



THE CAREER COUNSELOR'S GUIDE TO BLOGGING

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Web logs, commonly known as “blogs,” are a powerful tool to use to write about a topic, publish those thoughts to the web, and connect with others. There are currently hundreds of millions of blogs in existence, a number that is growing rapidly every day. While blogging may have had early roots as a personal journal, this medium has become a viable resource for individuals and organizations to communicate professionally about all kinds of topics. Bloggers post as often as monthly to daily, depending on their ability to contribute. There are numerous platforms for bloggers, including WordPress, Tumblr, Medium, and even on LinkedIn. This guide will not cover each platform, but will speak to ways students can use blogs as a means to:

Create a completely customizable professional presence online.

Grow and establish authority on a specific subject.

Communicate ideas with words, images, and videos with little restriction in character limit.

Connect with bloggers and readers about topics of professional interest.

CREATING A STRONG PROFILE AND PERSONAL BRAND BY BLOGGING

When it comes to creating a blog, no matter what the platform, it may be helpful for students to consider it as a website of their own. On a blog, writers have free reign to elaborate on topics, create pages, and moderate comments at will. To create a strong blog and strong personal brand, there are a few special considerations.

TOPIC AND TITLE OF THE BLOG

To build readership and community, it would be helpful for students to consider focusing their blog on a topic. Many students might be familiar with blogs as they are a popular way to stay in touch with family and friends when going abroad. Even these blogs have a topic: my study abroad experience. Thinking of a blog topic may be challenging for students. They may experience writer’s block at the thought of it, or they may feel like they have little to say. To help students

overcome these concerns, here are some topics you can encourage them to think about for blog ideas:

- An internship or internships—Chronicling their internship experiences, from the search process to success in the internship itself.
- All about their major and courses—Blogging about what they learn in classes and about their major.
- Interesting lectures or guest speakers—Detailing many of the events and opportunities to hear from experts when they come to campus.
- Leadership positions and campus activities—Writing about their experiences outside of the curricular journey and what they learn from them.
- A personal passion—Discussing something that a student particularly loves or reads about in his or her spare time (sometimes these passions can have interesting intersections with their career journeys).

CREATING A STRONG PROFILE

Like many good ideas, if a student begins writing about something and later wants to pivot to a new direction, that's possible, too. Encourage students to feel comfortable getting started without feeling that their choice of topic must be concrete and final.

Once a student has settled on a topic, it's important to consider a proper title. Of course, this is a place where students can get creative. However, the title should help the reader

understand the topic and scope of the blog, so it's critical to keep in mind the audience. In addition, since the blog is a website and the goal is to get found, students should keep in mind some basic search engine optimization (SEO) tips. Consider putting keywords and phrases into the title and web address of the blog so that the blog will have a better chance of ranking high in search results.

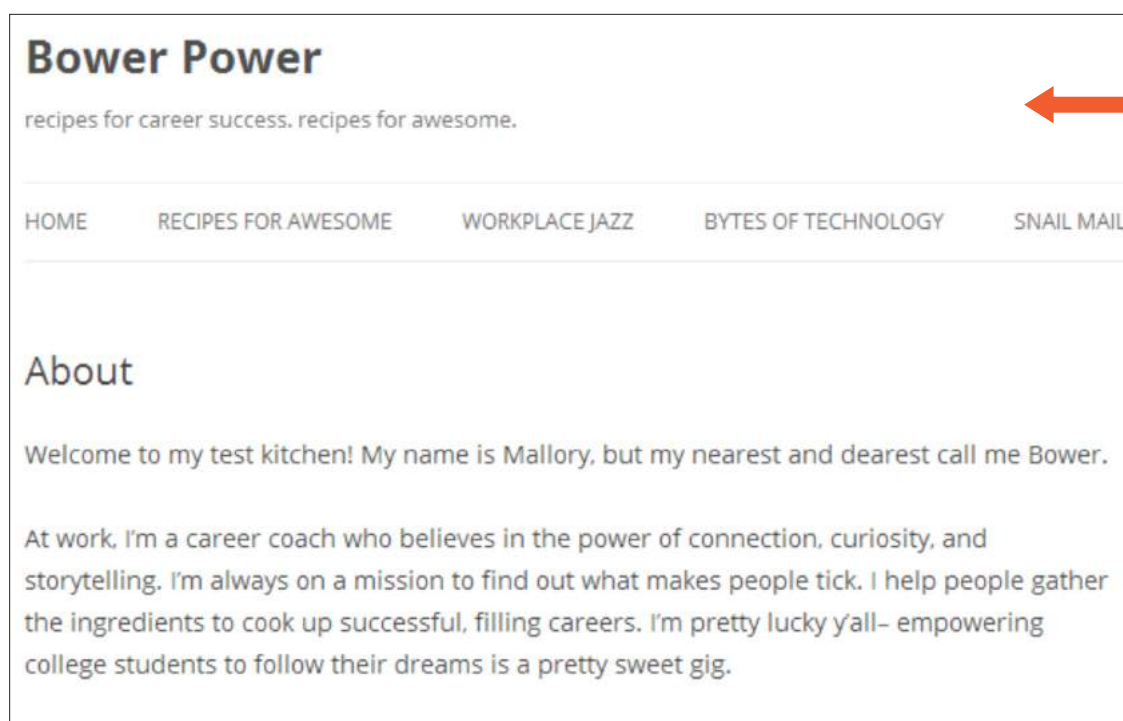
The screenshot shows a web interface for creating a new blog. At the top, it says "Blogs List > Create a new blog". Below this are two input fields: "Title" and "Address". Below the "Address" field, it says "You can add a custom domain later." Underneath is a "Template" section with a grid of six template thumbnails. The first row contains "Simple", "Dynamic Views", and "Picture Window". The second row contains "Awesome Inc.", "Watermark", and "Ethereal". Below the grid, it says "You can browse many more templates and customize your blog later."

THE TITLE AND WEB ADDRESS SECTIONS ARE IMPORTANT PLACES TO CONSIDER KEYWORDS AND PHRASES TO OPTIMIZE A BLOG FOR SEARCH ENGINES.

CREATING A BIO OR "ABOUT" PAGE

Although authorship will be assigned to the student on each post, it's still important to create a bio section or even an "About Me" page to make sure readers can always learn more about who is writing. This also gives the student another opportunity to make a personal impression on

the web. For those struggling with writing a bio, encourage them to consider using their LinkedIn summary or perhaps their Twitter bio as a way to get started. It's also a good idea to include contact information or links to other social media here. The "About Me" section of this career coach's blog can give students an example of what they can include.



HAVING A STRONG "ABOUT" PAGE OR BIO CAN BE AN EFFECTIVE WAY FOR READERS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOU FROM ANYWHERE ON YOUR BLOG.

In addition, if students write blog posts for other blogs, it would be wise to have them consider a consistent byline for their writing. Typically, bylines are two or three sentences, and students can consider providing links to other social media with these words to help people get back to their presences online.

INCORPORATING PICTURES, VIDEOS, AND MEDIA IN POSTS

A critical consideration for successful blogs is the inclusion of images, videos, and other media that can be consumed by readers on any device. In fact, in any social media, the emphasis always seems to come back to this point. So, it would be wise for students to consider putting media into their posts where relevant. For example, on an "About" page, students should consider putting up a professional picture of themselves to go along with their bio. Matching up this picture with their LinkedIn profile photo would be a good way to keep a consistent presence across social networks.

A WORD ABOUT FREQUENCY OF POSTING AND SEO

One thing that often concerns students is the

frequency with which they "should" write blog posts. While blogs are most successful when written often (once a week or more), this is not a mandate. For those students who are planners, it may be helpful to have them consider a schedule for writing. For those who are spontaneous, it may be best to come up with a few ideas for posts and then write when they are inspired to do so. Then, allow them to see how they feel after a few posts.

In addition, one important thing for students to keep in mind is SEO. To ensure their blogs will be found easily and rank well, encourage students to consider including keywords and phrases for their posts. Those keywords and phrases should be placed in:

- The title of the post.
- The first and last sentence of the post.
- Any headings within the post.
- Captions and descriptions of images, videos, or media.

For a quick primer on SEO and blogging, [Prologger has gathered some excellent resources on the subject.](#)

NETWORKING AND CONNECTING PROFESSIONALLY BY BLOGGING

When done strategically, blogging can offer students a unique way to network and connect with others. Most blogging platforms (Blogger, WordPress, Tumblr) have easy ways to interact that can prove useful in making connections and building one's network. Blogs allow students the opportunity to follow professionals and professional blogs, and build connections by reblogging, liking, and commenting on others' content.

YOUR OWN BLOG

To grow their blog presence, students should encourage interaction, make commenting and following easy, and get social.

- **Encouraging interaction**—Within posts, students should encourage interaction and get people talking on their blog. Students can ask readers to add their comments, feedback, or responses to various posts. It would be good to suggest that they respond to people's contributions to help build a community.

- **Commenting**—Students will want to make sure that they are writing about things that get people talking and that it is easy for others to comment. Students should also comment on others' blog posts or articles when relevant to their interests or personal blog topics. Most of all, advise students to be positive online with their comments. There is often heavy criticism and sometimes negativity in blog comments, and it's best not to go far down that path.

- **Following**—Make sure students provide an easy way for people to follow their blog, even if it's just links to the RSS feed. And most importantly, remind them to add in other social media so that readers could follow them on other social media, too.

- **Getting social**—Connecting posts with other social media will amplify the reach of each post and draw in new followers, making for potential new connections. Remind students to test everything

first and make sure they know how the automatic updates and tweets will look so they are happy with the way things are being posted.

- **Link to other, credible sources**—Encourage students to link to other, credible sources and blogs when they write posts. The authors of those posts will notice this link, and may be more inclined to comment or connect with the student.

GUEST POSTING AND CONTRIBUTING

If students are unsure whether blogging on their own is feasible, encourage them to seek out guest post opportunities. Guest posting on other blogs can also help grow a network and help one be seen as an expert without the full commitment of a blog. This is a great way for a student to try out blogging and see if it is right for him or her. It also offers opportunities to network with those who comment, like, or repost the contribution.

To find guest posting opportunities, students should check their LinkedIn groups for posted opportunities or approach someone they know who has a blog. Does a favorite professor blog? Perhaps a mentor or family friend blogs, too. Students can also check Twitter for posted opportunities. Many sites, such as *The Daily Muse* and *The Huffington Post*, are populated by guest bloggers or regular contributors. Students may be surprised that websites and blogs they read often welcome contributions from guests.

If students have blogs of their own, it may be valuable for them to ask for guest posts of their own. Bringing in a new author may also bring in new readers. The author of the guest post will likely spread the word about the blog once it is posted. For some students, especially those in a close-knit group of friends, another option to consider is a group blog with numerous authors. If the group can create a shared vision and manage the posting schedule as not to overlap, this could be

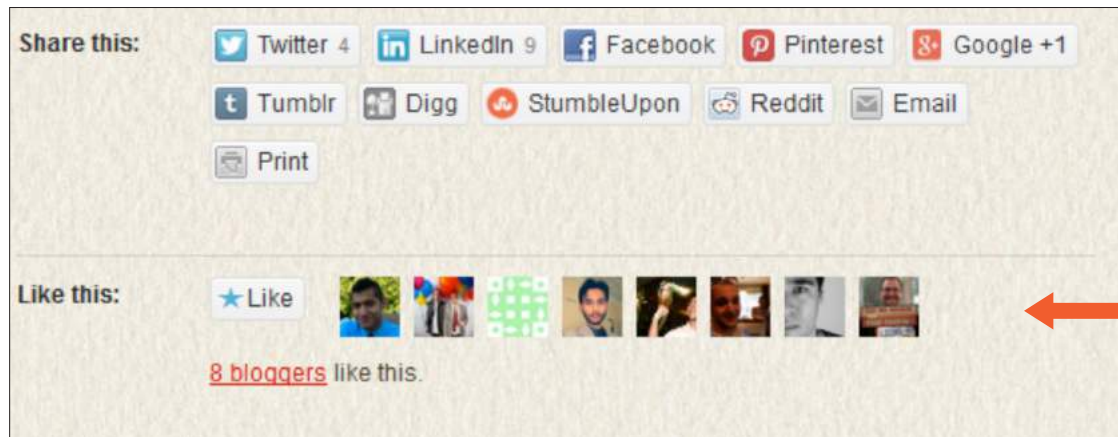
an excellent way to get started blogging and boost each other's visibility.

CONNECTING AND NETWORKING

Whether students choose to have their own blog or be contributors, both of these options can help them connect and grow a network. In either case, it is important to encourage them to share posts on

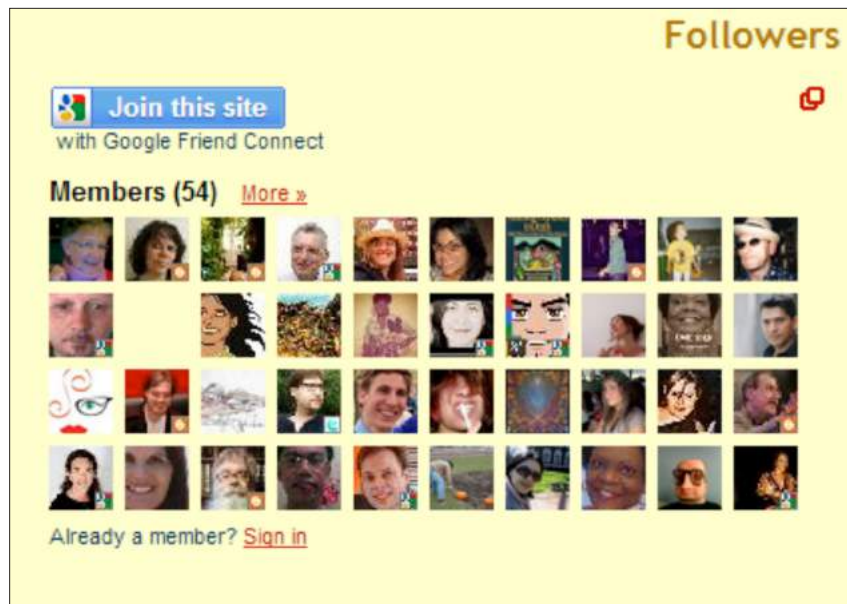
other social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. If they have a close group of friends or even a list of family, a direct e-mail to these groups about their post might be beneficial, too.

To be mindful of the connections made with a blog, students should take note of who is commenting and liking their posts. These comments and likes may lead to new connections.



THE BLOGGERS THAT LIKE A POST CAN TURN OUT TO BE GOOD CONNECTIONS OR LEAD TO GOOD CONNECTIONS

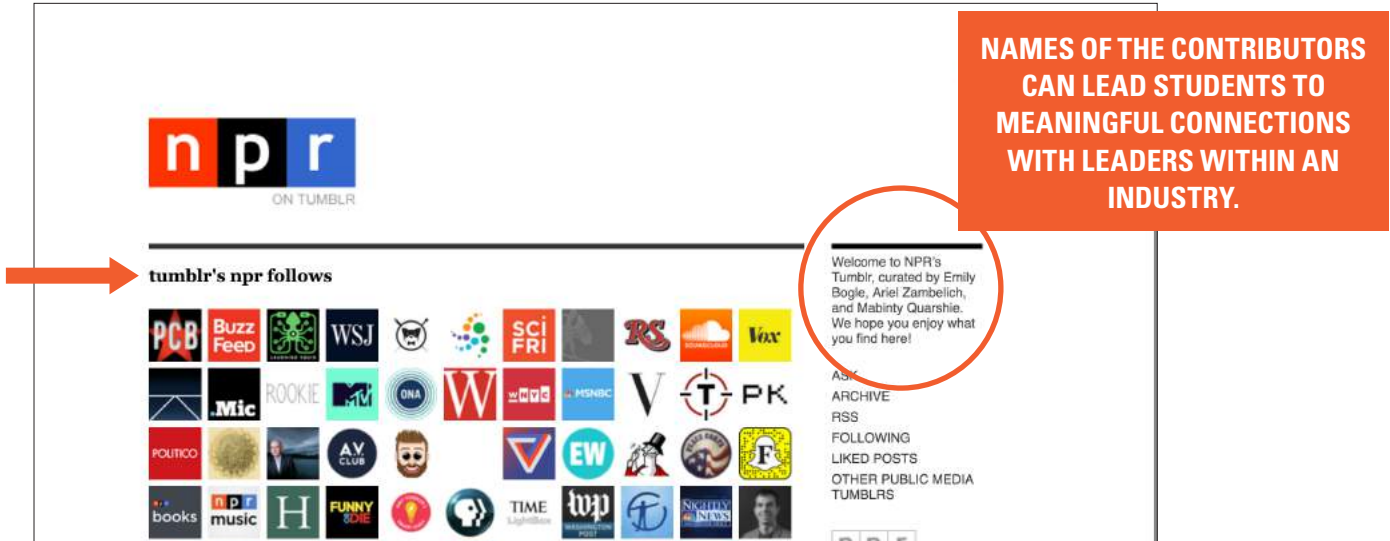
Students can also see who else follows their blogs and build connections that way.



FOLLOWING A BLOG A STUDENT HAS OR IS INTERESTED IN INDICATES THAT FOLLOWERS ALREADY HAVE SIMILAR INTERESTS AND COULD PERHAPS BE A GOOD, PASSIVE CONNECTION.

NETWORKING AND CONNECTING

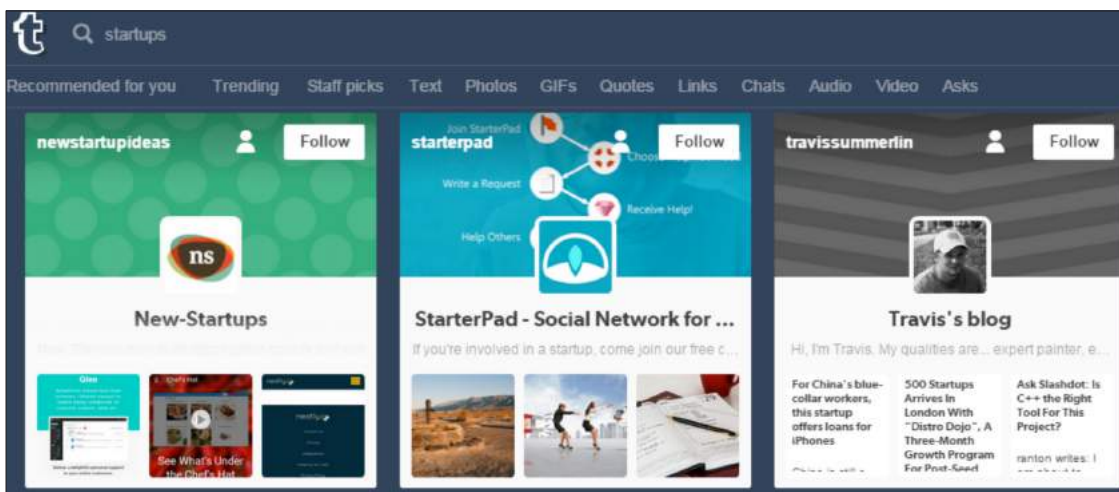
Tumblr lends itself to some interesting and unique networking opportunities. On some sites, you can also see who an author is following, which may help in identifying more bloggers with similar interests.



For example, this NPR site offers students the chance to see like companies, which can lead to the discovery of other relevant blogs. This format also provides the names and links to personal blogs and to the contributors. Students can see each personal blog, and if interested in editing, social media, and/or working for NPR, this

information could provide them with a career advantage.

Students should also search for blogs relating to their major, industry interests, or career goals. This can lead not only to good information, but to other people with similar interests. For instance, here's a screen shot of a search for blogs on startups:



While blogging can be a great way to connect and network, it does require dedicated effort on the students' part. It can be an effective way to network when done correctly and with the right intentions. When students write their own content, they have

the opportunity to be seen as an authority on a particular subject matter. The blog posts they write may get shared around the web, which could give the student significant visibility and bring some powerful connections to them.

FINDING JOB AND INTERNSHIP LISTINGS ON BLOGS

Blogs can offer students a variety of options in their job or internship search. As social media has risen in popularity, blogs have become an integral part of an organization's ability to promote opportunities. Many blogs, as previously discussed, have been established by career advisers, both affiliated and not-affiliated with higher education career centers, industry leaders, or job-search engines to share career advice. In many cases, such blogs also share actual job and internship listings or resources to identify listings. This final section will cover the different options available in the "blogosphere" to help students find job and internship listings. These options include:

- Job blogs
- Employer blogs
- Keywords in the "blogosphere"

JOB BLOGS

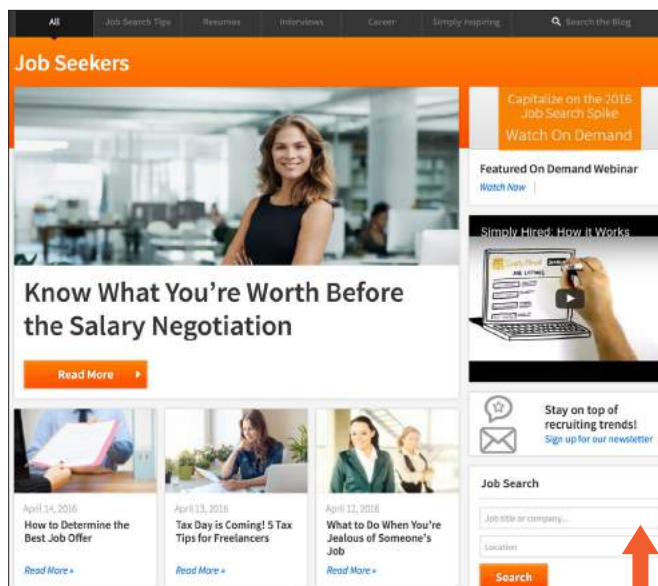
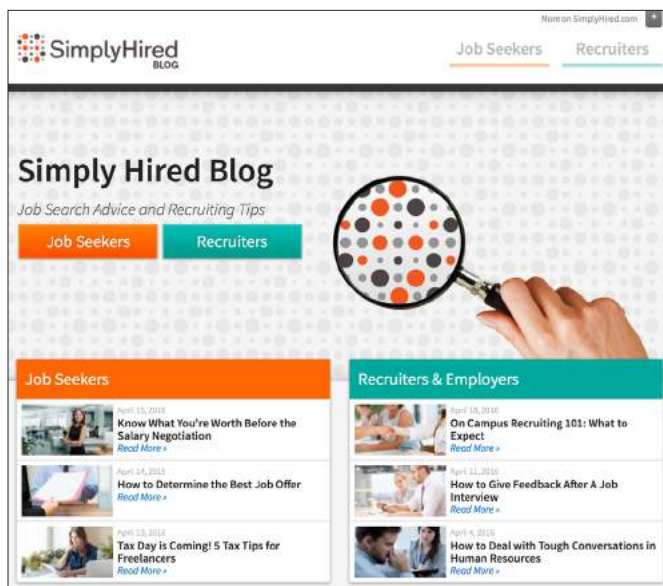
Job blogs are blogs that post job and internship openings and/or critical information about jobs. This information can be leveraged by students to find actual listings, develop an understanding of a field or industry, or discover an organization where they can then search for open positions.

Here is an example of a popular job blog, [One Day, One Job](#). As the title implies, the blog posts a new company each day, along with information about entry-level opportunities and other company insights.

One Day, One Job offers a breakdown by location, field, and major. Breakdowns similar to these, as well as other filters that cater to job seekers, are echoed by other job blogs out there.

The screenshot shows the One Day, One Job website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Explore Careers, Career Advice, About ODOJ, Post a Job, and Search Jobs. A large red arrow points from the 'Search Jobs' link to a search box on the right side of the page. The main content area features a search bar with the text 'Discover Amazing Entry Level Jobs and Internships' and a subtext 'Search thousands of companies and tens of thousands of entry level and intern positions'. Below the search bar is a search input field with the placeholder text 'Enter location, job type, company name, etc.' and a 'Search' button. The page is divided into several sections: 'We'll Help You Start Your Career the Right Way' with a story snippet, 'Jobs Near You' with a list of job listings, 'Browse by Location' with a grid of location options, and 'Browse by Field' with a grid of field options. A red arrow points from a red box labeled 'SEARCH BY LOCATION, FIELD OR MAJOR.' to the 'Browse by Location' and 'Browse by Field' sections. A red arrow also points from a red box labeled 'SUGGESTED SEARCHES' to the 'Jobs Near You' section.

FINDING JOBS AND INTERNSHIPS



**SEARCH FOR JOBS WHILE
LEARNING ABOUT TRENDS
AND HIRING ORGANIZATIONS.**

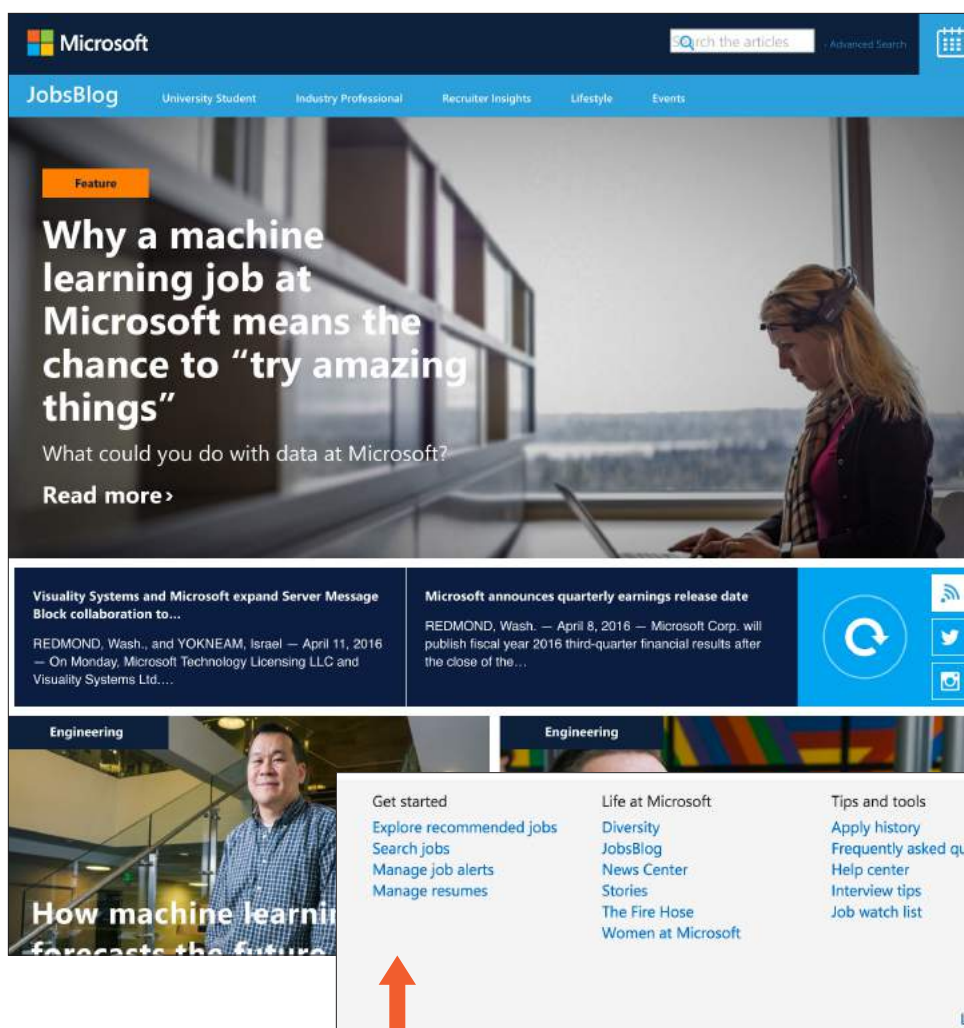
In the box at the right is a sampling of other blogs with listings. Remember, this is not an extensive list; remind students to explore on their own, and consider their brand and professional goals during their searches.

- > [Brazen Blog](#) from Brazen.com
- > [Mashable Jobs](#) from Mashable.com
- > [Women for Hire](#) from Tory Johnson
- > [Simply Hired Blog](#) from SimplyHired.com

EMPLOYER BLOGS

Students today can learn about organizational culture, success stories, and work life thanks to employer blogs. This forum has also become an avenue for students interested in a particular organization to discover job and internship


opportunities available. More importantly, it provides insider information to help strengthen their application or decide if the company is the right fit for them.



GET CONNECTED TO THE OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS FROM THE BLOG AND NEVER MISS AN UPDATE.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CAREERS LANDING PAGE, THERE IS ACCESS TO THE JOB LISTING PAGE AND THE ABILITY TO SET UP JOB ALERTS.

Here's another example from Google:




Google news and updates especially for students


Google Interns' Top 5 Interview Tips

July 29, 2015


At Google Students, we're all about providing content *for* students, *by* students. So, we asked over 100 Google interns for their best resume and interview tips. Last week, we shared their [top 5 resume tips](#). This week, we're sharing their top 5 interviewing tips (and a bonus tip for the coding interview):




Talk through your answers. Oftentimes, your thought process is just as important (if not more important) as the answer.



- 1. Think out loud**
Oftentimes, there's a tendency to only speak in interviews when you have a fully fleshed-out answer. However, in Google interviews, we're just as interested in your thought process as we are in your final answer. So, don't be afraid to think out loud and talk through how you're planning on approaching the problem and what steps you'd take to tackle it, especially when the question is complex.
- 2. Practice using the CAR technique to answer questions with stories**
Stories are a brilliant way to paint a picture of your skills for the interviewer. Instead of just saying, "Everywhere I've worked, I've been a leader," share a specific story of a time that you exhibited





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Not only do blogs give students important insights, but they educate readers on how to prepare for interviews with their company, and more. Through employee or intern spotlights, they will list actual job titles, which can aid in a job or internship search outside of blogs.

KEYWORDS IN THE BLOGOSPHERE

The final piece to help students find job and internship listings on a blog is to stress the importance of keywords. As mentioned in the “Creating a Strong Profile and Personal Brand” section, SEO is crucial to blogging. This rule

applies when students are blog contributors and want to be found, or when they are blog explorers and want to find something. If they search for professional opportunities on a blog, remind them to use keywords for the industry, organization, and job function. In other words, they need to “walk” the industry “walk.” If they incorporate buzzwords for their field of interest, they will most likely find related jobs and resources in the blogosphere.

For example, a search for “top design blogs” yielded the list below and one of the blogs included a job board for designers.



In the end, blogs are dynamic platforms that present a robust range of professional information, an opportunity for students to showcase their skills and voices, and a place to find job or internship listings.

Especially for those who are considering writing in the future, but certainly not exclusively for these

students, blogging is a viable means to put forth a voice on the web. With methods to build a brand, connect with others, and find jobs, students can consider writing a blog as more than a personal or study abroad journal and start to view it as an opportunity to develop professionally.

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