

AMERICAN EAGLE OUTFITTERS, INC. RECRUITING TEAMS visit college campuses every year to find **passionate, smart and innovative** students to join our corporate training programs. These programs are designed to give you hands-on experience, immerse you in many aspects of this dynamic brand and prepare you for a career at American Eagle Outfitters.

## **MERCHANDISING**

When you join us as part of the Merchandising Training Program, you immediately begin influencing a \$3+ billion dollar business. Partnered with a coach and a mentor who will foster your personal development, you will learn all of the tools necessary to become a Buyer for AEO Inc., choosing and developing the product assortment in more than 1,000 AE or aerie stores across the nation. In this position, it is not only important to have a **creative understanding of trends**, but you must also have the **ability to make sound, informed business decisions**.

## **MERCHANDISE & INVENTORY PLANNING TRAINING PROGRAM**

This exciting program at AEO Inc. will prepare you for a fast-track career in the Merchandise & Inventory Planning organization within the AEO brands. You will learn the fundamentals of operating a \$3+ billion business where you will have a direct effect on the **bottom line profitability** of your department. You will experience a 16-week rotational program highlighted by experience in Merchandise & Inventory Planning. You will have a Mentor guiding you along the way and a Coach for each rotation. Upon successful completion of the program, you will be assigned to one of the two areas that you trained in based on your talent and business need.

## **TRAINING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

- Minimum of **a Bachelor's Degree** is required from a top tier college or university
- Minimum overall **GPA of 3.0**
- **Strong business acumen** through classes, internships or prior work experience
- **Passion for retail** and **knowledge of the AEO customer**
- In **touch with current trends** in retail and with our target customer
- **Strong influential communication style**; ability to sell your ideas with confidence
- **Cross-functional collaboration and leadership skills**
- Proven ability to gain results in a **fast paced environment**; a high sense of urgency

My research online showed that they go by the motto "Live Your Life, Love Your Job." It also showed their core values are integrity, passion, and teamwork. Their work environment is collaborative and team oriented. They operate under two brands: American Eagle Outfitters and Aerie. Their ideal market is 20 year old men and women college students. The branches of the business include corporate office, stores, and distribution centers with their headquarters in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The average starting salary for my major of supply chain management is \$72,000.

To: Professor Christine Grogan  
From: Penn State Student  
Date: 12 October 2015  
Subject: Cover Memo for Project 3 Job Application Packet

Attached to this cover memo is my completed Project 3 Job Application Packet. Included in the packet are a copy of the job advertisement, my accomplishments and qualifications audit, my resume, a cover letter, a letter of recommendation request, and an interview follow up email. All of these documents have been formatted and edited to fit the job description of the Merchandise and Inventory Planning Training Program for American Eagle Outfitters. This cover memo provides explanations to decisions I made regarding a few of the previously mentioned documents.

### **Decisions Made**

The macro view of the decisions I made when creating this job packet for American Eagle Outfitters was to appeal to the company in a professional manner. In my field, regardless of the company, the supply chain role is extremely important and requires someone who is going to work hard and get the job accomplished correctly. For this reason, I did not feel comfortable styling my documents in a creative manner. However, because American Eagle Outfitters has a company culture that values creativity, I tried to show my creative side in a professional way. I did this by including examples of times I had to be creative and innovative in both my cover letter and resume. I believe for the job I am applying to this was the best way to showcase I have those skills, while still coming across as a candidate to take seriously.

### **Audience Analysis**

American Eagle Outfitters has a unique company culture in the fact that they are casual. Employees are encouraged to live by the "Live Your Life, Love Your Job" motto. However, although they strive for a casual work environment, American Eagle Outfitters demands a lot professionally of their employees. Their goal is to find and acquire talent that is mature enough to be able to balance a casual environment within a professional one.

### **Strategies Used in Resume**

For my resume, I decided to go with the functional format instead of chronological. I chose this format because everything on my resume has been accomplished within the past three years, so ordering it chronologically would be difficult when many things overlap. I really wanted to highlight my experiences that I thought would be most applicable to this job with American Eagle Outfitters by listing those first under their respective sections and working down to less applicable experiences from there. I put my education first as it is the most impressive credential I have earned, followed by my work experience, leadership activities, and finally awards. Under my work experience, I listed my time as a waitress first because skills learned through serving a customer can easily be translated into a retail setting. In regards to my leadership activities, I listed my undergraduate curriculum committee experience first because this experience forced me to implement innovative solutions to problems while working on a team. I followed that with my work on an Operations THON committee because through this activity I used a lot of creativity skills as our Inspiration Chair. The general format and style of my resume was created based on the going standard for my field in supply chain management which highly recommends a professional looking document.

### **Strategies Used in Cover Letter**

In my cover letter, I started by stating what position I was interested in, how I learned of this opportunity, and how I could add value to their company. I followed this paragraph with one discussing my education and explaining that I meet their GPA requirement. I then dove into my work and extra-curricular activity experience. For each of these paragraphs, I made sure to provide an example of how exactly I implemented the skills that they are seeking.

### **Keywords from Ad**

The American Eagle Outfitters job ad for the Merchandise and Inventory Planning Training Program had several phrases that jumped out and I wanted to ensure I demonstrated in my cover letter and resume. Some examples of these phrases are:

- Creative
- Innovative
- Strong business acumen
- Communication
- Cross Functional Collaboration
- Ability to work in fast paced environment

In my job application packet that would be sent off to American Eagle Outfitters, I tried to include these buzz words as many times as I could while also providing valid examples that demonstrated my use of these skills.

If you have any questions or comments about anything mentioned on this cover memo or included in the rest of my application packet, please contact me at [abc123@psu.edu](mailto:abc123@psu.edu).

123 E. College Ave.  
State College, PA 16801  
October 12, 2015

Human Resources  
77 Hot Metal Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

Dear Ms. Jasko:

I am delighted to apply for the Merchandise and Inventory Full Time Training Program. I learned of this opportunity through networking with recruiters during the Penn State Fall Career Days. During this time, I also attended the information session held on American Eagle Outfitters, which peaked my interest in your company because of how passionate your employees are about the work they do. My educational training, innovative problem-solving skills, and experience working on cross-functional teams have prepared me well to contribute to your program.

At the end of this year, I will graduate from The Pennsylvania State University Smeal College of Business with a degree in Supply Chain and Information Systems Management. To supplement that, I will also have two minors: Information Systems Management and Sociology. My cumulative grade point average is a 3.88. As a result of my intensive coursework, I am proficient with using both Excel and Access to analyze data.

In addition to my academic credentials, my work experience has given me very hands-on knowledge of how important it is to make the customer happy. Two summers ago, I worked as a server in a brand new restaurant inside an amusement park. This experience allowed me to come up with creative and innovative solutions to every-day problems. For example, when I knew food was going to take a long time, I would suggest to the parents to let their kids go out into the amusement park and ride to prevent them from impatiently waiting at the table. The parents were always appreciative of the notice, and in most instances my problem-solving skills were able to save my relationship (and tip) with my customers. During this experience, I learned to think on my feet in an extremely fast-paced work environment.

Becoming involved in student activities on campus has given me experience in working in cross-functional environments. I am currently serving as the only student representative on an undergraduate curriculum review committee for the business school. Being significantly younger than everyone I am working with has come with challenges, but has encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone. Continuously, I must run ideas past superiors from all different departments and backgrounds. This experience will translate well into the kind of cross-functional teamwork that American Eagle Outfitters promotes in your employees.

I welcome the opportunity to interview with your company. I am confident that my academic, work, and extra-curricular activity experiences can add value to your company. If you have any questions or would like any other information, please contact me at 123-456-7890 or [abc123@psu.edu](mailto:abc123@psu.edu)

Sincerely,

Penn State Student

# Penn State Student

abc123@psu.edu  
123-456-7890  
123 East College Ave.  
State College, PA 16801

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## EDUCATION:

The Pennsylvania State University, Smeal College of Business, University Park, PA  
Expected Graduation: May 2017  
Intended Bachelor of Science in Supply Chain Management  
Dean's List: 4/4 Semesters  
**Cumulative GPA: 3.88**

## EXPERIENCE:

### **Kennywood Amusement Park, West Mifflin PA**

Server, Johnny Rocket's Restaurant

June 2014-August 2014

- Selected to be server trainer by three managers for brand new restaurant
- Developed customer relation skills daily due to new restaurant problems
- Worked 45-55 hours per week

### **Smeal College of Business, University Park, PA**

Office Assistant, Undergraduate Education Advising Center

August 2013-Present

- Create various office projects on Word, Excel, and Powerpoint such as creating promotional event flyers
- Manage at front desk to efficiently schedule student appointments, direct traffic, and answer phone inquiries
- Work 9 hours per week while enrolled in 15 credits

### **Smeal College of Business, University Park, PA**

Ambassador Intern, New Student Orientation Program

April 2015-Present

- Utilize public speaking skills by giving a half an hour presentation to accepted students and families
- Communicate as a liaison for first year students during orientation
- Collaborate cross-functionally on a subcommittee focused on academic integrity efforts

## ACTIVITIES/LEADERSHIP:

### **Undergraduate Curriculum Review Committee**

Only Student Representative

May 2015-Present

- Discuss problems and brainstorm innovative solutions at monthly administrative meetings
- Assist faculty in reviewing current business college curriculum
- Craft survey questions for current students, recent graduates, faculty, and recruiters

### **Penn State IFC/PanHellenic Dance Marathon Operations Committee**

Inspiration Chair

October 2014-Present

- Create weekly inspiration presentations to ensure committee of 35 members stays motivated and focused on goals
- Prepare to logistically handle setting up, tearing down, and cleaning the Bryce Jordan Center for 15,000 students

## AWARDS:

- Invited to serve as Smeal College of Business Student Marshal for Convocation –August 2015
- Selected as Student Speaker for Penn State Volunteer Chairs' Dinner –September 2015
- Two Year Recipient of Penn State Mr. & Mrs. Paul S. Hagan Scholarship
- Two Year Recipient of Penn State Mr. & Mrs. Melvin D. and Carolyn P. Rex Scholarship

To: Professor Kathleen Riley  
From: Penn State Student  
Date: 12 October 2015  
Subject: Letter of Recommendation Request

Dear Professor Riley:

I have recently applied for a job with American Eagle Outfitters, and they have requested a letter of recommendation. Immediately I thought of you since I have taken three of your Management Information Systems classes: 204, 301, and 431. As I have told you previously, your MIS 204 class was the reason I decided to pick up the ISM minor. I was wondering if you would consider writing the letter of recommendation. If you would be so kind to write it, the letter is due with my application packet on November 3, 2015.

Attached to this email, I have included the link to the job posting on their website. I am applying to their Merchandise and Inventory Planning Training Program. From the posting, it seems as though they are seeking an employee with strong business acumen, cross-functional teamwork, and innovative skills.

In MIS 301, I was required to work on a group project that tied together everything we had learned that semester in Excel and Access. My group received an "A" on this final project, and I have attached a copy that includes your comments specifically on my performance.

American Eagle Outfitters has requested the letter be mailed to them with postage dating no later than November 3. It should be addressed to Rachel Jasko in the Human Resources Department. The address is 77 Hot Metal Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15203. If you choose to write the letter, I can provide the envelope and postage for the mailing.

I have attached to this email a copy of my resume, cover letter, and the final project from MIS 301. If you have any questions about the documents or need any other materials, please let me know. I thank you for your consideration to write this letter on my behalf.

Sincerely,

Penn State Student

To: Rachel Jasko  
From: Penn State Student  
Date: 12 October 2015  
Subject: Interview Thank You

Dear Ms. Jasko:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to interview for the Merchandise and Inventory Training Program at American Eagle Outfitters.

I thought more about your question regarding my experience with Excel and would like to add that in addition to minoring in Information Systems Management, I also frequently use Excel on projects at my current job. Specifically, I use PivotTables and DataTables on a day to day basis. I believe my experience with these tools would be of great assistance to your company.

I appreciate your consideration and want to express my continued interest in this position at America Eagle Outfitters. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Penn State Student