

SWE UW Chapter

General Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 25, 2012, 5:30pm

Guest Speaker:

Wendy Jenkins (Mechanical Engineering degree)

Boeing (Current), Puget Sound Energy

Presentation: Engineering Careers After College

Engineering in college:

Math, problems

What is real-world engineering like?

What does an engineer do?

Depends on: degree, industry, company size, department

Ex: QA (statistics), CAD

Most engineers use very little of what they learned in college.

College purpose: teach how to think, solve problems

Can consult experts on the job

What to Expect:

Project deadlines instead of problem sets (projects from 1hr. to several years)

Tasks with both technical and administrative aspects

Boeing: can walk around floor whenever, not always in cubicle

How to approach your 1st job:

Learn about the company: structure, where your group fits in, how your work impacts whole company

Set up informational interviews: opp. To ask questions

Figure out where you want to go next (in company, industry)

Work your way up: be good at job, prove you can handle responsibility (ask for more if want it)

Advice for your 1st job:

First impressions matter: assumptions in 1st seconds (act, dress, ect.)

Dress for job you want, not job you have

Act professional, don't be afraid to ask questions (better than struggling or doing a poor job)

Don't be afraid to volunteer for extra tasks – great way to show initiative, leadership, good attitude

Manage up: meet and exceed expectations of boss, not just peers.

Become familiar with company policies: what happens when you do something wrong? (ex: bad parking, sick leave, personal use of company materials)

Communication Advice:

Don't be afraid to talk to people in person, especially with other generations

Many people do not read email

E-mail: use wisely, have relevant subject, reply promptly

You're not in College Anymore...

Be punctual and inform others when plans change – others depend on your punctuality

Deadlines are hard – no extensions. Inform boss well in advance if you will not meet a deadline.

Will be expected to finish and meet deadlines, even if you must work extra hours

Usually expected to work at least a year before leaving

Handling Money:

Budget: live within or below your means. How much do you want to spend each month?

Maintain current standard of living and slowly increase if needed

Saving is important: use direct deposit to your advantage, at least match amount with 401k-free \$

Starting a New Life:

Make friends: YP networks, professional societies, volunteer, activities

Moving: company relocation assistance, connect with network to learn about area

Work Life Balance:

Take time for yourself – don't get burned out, ok to say no

Benefits for a reason: use vacation, tuition reimbursement

Why Stay Involved in SWE:

Benefits: networking, prof. development programs, outreach, leadership, safe place to practice skills and then apply to workplace

Membership upgrade: free for C2C, \$20 otherwise

Networking with professionals