



About this program

Bridging the gap: Industry Power Skills for Career Readiness

Transitioning from campus to the workplace comes with an unwritten set of rules and expectations. This series aims to serve as a tool for graduate students, particularly those without work experience, to navigate the encumbrances of the first job or internship. This Fall 2026 the series is a four-part, discussion-based event designed to shift your mindset from student to professional.

We've invited early-career UMBC alumni and industry partners to share their insider perspectives on the essential skills required to make a great first impression and build a strong professional reputation.

Workshops:

1. The Anatomy of Professionalism

Objective: What are the expectations in the workplace? How do I bring my authentic self and learn how my strengths align with my team needs? Learn how to shape/build your professional image.

- Skill 1: Professionalism, what are my individual strengths? [CliftonStrengths](#) How do I identify the expectations of my workplace?
- Skill 2: Improve your verbal communication skills to convey authority, ownership, and initiative. [40 work phrases to sound more confident](#).
- Skill 3: Improve your writing communication skills, by learning the ["Bottom Line Up Front" \(BLUF\) writing method](#).

2. The Social Architect

Objective: To master the interpersonal dynamics required to work in complex, multi-generational teams. The importance of networking and using your connections to build your brand, communication skills, navigating professional relationships, mentorship.

- Skill 1: Use the [DiSC Model \(Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, Conscientiousness\)](#) to self assess your communication style.
- Skill 2: Adapting your communication style (Style Flexing).



- Skill 3: [Networking and building relationships](#). Let's discuss the art of having meaningful conversation as a tool to create lasting connections that could be useful at some point in your career.

3. Leading Without Authority

Objective: To equip students with the "Soft Power" skills needed to manage projects and influence peers. Let's discuss how a person doing an entry level job can still showcase their initiative and potential leadership skills in the workplace, learn the art of prioritization and delegation, and advocacy.

- Skill 1: Understand there are [5 Sources of Power](#)
- Skill 2: The Art of Project Management and Delegation - The "Task vs. Outcome" framework. Learning to delegate the what, not the how. Use the Eisenhower matrix to decide how to prioritize and what can be/should be delegated for the good of the timeline and project.
- Skill 3: [Self-advocacy](#) Can I say no?

4. Strategic Thinking & Decision Making

Objective: To teach students how to prioritize high-level tasks and make defensible decisions in "gray" areas.

- Skill 1: Moving from "Tactical" (daily tasks) to "Strategic" (long-term goals).
 - Tool: The Eisenhower Matrix for radical prioritization.
- Skill 2: Decoding Complex Problems
 - Using Root Cause Analysis ([The "5 Whys" Technique](#)) or/and the [hishikawa diagram](#).
- Skill 3: Defending Your Decision
 - Skill: The ["Decision Log"](#)—how to document and justify a choice to stakeholders before they ask.