrive socially."

"I am particularly interested in this role because I recently returned to college to complete my degree in Health Sciences after providing care for my disabled sister for five years. This experience taught me the value of a holistic approach to caregiving, and I am eager to use these skills to enhance the patient experience at Good Samaritan."

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. That's why it's important to put careful thought into how you dress for job interviews and meetings with business contacts.



It's all part of your personal brand. It's the package you present—your qualifications, your preparation and, yes, your style—when you meet someone who can help advance your career. You know you're a person with great potential. Follow these simple guidelines to make sure you look the part!

General Guidelines

Dress codes in the workplace have relaxed considerably in recent years, which can make it tougher, not easier, to decide what to wear. While it's definitely better to over-dress than under-dress, looking too formal for an interview can suggest that you're not a good fit for the culture. That said, here are some general guidelines:

- Clothes should be in good condition, fit correctly, and be clean and lint free
- Wear dress shoes that are comfortable and clean
- Hair should be well groomed
- Fragrance—a light touch is better
- Bring essentials only—a professional bag, briefcase or portfolio
- Cellphone off

HOW TO RESEARCH EMPLOYER DRESS CODES

If you have an interview or it's your first day and you're unsure what to wear, here are a couple of ways to get an idea of what staff wears on an everyday basis.

✓ **Check out their social media accounts** Many employers post images of employees at work or at business functions. Look for everyday-type images (not dressy corporate events) to get a sense of the culture. Be sure to look for staff in functions similar to yours, as some teams' dress codes vary.

✓ **Call the hiring manager or HR department** You can ask explicit questions about an employer's dress code. Questions like: "How formal is the dress code?" or "Do most interviewees wear a suit?"

WORKING REMOTELY: THE BASICS

Working from home is common now, and with the pandemic, it's even more so. The number of remote roles has increased by 173 percent since 2005, and most experts expect this trend to accelerate. This is the future of work.



Here are a few tips to help you ensure that working remotely is productive and successful:

Set up your workspace for success.

Whether it's a home office, a commercial co-working space, or a table in a coffee house, your workspace has a lot to do with your effectiveness. Make sure your space:

- Is comfortable and ergonomically sound
- Is quiet and able to accommodate phone conversations or video conferencing without distractions
- Gives you room to move around—cramped quarters can increase fatigue!

Get the right equipment.

Make sure you have the right tools and technology to do your job well:

- A computer with a camera.
- A reliable internet connection—nothing is more disruptive to a video meeting than a connection that drops.
- Remote-work software
- LinkedIn Learning is an excellent source for technology tutorials and tips, including entire courses, to support remote-work success.

SOFTWARE SUGGESTIONS

Video conferencing/screen sharing: Zoom, Skype, GoToMeeting, JoinMe or others

Communication: Slack or others

Project Management: Asana, Trello, Mondays

Cloud Computing/team sharing: Basecamp, Google Drive, Microsoft Teams, Box

Check it out here:

go.depaul.edu/careerlibrary



Thank You!

