



Your Career Readiness journal

Welcome!

With this journal, you'll connect what you've learned in college and through Career Readiness videos and simulations to the skills employers value.

You will:

- **Capture** important details about your experiences.
- **Reflect** on the questions that apply to you.
- **Prepare** to confidently share your story in interviews and during your career.

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Reflection Questions

- **Choose** the questions below that you feel match your experiences. You don't have to answer every question.
- **Write** down what you've learned and how you've applied your skills.
- **Practice** shaping your experiences into a clear story you can share.

You have experience!

Experience doesn't just come from paid work. Consider all your classes, activities, and experiences, such as:

- Class projects
- Competitions
- Internships
- Leadership roles
- Study abroad
- Team sports
- Theater & music performance
- Volunteer work

Adapting to change

- Describe a time when you faced something unexpected. How did you handle it?
- Describe a time when you didn't achieve a goal you were aiming for. What did you learn?

Building inclusive connections

- How have you built meaningful connections with people who have different perspectives or backgrounds?
- When working with people you don't know well, how do you build trust and strong working relationships?

Communication

- How have you used communication to build relationships, solve problems, or collaborate effectively in different settings?
- When preparing a presentation, what strategies do you use to make it successful?



Details

Think of an experience that taught you something important. Stuck? Questions to consider:

- What happened?
- What was your role?
- What challenges did you face?
- What actions did you take?
- What did you learn or achieve?

Break it down

- What specific actions did you take?
- What skills helped you succeed?
- How did you make an impact?

Giving & receiving feedback

- Describe a time you gave feedback to help someone improve a project such as a presentation, performance, or essay. How did you incorporate positive feedback as well as your suggestions for improvement?
- Describe a time you received feedback. How did you incorporate the feedback to make your project better?

Leadership

- How did you inspire or guide others?
- How do you show respect for people with different backgrounds, beliefs, and perspectives?

Learning from mistakes

- Describe a time you made a mistake. What happened?
- What did you learn from the experience? How will you avoid similar mistakes in the future?

Problem-solving

- What's a challenge you've overcome with creative thinking?
- Have you ever worked on a project or task where the rules weren't clear? What steps did you take to figure it out?

Teamwork

- How did you work with others to achieve a goal?
- How would you delegate a task to a team member?

Technology

- How have you used technology to complete tasks, adapt to new tools, or improve your work?
- How do you go about learning new technology?

Time management

- How did you balance multiple tasks successfully?
- Have you ever missed a deadline? What did you do?



Sharing your story

Checklist for a great story

- Highlights your strengths and growth
- Has a beginning, middle, & end
- Is clear, concise, & easy to follow
- Connects to the skills employers value



Interview prep tip

As you prepare for an interview, think about how you can tell your story in a way that fits this structure:

“During [experience], I [actions], using [skills], which led to [outcome].”

As you prepare to begin your professional career, you might be nervous about what to say in job interviews, especially if you’ve never interviewed for a job before. This journal can be a tool as you prepare.

Review what you wrote in response to the reflection questions.

Consider how to put the pieces together and tell your story in a way that highlights your strengths.

Worried you don’t have enough experience? Refer to the **You have experience!** sidebar to help you identify life experiences you have that might be relevant to share with potential employers and in work settings.

Example

This fictional scenario shows how you can use your journal to reflect on your experiences and to prepare for interviews.

Communication

- How have you used communication to build relationships, solve problems, or collaborate effectively in different settings?

Last semester, I led the group for a group project for my psychology class. None of us had met before being assigned to work together so I suggested we meet for lunch and get to know each other before we got started on the project. We didn’t make any decisions at lunch, but I got a sense of our different personalities and communication styles. I went to our first working meeting with a good idea of how to get us started on the right foot.



- When preparing a presentation, what strategies do you use to make it successful?

I paid attention to our different strengths and helped keep everything organized. One of the people in the group was an art student so I asked her to make our slides look nice. And another was a communication major and liked writing so I asked him to work with me on writing and editing the content. The other woman was chatty and confident—she'd been active in class discussions all semester—so I knew she'd be the best person to lead the actual presentation in class. We were all assigned different areas to research, and when our classmates asked us questions after the presentation we each answered the questions that were pertinent to our sections.

Sharing my story

I'm proud of the psychology project—it was an intensive project, relevant to my major, and my group got a great grade! So I want to be prepared to talk about it in my first job interview in a few days.

I'm referring to the tip above; I want to make sure the way I practice the story incorporates these elements:

Example:

"During [experience], I [actions], using [skills], which led to [outcome]."

My story:

As the leader of this in-depth group project, I used communication and organizational skills to facilitate a friendly environment, to identify everyone's strengths, and to organize tasks logically. Not only did we get an A on our project but we also gave an engaging presentation. At the end, our classmates asked us a lot of interesting questions (which, of course, we were very prepared to field)!

That's how I'm going to practice. The job I'm interviewing for involves public speaking and working in teams, so I think this will be a great story to tell! I feel more confident about the interview knowing that I have relevant experience and a story I can share.

