

**Your Path** to the  
**World of IT**

*Career Guide*



For more information, visit our website at [www.nisgtc.org](http://www.nisgtc.org)

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# Fast Track to IT *information*

The National Information Security and Geospatial Technologies Consortium (**NISGTC**) is funded by a Department of Labor grant awarded in 2011. The grant offers services to individuals who are seeking short-term training and job placement assistance in Information Technology.

Collin College leads a nationwide consortium of seven colleges that are committed to providing students with the academic and career support that they need to succeed in information technology industries.

## Grant Benefits

- Many labs available 24/7
- Free IT-specific tutoring for success
- Variety of internships
- Interaction with IT experts
- Targeted workshops designed to hone interviewing skills
- Resume assistance
- Targeted IT Job Fairs and placement
- Transcender™ Test Prep Software

## Programs of Study

- Cybersecurity
- Geospatial Technology
- Mobile Apps/  
Programming
- Networking

## Career Coaches

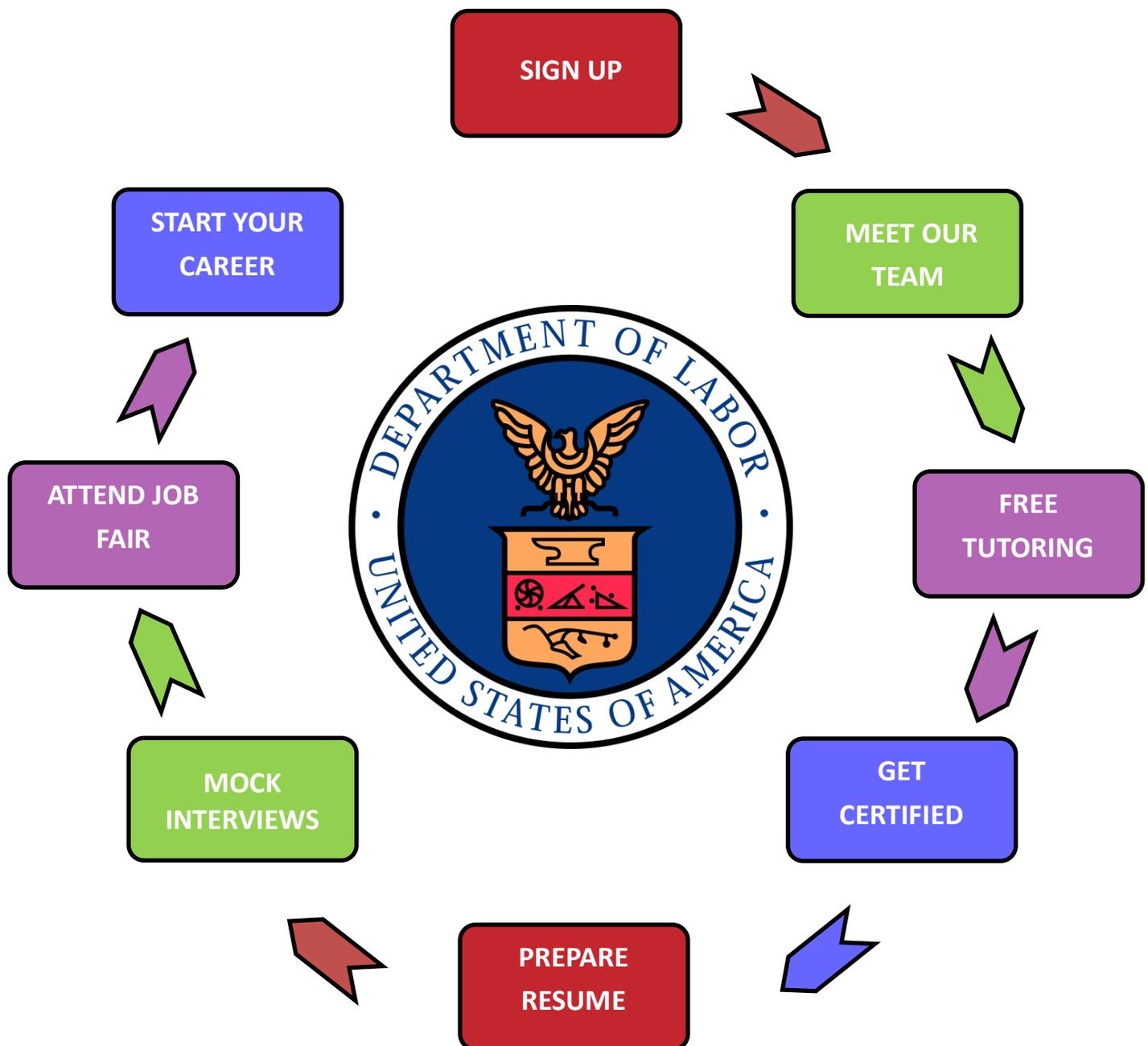
- Susie Davisson (Spring Creek D105)  
469.365.1814
- Diane Ganze (Preston Ridge H240)  
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- Amanda Hamm (Preston Ridge F144)  
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Collin College Career Coaches: (from left) Amanda, Diana, Jim, Susie and Diane

# Student Success Life Cycle

*Where are YOU in the process?*



1

## Become a Participant

- Ask a Career Coach for a participant form or find one online at [www.nisgtc.org](http://www.nisgtc.org)

2

## Meet our Team

- Meet with the Career Coaches
- Check out our Tutoring Den

3

## Free Tutoring

- Seek assistance with your coursework from our Department of Labor IT tutors

4

## Free Workshops and Events

- Resume preparation, interview skills, LinkedIn, etc.

5

## Get Certified!

- Access our study resources: Transcender™ Test Prep Software
- Take tests for CompTIA, Cisco, VMware and more!

6

## Prepare your Resume and LinkedIn Account

- Set up a meeting with a Career Coach
- Participate in mock interviews

7

## Attend IT Job Fair

- Get ready to attend our IT Job Fair by participating in a resume workshop and mock interview

8

**Start Your Career!**

# Certifications

## Q & A

### What is a Certification?

Certification is a formal validation of your knowledge through high-stakes testing. For vendor neutral certifications (such as CompTIA) the knowledge validated pertains to a particular type of technology, but not to a specific vendor. For vendor certifications, the knowledge validated typically concerns the knowledge and skills needed to support a particular vendor product.

### Why Certify?

Certification affects your career, your company's success, and even your country's ability to compete globally. With such rapid technology growth, people who stay ahead of the technology curve increase their own competitive edge and improve their company's ability to react quickly to changes.

		Description
CompTIA A+		A foundational certification for entry level technicians. Designed to certify the competency of entry-level PC computer service professionals in installing, maintaining, customizing and operating personal computers.
CompTIA Network+		Designed to test the competency of a mid-level network technician in supporting and configuring TCP/IP clients in terms of network design, cabling, hardware setup, configuration, installation, support and troubleshooting.
CompTIA Security+		CompTIA Security+ not only ensures that candidates will apply knowledge of security concepts, tools and procedures to react to security incidents, it ensures that security personnel are anticipating security risks and guarding against them.
CompTIA Linux+		CompTIA Linux+ Powered by LPI is a high-stakes, vendor-neutral certification that validates the fundamental knowledge and skills required of junior Linux administrators.
Cisco CCNA		Validates the ability to install, configure, operate and troubleshoot medium-size routed and switched networks, including implementation and verification of connections to remote sites in a WAN.
Cisco CCNP		Validates the ability to plan, implement, verify and troubleshoot local and wide-area enterprise networks and work collaboratively with specialists on advanced security, voice, wireless and video solutions.
Microsoft MCSA		Helps you advance your career by showing employers and clients that you have the skills to successfully configure, manage and maintain a Windows server enterprise system.
Microsoft MCSE		Validates the skills needed to run a highly efficient and modern data center, with expertise in systems management, virtualization and networking.
VMware VCP5		Confirms the education needed to successfully install, deploy, scale and manage VMware vSphere environments.

Source: [learnkey.com/Certification\\_Tracks](http://learnkey.com/Certification_Tracks)

Source: [learnkey.com/Certification\\_Tracks](http://learnkey.com/Certification_Tracks)

Source: [certification.comptia.org](http://certification.comptia.org)

Source: [netacad.com/web/about-us/courses-and-certifications](http://netacad.com/web/about-us/courses-and-certifications)

Source: [microsoft.com/learning/en-us/certification-overview.aspx](http://microsoft.com/learning/en-us/certification-overview.aspx)

Source: [mylearn.vmware.com/portals/certification/](http://mylearn.vmware.com/portals/certification/)

# Careers In Technology

## *and Quick Facts*

### Computer Systems Analyst

Computer Systems Analysts study an organization's current computer systems and procedures and make recommendations to management to help the organization operate more efficiently and effectively. They bring business and IT together by understanding the needs and limitations of both.

SALARY: \$24/hr or higher

### Database Administrator

Database Administrators figure out effective ways to arrange, track and store information for businesses and other organizations. A Database Administrator may also be in charge of designing and coordinating database security systems to safeguard computer databases.

SALARY: \$20/hr or higher



### GIS

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Specialists work with related software and programs to create and maintain data and/or maps that can be combined with geographically referenced data. GIS software has the capacity to relate different types of data such as socioeconomic, demographic, administrative or political boundaries, land use, land cover, environmental, infrastructure and transportation networks.

SALARY: \$18/hr or higher

### Security Specialist

Security Specialists help ensure that a company's computers and network systems are protected. They may perform security tests or design and install security systems. Once a company's systems are installed, specialists are responsible for monitoring and maintenance.

SALARY: \$23/hr or higher

### Network Administrator

Aside from maintaining a healthy computer network, these professionals also lend their technical knowledge to managing networks.

SALARY: \$20/hr or higher

### IT Manager

As the head of the IT department, the manager ensures that a company's network is operating smoothly and that dangerous threats like hackers and malware are kept at bay.

SALARY: \$22/hr or higher

### Systems Administrator

A Systems Administrator performs installation, configuration, administration and maintenance of servers, server software, network devices, and server storage. They analyze system, network, and storage performance in order to maintain quality of service and high availability for all business users.

SALARY: \$20/hr or higher

### Mobile App Developer

Mobile App Developers are software engineers that create applications for handheld devices such as mobile phones or tablets. They need to know how to create an easy to use user interface. It's helpful to have some general skills in common programming languages and database management.

SALARY: \$27/hr or higher



For more info, check out the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics—Occupational Outlook Handbook!

Source: [www.bls.gov/ooH/](http://www.bls.gov/ooH/)

# Resume essentials

First Name Last Name  
Contact Info (i.e. Phone # & Email)

**RESUME HEADLINE:** A resume headline is a brief phrase that highlights your value as a candidate to this business.

i.e. **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST**

i.e. **IT Professional with Five Years of Experience in Software Support**

## SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS/ACHIEVEMENTS

In this section, you are replacing the Objective by providing 3-5 concise sentences summarizing your most pertinent experience & qualifications. This is customized for the position you are seeking.

- Eight years of experience working in the \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank) industry
- Demonstrated ability to adapt to new equipment & technology
- Resourceful in solving problems and maximizing resources
- Collaborates easily with co-workers and works well independently
- Performs effectively despite sudden deadlines and changing priorities

## CORE TECHNICAL SKILLS

In this section, list all technical skills including, but not limited to, the following:

- Operating Systems
- Hardware & Software
- Specific Programming Languages
- Web-Based Technologies

## INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS

In this section, list all relevant industry certifications including, but not limited to, the following:

- Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist, (Month Year)
- Cisco Certified Network Associate, (Month Year)

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In this section, list all education including degrees, certificates and training.

- Name of Educational Institution – City, State
- Degree Major, Year Completed or Year Degree will be completed

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Begin with most recent experience or most relevant.

Organization Name / Employer — City, State

Job Title / Position Title ——— Month Year – Month Year

- List important duties & responsibilities
- Use bullets as needed to *best describe* your experience

REFERENCES Available Upon Request

### RESUME TIPS

- ⇒ Tailor your resume to the specific position for which you're applying.
- ⇒ Use action words to describe your work skills.
- ⇒ Use KEY WORDS from the job description.
- ⇒ Proofread it for grammar, punctuation and spelling errors.
- ⇒ Save references & personal data for the interview.
- ⇒ Include a cover letter with your resume.

Source: [worksmart.ca.gov/tips.resume.html](http://worksmart.ca.gov/tips.resume.html)

Check out the  
[www.NISGTC.org](http://www.NISGTC.org)  
Website for more tips  
& info!

# Cover Letter *essentials*

**Job Description**

**Key Words**

**good first impression**

## Tips for Writing Effective Cover Letters

- ⇒ **Customize and use names:** Customize each cover letter you send — addressed to the specific hiring manager (if you can find the name by calling the company or through research online).
- ⇒ **Speak the right language:** Consider the recipient of your information. Is the organization conservative and traditional or creative and entrepreneurial? Do your research!
- ⇒ **State the reason you're writing:** Always tell the reader why you're writing, but be tactical about it. To reply to an advertised job, name the position title and where you saw the advertisement.
- ⇒ **Explain why you're a top candidate:** Your basic message should be: "Here are examples of work I've done and accomplishments I've achieved that match what you're looking for." Because you've researched the company online, you're able to show why your skills and competencies are right for the job and can benefit the company.
- ⇒ **Accomplishments are job offer magnets:** Employers hire for results, not responsibilities. And they like numbers — insert percentages, dollar amounts or other key measures wherever possible to quantify achievements and accomplishments.
- ⇒ **Declare what's next:** In closing your letter, reprise your enthusiasm, confirm your desire for an interview and state what the next step will be. Preferably, you use an action close, telling the recipient that you will follow up and when that will happen. In some instances, you will have to wait for them to contact you.
- ⇒ **Read and reread:** Go beyond using your computer's spell checker tool to review your cover letters for typos and grammatical errors. Reading aloud often helps.

**Relevant information**

**Strong personalization**

**Interesting to read**

# Getting Started *with your job search*

## Networking is #1

Networking involves telling everyone you know and meet about your career goals. Good sources are school alumni, clubs and professional organizations, mentors and teachers. Remember people cannot help you if they don't know you are looking for an opportunity.

## LinkedIn

- Create a professional profile that portrays your skills, education, certifications and job history. Make sure the profile is complete with a professional picture. If you need assistance with the picture, see Diana Sukut at Collin College.
- Join groups of shared interests to network and stay current with the industry trends. Recruiters and employers are also on LinkedIn and this is a great avenue to create relationships with them.

**Remember:** As useful a tool as virtual networking is, it is still extremely important to create relationships with industry professionals in the real world.



### Ways to Take your LinkedIn Profile from Good to Great



Source: slideshare.net/linkedin

**Profile Picture** - Adding a profile picture makes your profile 7x more likely to be viewed by others.

**Endorsements** - Bolster your professional brand by adding skills your connections can endorse you for and recognize those you've worked with on their professional strengths.

**Summary** - A summary of 40 words or more makes you more likely to turn up in a employers search. Include keywords featured in job descriptions for your field.

**Experience** - Add pictures, videos and presentations to your experience section to create an eye-catching portfolio.

**Volunteer Experience** - Managers say they view volunteer experience as equivalent to formal work experience.

- Dice.com
- ComputerJobs.com
- Indeed.com
- Techfetch.com
- Glassdoor.com
- Computerjobs.com
- Jobspider.com
- Justtechjobs.com
- Sologig.com
- Careers.stackoverflow.com
- Careers.ieee.org
- Computerwork.com

# Interview *tips*

## Top 15 Technical Interview Questions

Source: Doyle, Alison. (2012) Top 50 Technical Interview Questions.

1. What development tools have you used?
2. What languages have you programmed in?
3. What source control tools have you used?
4. What are your technical certifications?
5. What do you do to maintain your technical certifications?
6. How did your education help prepare you for this job?
7. How would you rate your key competencies for this job?
8. What are your IT strengths and weaknesses?
9. Tell me about the most recent project you worked on. What were your responsibilities?
10. From the description of this position what do you think you will be doing on a day-to-day basis?
11. What challenges would you expect in this job if you were hired?
12. How important is it to work directly with your business users?
13. What elements are necessary for a successful team and why?
14. Tell me about the project you are most proud of and what your contribution was.
15. Give an example of where you have applied your technical knowledge in a practical way.



### Post Interview Follow-up

- Immediately send a thank you letter or email to show your appreciation for the interview. This also demonstrates your interest in the position.
- Call the interviewer within 24 hours. Reiterate your interest and qualifications.
- Reach out to your references. Make sure they are aware they could be contacted.

## Interview Attire

### Women's Interview Attire

- Solid color, conservative suit
- Coordinated blouse
- Moderate shoes
- Limited jewelry
- Neat, professional hairstyle
- Tan or light hosiery
- Sparse make-up & perfume
- Manicured nails
- Portfolio or briefcase

### Men's Interview Attire

- Solid color, conservative suit
- White long sleeve shirt
- Dark socks, professional shoes
- Very limited jewelry
- Neat, professional hairstyle
- Go easy on the aftershave
- Neatly trimmed nails
- Portfolio or briefcase

Business Professional —Yes

Business Casual—Not  
Usually



*Collin County Community College District is an equal opportunity institution and provides education and employment opportunities without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin disability or veteran status. For more information contact ACCESS at 972.881.5898V/TDD. For persons with hearing or speech impairments please use the Texas Relay Services when offices or departments on campus do not list a TDD number. The Texas Relay number is 1.800.735.2989 (TDD).*

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