



## Understanding Your Natural Strengths, Professional Identity and Leadership Style for Career Development

*Using the Clifton Strengths for Students Assessment  
(formerly Strengths Quest)*

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# DISCOVER YOURSELF

? | WHO AM I?

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- **Objective #1** — The Role of Self-Assessment in Academic Training and Career Development
- **Objective #2** — Self-Assessment Domains
- **Objective #3** — Assessing your Strengths – Strengths-Based Decision Making and Professional Development.
- **Objective #4** — Strengths in Action: Getting to Know Your Strengths for Learning, Earning and Leading

## About Me:

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## Scott Borden

30 Years RU Career Exploration & Success Office  
NJ Private Counseling Practice  
Counselor and Counseling Intern Trainer/Supervisor

### *Clifton Strengths Top Five:*

1. Empathy
2. Ideation
3. Positivity
4. Harmony
5. Strategic

# Your Turn -- Clifton Strengths Top 5 Introduction...



*Hello!*

1. My name is...
2. My Top 5 Strengths...
3. What I would like to take away from this program today...

# My Dominant Hand Activity (Strengths in Action)



## *Are you right or left-handed...?*

1. Take out a piece of paper
2. Get a pen or pencil
3. Sign your name as you normally would.  
(Describe what that activity was like)
4. Now, sign your name using your other (non-preferred) hand. Describe what that experience was like.
  - \* *How did it feel?*
  - \* *What was different?*

# CAREER JOURNEY MODEL

**PURSUE YOUR GOALS**  
We have events and resources designed to help you to prepare for the job search process and connect you to opportunities.

**DEVELOP SKILLS**  
We can assist you in developing the skills you need to have a competitive advantage in your full-time job search.



**DISCOVER YOURSELF**  
We can help you identify potential options using a combination of self-evaluation questions and career assessments.

**EXPLORE CAREER & MAJORS**  
We can assist you with exploring your major pathways and help you to select a career that is congruent with who you are and what you value.

## Our Assessment – Clifton Strengths Finder for Students

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- **The Clifton Strengths Finder (CSF)**, developed by Gallup under the leadership of educational psychologist Donald O. Clifton.
- Foundation is the individual **strengths philosophy** that has formed the basis for the positive psychology movement.
- Positive psychology is a field that emphasizes optimal human functioning and factors that contribute to a sense of well-being and the ability to contribute productively to society (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).
- This movement studies mental health and optimal performance. In the same way, when Don Clifton first designed the interviews that later became the basis for the Clifton Strengths assessment, he began with the question, *“What would happen if we studied what is right with people?”* (Lopez, Hodges, & Harter, 2005, p. 3).

## Clifton Strengths...

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- The strengths philosophy -- **belief that individuals are able to gain far more when they expend effort to build on their talents than when they spend a comparable amount of effort to remediate their weaknesses** (Clifton & Harter, 2003).
- Clifton believed that these talents were **“naturally recurring patterns of thought, feeling, or behavior that can be productively applied”** (Hodges & Clifton, 2004, p. 257). Strengths are viewed as developed talents.
- A strength is defined as **a talent that was honed with the knowledge and skills needed to achieve excellence.**
- The Clifton Strengths Finder was designed to measure the **raw talents that could then be developed into strengths.**
- The purpose of the instrument is to **identify “signature themes”** (Lopez, Hodges, & Harter, 2005, p. 6) **of talent that can be productively applied to achieve success.**

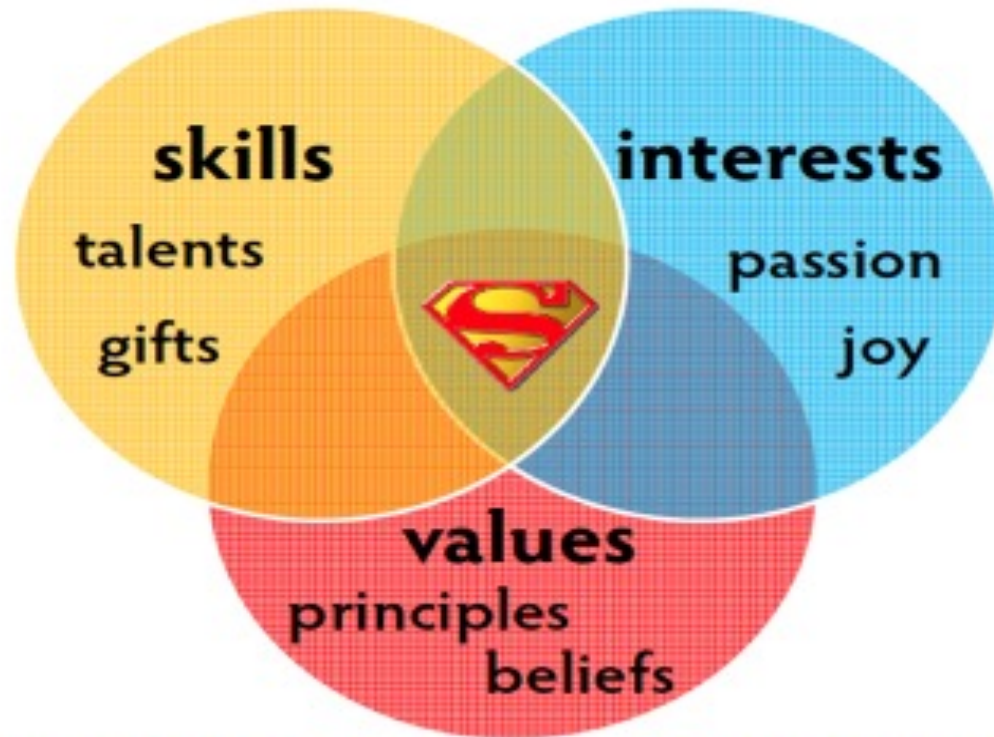


# Defining Your “Strengths”

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*The Sweet  
Spot of Strengths...*

## What exactly is a strength?

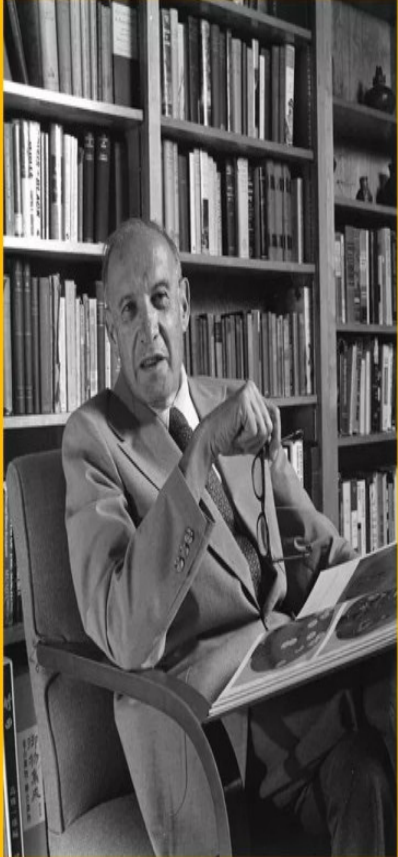


Our strengths are where skills, interests, and values merge,  
and so where we want to grow.

Steve Lee, UC Davis


# When people have an opportunity to use their greatest talents and strengths, they ...

- Experience positive energy
- Are more likely to achieve their goals
- Are more confident
- Perform better at work
- Are more engaged at work
- Experience less stress

A black and white photograph of Peter Drucker sitting in a chair in a library, reading a book. He is wearing a suit and glasses. The background is filled with bookshelves.

“A person can perform only from strength. One cannot build performance on weakness, let alone on something one cannot do at all.”

Peter Drucker

The logo for Leadership Freak, featuring the letters 'LF' in a red square followed by the text 'LEADERSHIP FREAK' in a bold, sans-serif font.

Source: Gallup

## Using Your Natural Strengths – (Gallup) research finds the following:

### *People Who Focus on Using Their Strengths ...*

- Are three times more likely to report having an excellent quality of life
- Are six times more likely to be engaged in their jobs
- Teams that focus on strengths every day have 12.5% greater productivity
- Employees who know and use their strengths are six times as likely to be engaged at work, nearly 8% more productive in their role and much less likely to leave their company.



# Why is self-assessment so important?

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- **Because most don't assess ourselves accurately**
  - Dunning and Kruger effect (1999 & 2003)
  - Crawford, Lang, Fink, Dalton, & Fielitz (2011)
  - Confirmation Bias (Wason, 1960)
- **Because most aren't using their strengths fully**
  - Strengths Based Leadership, p 12
  - Because self-awareness leads to better team performance (Dierdorff & Rubin, HBR, 2015)

# Why is self-assessment so important?

Over past 25 years, the Gallup Organization surveyed over 10mm people worldwide on their workplace engagement (*how positive and productive you are at work*) using the statement:

***“At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best everyday.”***

- Only ⅓ of respondents strongly agree
- Those who agreed - 6x more likely to be engaged in their jobs
- And - 3x more likely to report having an excellent quality of life in general

# Why is self-assessment so important?

- Those who “*disagreed*” or “*strongly disagreed*” reported consistent “*emotional disengagement*” from their jobs.
- Implications for workplace productivity, satisfaction, organizational leadership
- When able to put most energy into developing natural talents, great room for growth and productivity exists



***\* Revised Maxim...You cannot be anything you want to be -- but you can be a lot more of who you already are.***

# Your (Unique) Results!

## *Learning About Your CliftonStrengths Results Talent is only part of the CliftonStrengths equation.*

- Knowledge, skills and experience (practice) are important, too.
- When you intentionally practice using these important traits together, to the point that you can consistently provide near-perfect performance in a given activity, you've developed your CliftonStrengths.
- Takes time and effort.
- You'll likely develop knowledge and skills through your experiences in school, in your work and with hands-on practice. So, let's focus on your talents — *on who you are today.*

*\*To start your journey, let's take a few minutes to reflect on your CliftonStrengths results and what they mean to you...*

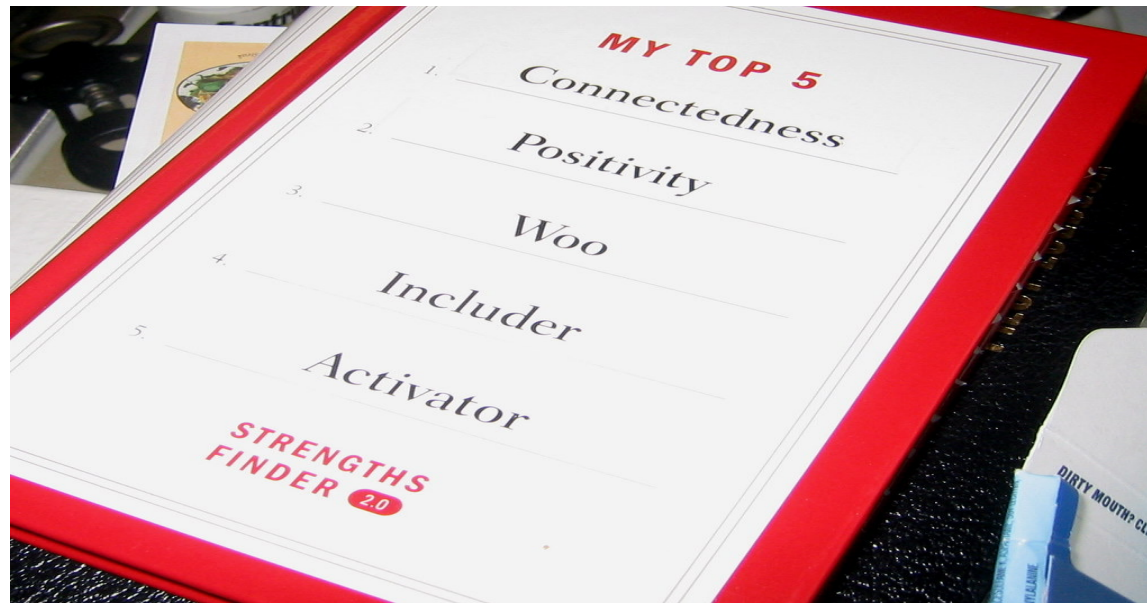


# Your Clifton Strengths Dashboard/Results/Reports

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## [From Your Clifton Strengths Results Dashboard: \(www.strengthsquest.com\)](http://www.strengthsquest.com)

1. Review your Clifton “Top 5” -- “Signature Themes Report”
2. Review your Clifton Strengths for Students report sections - “How This Theme Contributes to Your Success” and “How This Theme Could Get in the Way of Your Success”





## Breakout Groups – # groups TBD and 8 minutes group reading/brainstorming time and 8 minutes full group share and process

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### *There will be a total of two break out group activities:*

1. Each group will participate in this first breakout activity to review, reflect, process, share.
2. Each group member will review his/her/their **Clifton Top 5 Themes** results and process the group activity questions.
3. Each group member will write some brief individual observations to answer the prompted questions and be prepared to share with the larger group when returning from the breakout.



## Breakout Group Activity #1 - Group Question Prompts

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1. What was your first reaction after reviewing your **CliftonStrengths** results?
2. What, if anything, surprised you about your **CliftonStrengths** results?
3. What **fields, career areas, and/or jobs** seem like a good match based on your strengths?
4. Are there **specialty areas/or certain roles in your field of interest** that you think might be a good fit, or that you would like to explore further based on identification/clarification of your dominant strengths? *Examples include: Leadership, Entrepreneur, Sales/Business Development, Research, Teaching, Publishing/Journalism, Finance, etc.*

# Strengths, Awareness and Emerging Leadership

## *Skill Categories and Clusters*

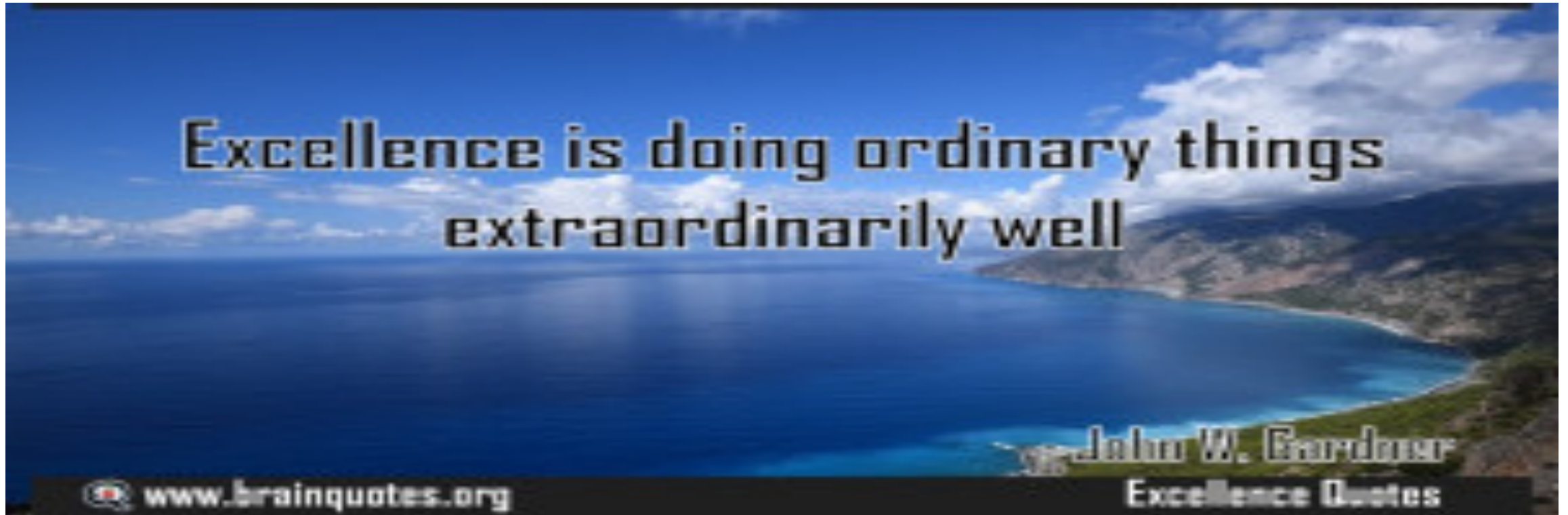
### Strengths-based Leadership Domains

Executing	Influencing	Relationship Building	Strategic Thinking
Achiever	Activator	Adaptability	Analytical
Arranger	Command	Developer	Context
Belief	Communications	Connectedness	Futuristic
Consistency	Competitive	Empathy	Ideation
Deliberative	Maximizer	Harmony	Input
Discipline	Self-Assurance	Includer	Intellection
Focus	Significance	Individualization	Learner
Responsibility	Woo	Positivity	Strategic
Restorative		Relator	

## Group Break Out Activity #2 – 10 mins brainstorm/10 mins group process

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### PICTURE of EXCELLENCE



# Picture of Excellence

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## 1. **Brainstorm alone – write down words or concepts**

- What qualities, characteristics and strengths do you admire in a **leader**?
- What inspires you?

## 2. **What is your vision of an excellent leader?**

- Draw a picture that represents your thinking.

## 3. **Share your thinking with your partner or group**

- \* Explain your drawing and what it represents

# How Do You “Picture” Excellence in Leadership?

*Your Turn...!*

## Examples of a Picture of Excellence



Promotes growth, listens well, lifts team up, supportive, provides opportunities



Wise, knowledgeable, sees the big picture, takes care of those under her wings

# Clifton Strength and Leadership Development

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First introduced in the bestseller *Strengths Based Leadership*, the four domains of CliftonStrengths are:

- **Executing** – *Achiever, Arranger, Belief, Consistency, Deliberative, Discipline, Focus, Responsibility, Restorative*
  - **Influencing** – *Activator, Command, Communications, Competitive, Maximizer, Self-Assurance, Significance, WOO*
  - **Relationship Building** – *Adaptability, Developer, Connectedness, Empathy, Harmony, Includer, Individualization, Positivity, Relator*
  - **Strategic Thinking** – *Analytical, Futuristic, Context, Ideation, Input, Intellection, Learner, Strategic*
- At their core, teamwork and collaboration are all about *partnerships*.
- You can use the domains of CliftonStrengths to better understand your employees, team and leaders --  
*What are they great at? What am I great at? Where do we both struggle? --*  
and know learn/how to best work with them.
- This knowledge helps set your teams for success.

## Executing Domain Skills

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### What Is the Executing Domain of CliftonStrengths?

- These themes answer the **Executing Domain** question "How do you make things happen?" They may help you turn ideas into reality.
- When teams need to implement a solution, they look to people with Executing themes who will work tirelessly to accomplish the goal.





# Influencing Domain

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## What Is the Influencing Domain of CliftonStrengths?

- These themes answer the question "How do you influence others?" They may help you take charge, speak up and make sure others are heard.
- When teams need to sell their ideas inside and outside the organization, they turn to people with Influencing themes to convince others.



# Relationship Building Domain

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## What Is the Relationship Building Domain of CliftonStrengths?

- These themes answer the question "How do you build and nurture strong relationships?"
- They may help you hold a team together.
- When teams need to be greater than the sum of their parts, they turn to people with Relationship Building themes to strengthen their bonds.



## Strategic Thinking Domain

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### What Is the Strategic Thinking Domain of CliftonStrengths?

- These themes answer the question "How do you absorb, think about and analyze information and situations?" They may help you make better decisions and create better outcomes.
- When teams need to focus on what could be, they turn to people with Strategic Thinking themes to stretch the team's thinking for the future.



## In Closing...

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### *Group Process Question:*

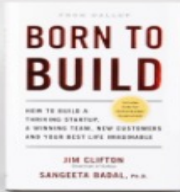
1. What is one professional goal you have for 2023 - 2024?
2. How will you use what you learned today to work on achieving that goal?



**"If you aim at  
nothing, you will hit  
it every time"**

*Author Unknown*

# Strengths-Based Professional Development



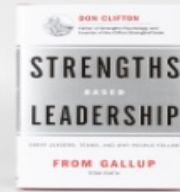
Born to Build

**\$19.99**



CliftonStrengths for Students

**\$19.99**



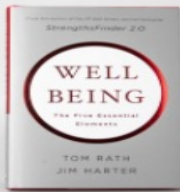
Strengths Based Leadership

**\$19.99**



It's the Manager

**\$19.99**



Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements

**\$19.99**



How Full Is Your Bucket? Expanded Anniversary Edition

**\$19.99**



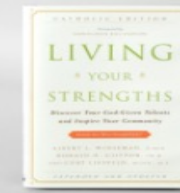
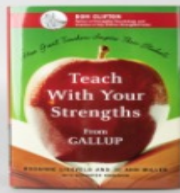
First, Break All the Rules

**\$19.99**



Strengths Based Parenting

**\$19.99**



## Other Self-Assessment Tools

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Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) – Personality Style

DiSC - <https://www.discprofile.com/what-is-disc/>

True Colors - <https://www.truecolorsintl.com/the-four-color-personalities>

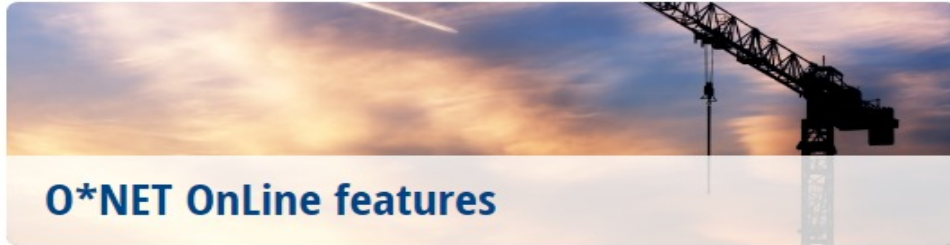
Self-Directed Search – <https://self-directed-search.com/>

Traitify – <https://rutgers.traitify.com/>

ONET – [ononline.org](https://ononline.org)



Q electrician Go



## O\*NET OnLine features

Introduction ▾

Occupation Keyword Search ^

Q dental assistant

Examples: 25-1011.00, dental assistant

Search O\*NET-SOC occupations →

Find Occupations ^

- Bright Outlook
- Career Cluster
- Hot Technology
- Industry
- Job Family
- Job Zone
- STEM
- All Occupations



## More career sites & resources

"I want to be a..."

Start the career you've dreamed about, or find one you never imagined. Discover your interests with the [O\\*NET Interest Profiler](#) and find more exploration options at [My Next Move](#).

Find your career at My Next Move →

**ATTN: VETERANS**

Put your military skills and experience to work in civilian life.

Army (MOS) ▾

Q 15W Go

Learn more at My Next Move for Veterans →

**¿Habla español?**

[Mi Próximo Paso](#) incluye tareas, aptitudes, información sobre salarios y más de 900 carreras diferentes.

Visite Mi Próximo Paso →

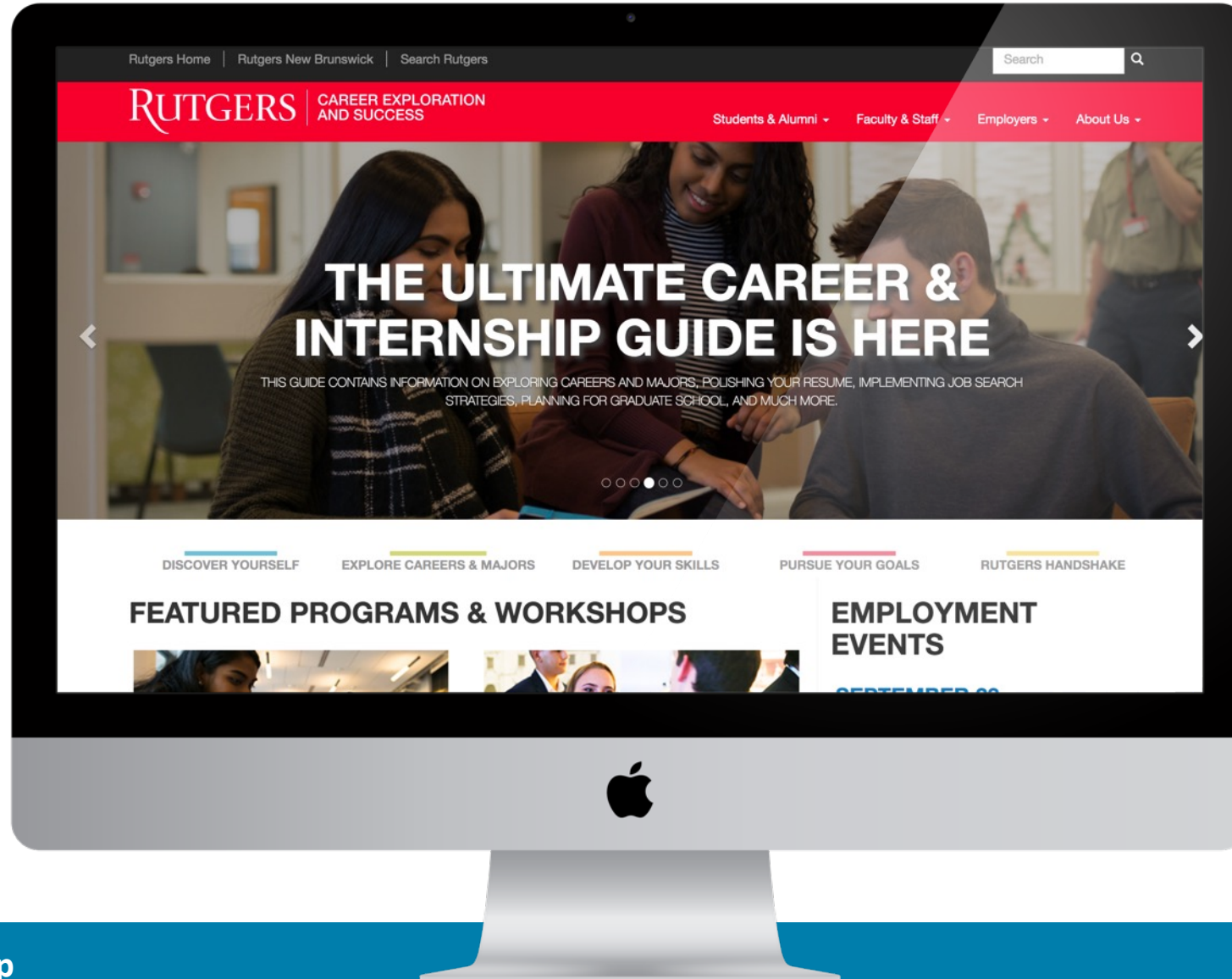
# QUESTIONS





# CAREERS.RUTGERS.EDU WEBSITE

CAREERS.RUTGERS.EDU



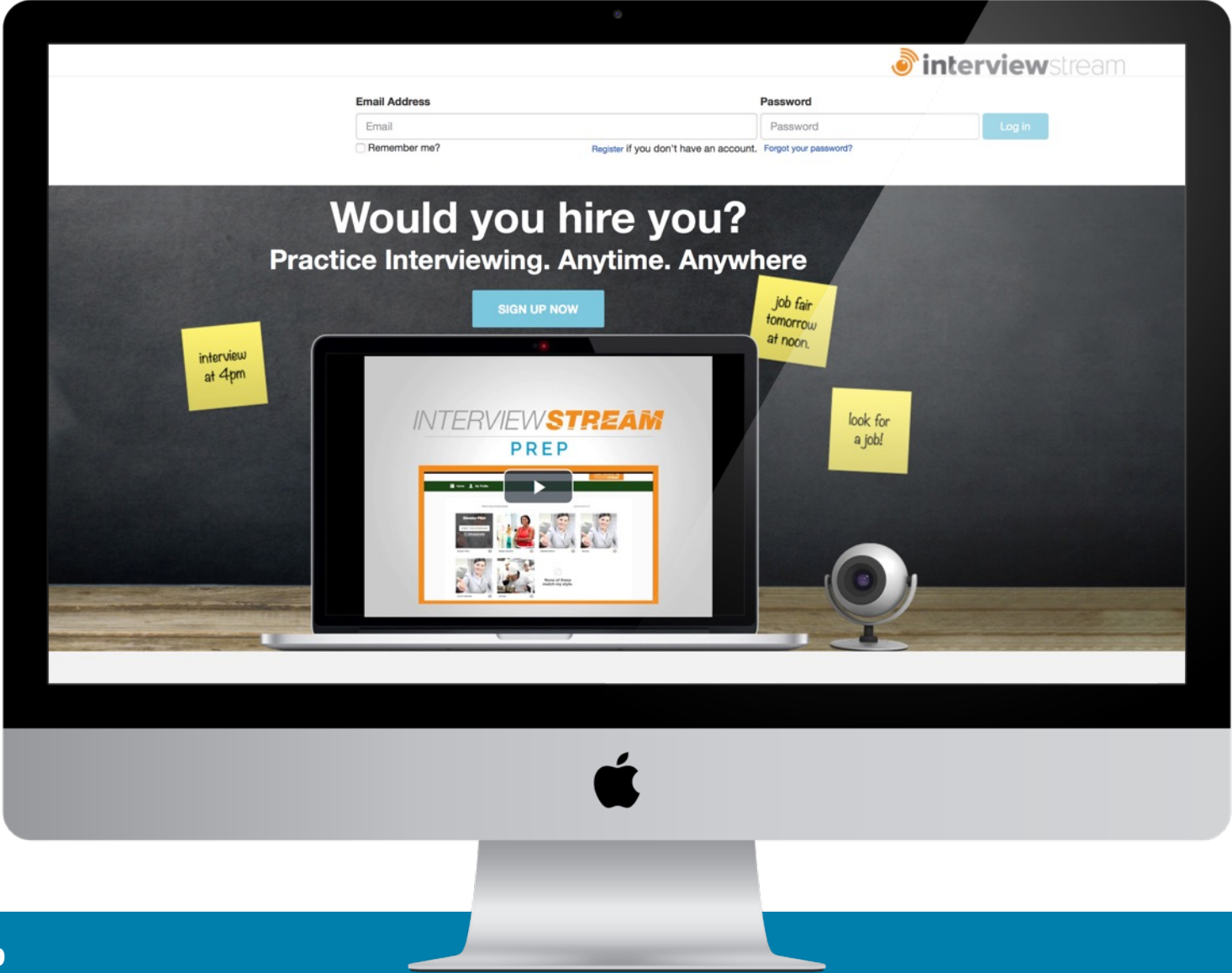
# GOINGLOBAL

CAREERS.RUTGERS.EDU/GOINGLOBAL



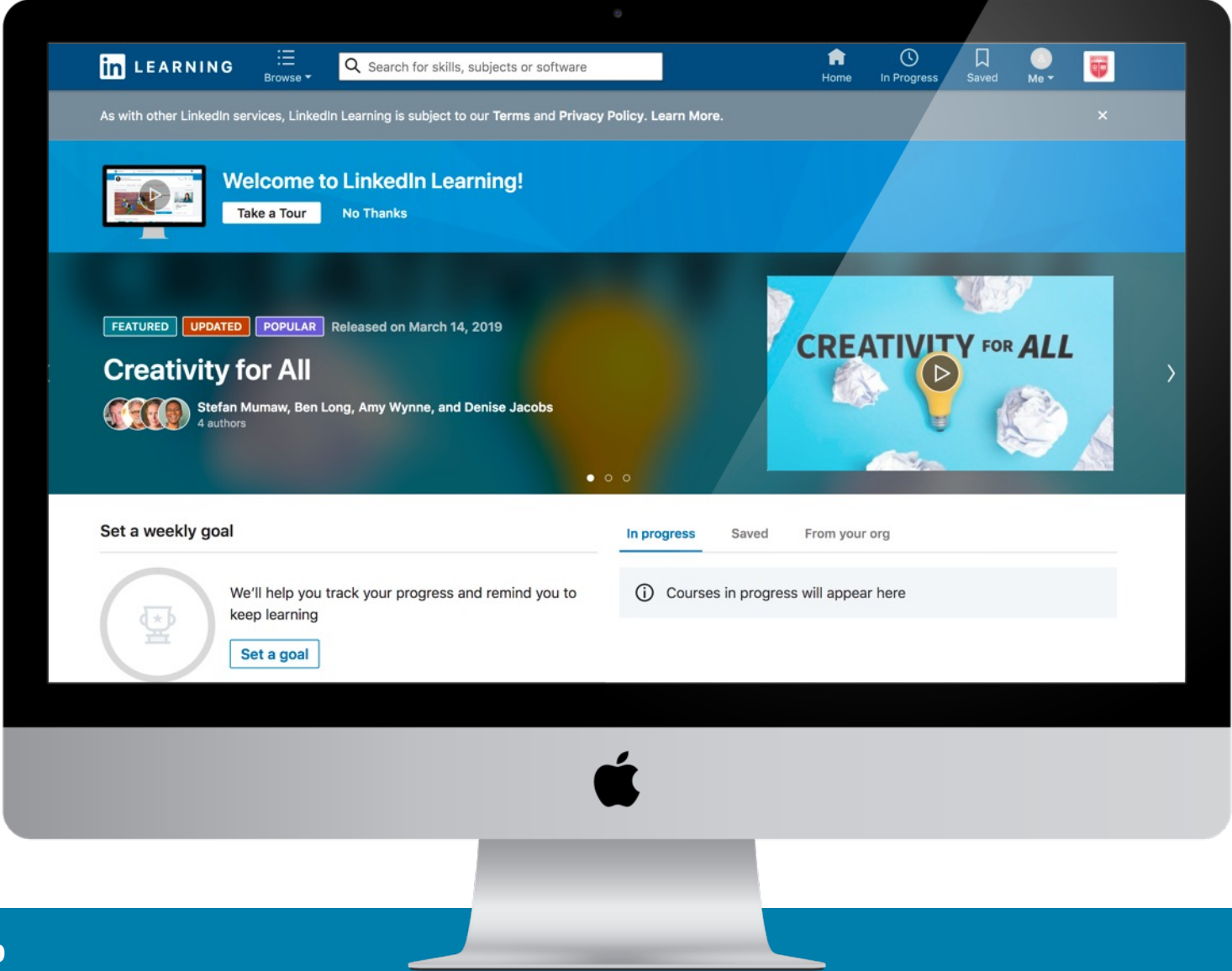
# INTERVIEWSTREAM

CAREERS.RUTGERS.EDU/INTERVIEWSTREAM



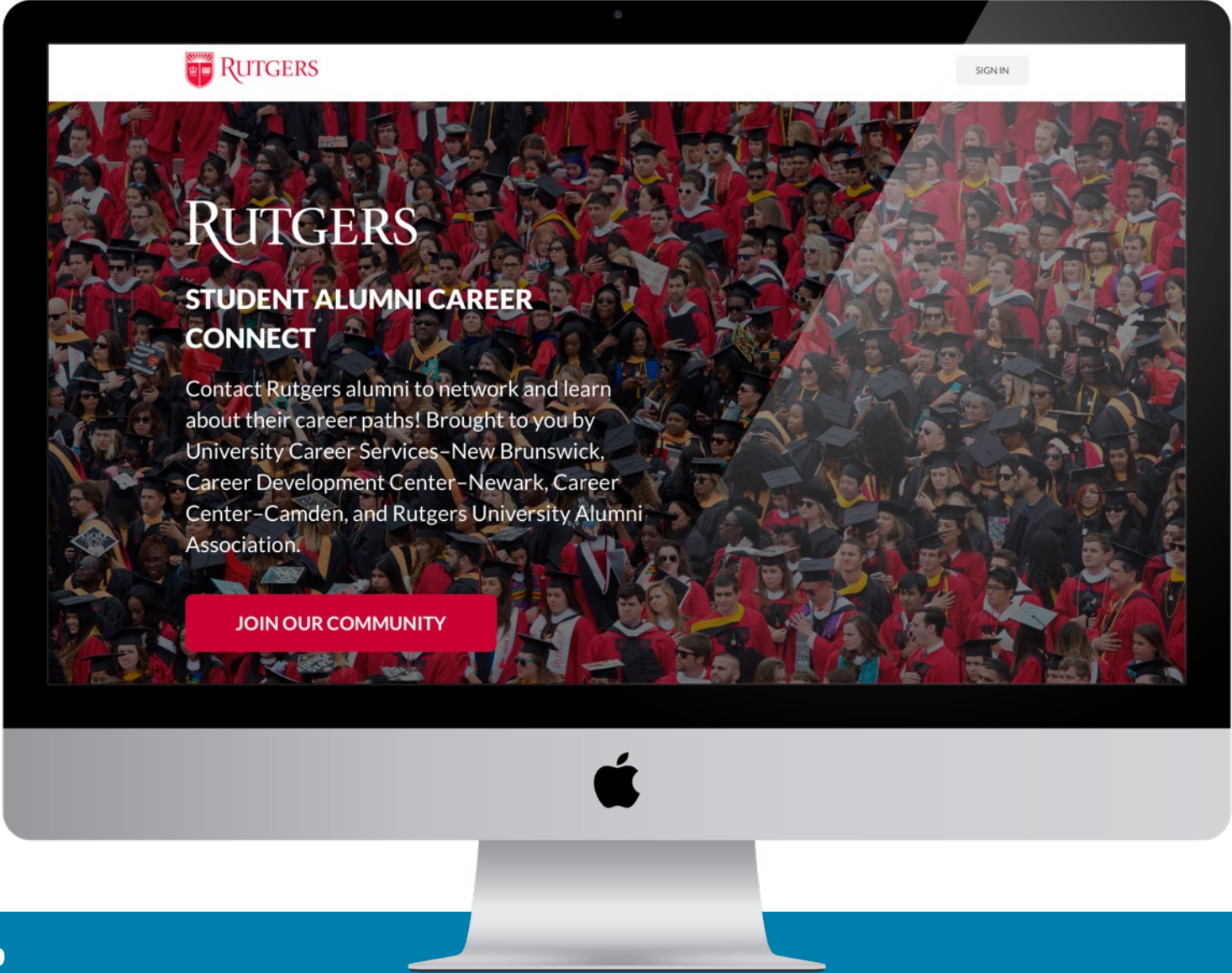
# LINKEDIN LEARNING

CAREERS.RUTGERS.EDU/LINKEDIN



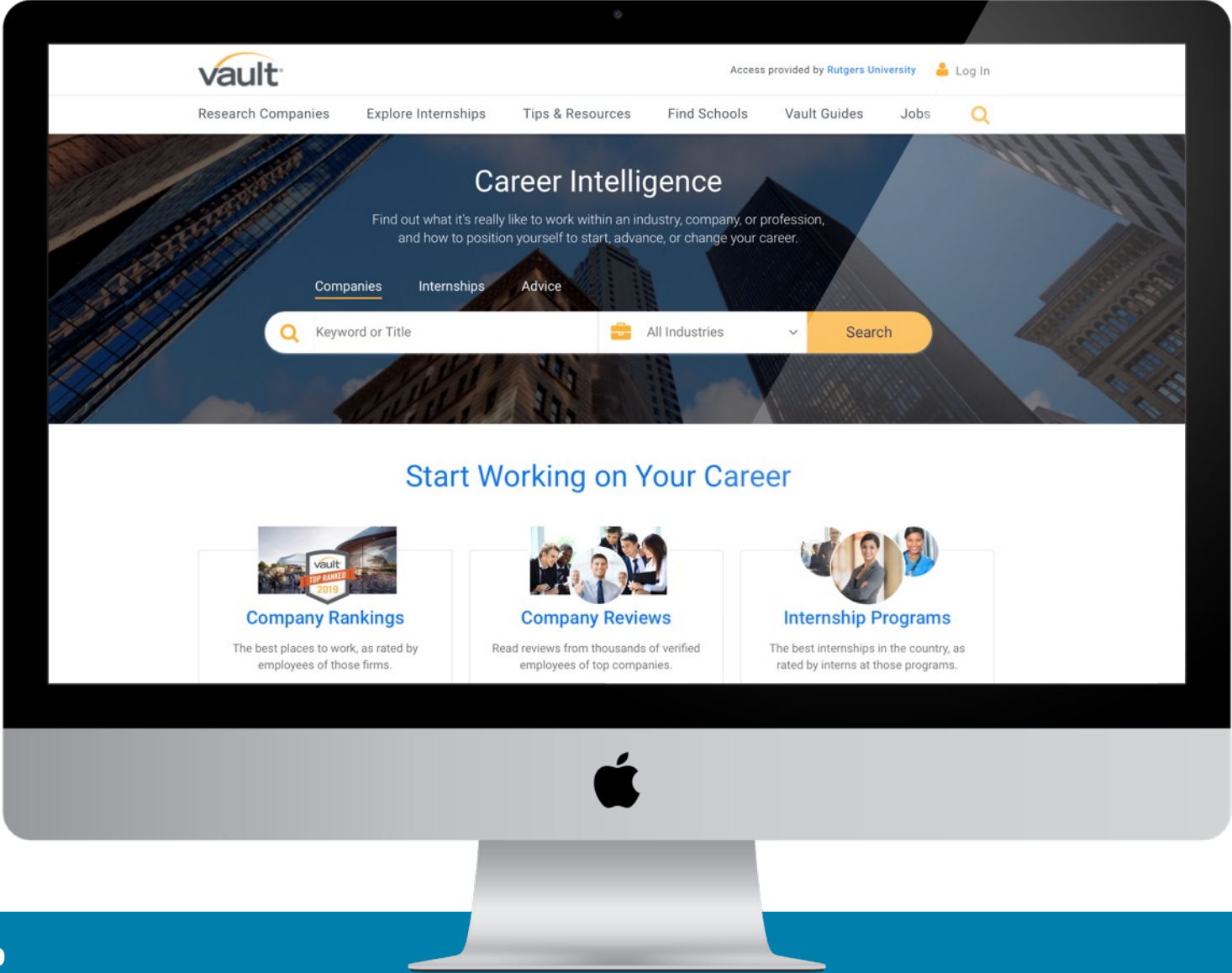
# STUDENT-ALUMNI CAREER CONNECT SYSTEM

CAREERS.RUTGERS.EDU/SACC



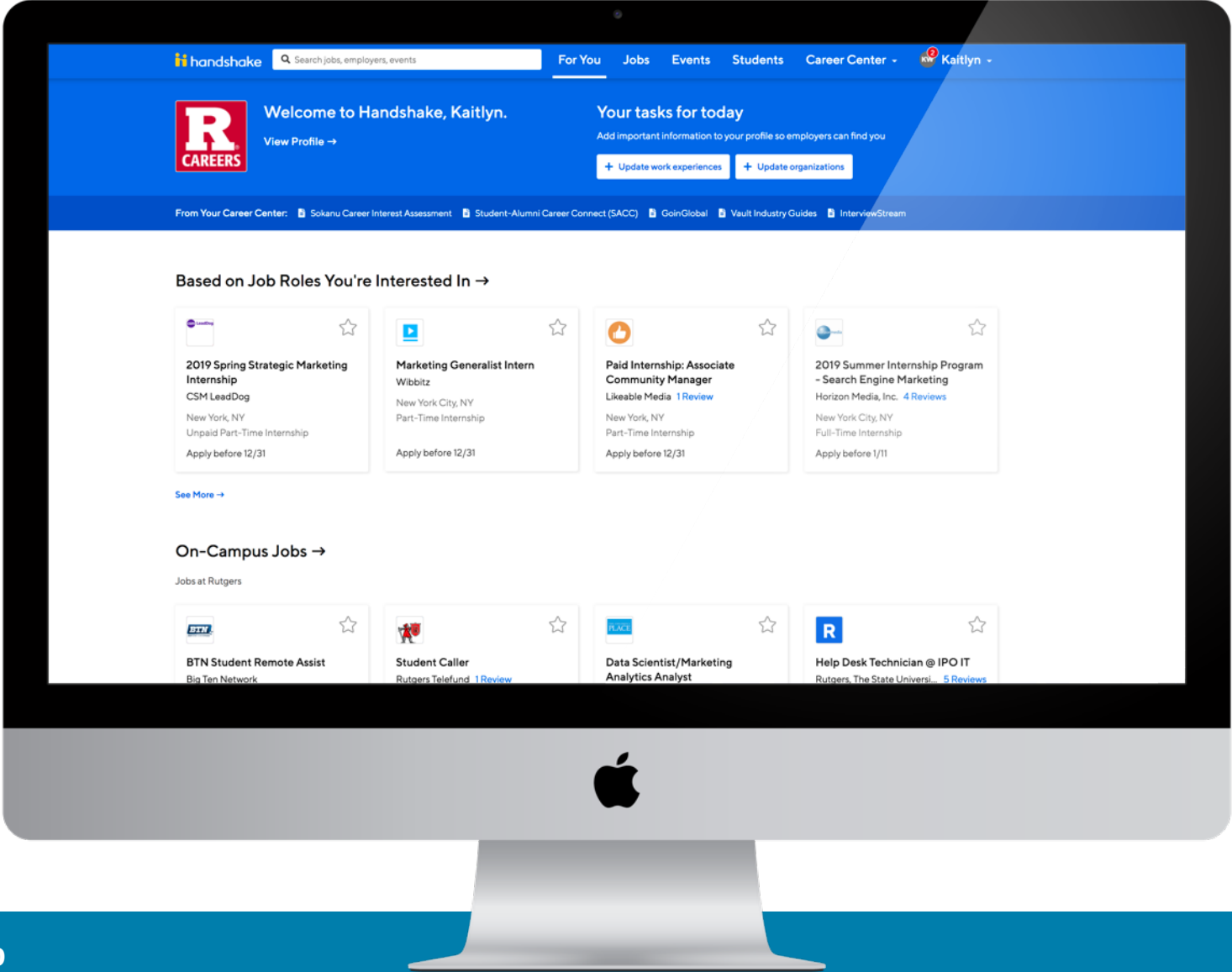
# VAULT CAREER EXPLORATION GUIDES

CAREERS.RUTGERS.EDU/VAULT



# RUTGERS HANDSHAKE

CAREERS.RUTGERS.EDU/HANDSHAKE



# CAREER & INTERNSHIP GUIDE

[CAREERS.RUTGERS.EDU/GUIDE](https://careers.rutgers.edu/guide)







# Thank You!

*Please contact me if I can assist in the future.*

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Career Advisor

Career Exploration and Success

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LinkedIn: Scott Borden LPC

On Handshake – to schedule appointments via Zoom

Connect with us on social media for updates, events, information, and more.



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