“Yes, And”

How often have you said, “yes, but”? Maybe a boss or a teacher, a friend or a family member suggests an idea or asks you to do something, and you respond, “Yes, but” . . . and then list the reasons why the idea would not work or why you cannot fulfill the request. “Yes, but” tends to shut down conversations, stifle cooperation, and may even lead to arguments.

In the Career Center, we often hear, “Yes, but” when we ask students the question, “Do you know about the Career Center?”

“Yes, but I’m a freshman, so I’ll use it later.”
“Yes, but I already know what I’m going to major in, so I don’t need it.”
“Yes, but I want to concentrate on my classes right now.”

The next time you find yourself saying, “Yes, but,” consider saying instead, “Yes, and.”

“Yes, and” is a concept that first began in improvisational theatre where one actor makes a statement, and a second actor responds, “Yes, and . . . ,” thereby accepting the first actor’s statement and expanding upon it. This technique has spread to other arenas that use leadership, creativity, and collaboration—such as our careers.

The principle is actually quite simple: When you say, “Yes,” you accept the idea or suggestion that another person makes. When you say, “And,” you add value to that idea or suggestion:

   Boss: “Can you have the report to me by Friday?”
   Employee: “Yes, and I’ll include a list of contact names in case you have questions.”

Following are “Yes, and” responses to some questions that are commonly asked of the Career Center:

I’ve already selected a major or career direction, so should I still use the Career Center?
Yes, and you can make an individual appointment with the Career Resources Specialist who works with your specific college. We can help you with all types of career development issues—learning how to network, how to create a strong LinkedIn profile, how to make effective career decisions, how to write a thank-you letter, and the list goes on.

Yes, and we can help you learn more about occupations that are well suited for your major, beginning with “What Can I Do with This Major?” If you already have a career direction in
mind, then we can help you research employers and find internships. If you know you’ll be going to graduate school, we can help you prepare for that as well—including practicing interviews for graduate and professional schools.

**Can you help me learn how to interview for internships and jobs?**

*Yes, and* we have several resources to help you learn and practice interviews. We can do mock interviews with you in our office or via Skype, and we can do phone interviews with you. We also can help you learn what is considered acceptable interview attire and what the differences are between business casual and *too* casual.

*Yes, and* each fall and spring semester, employers volunteer for Mock Interview Day, which gives students the opportunity to practice interviewing with employers. We also host Etiquette Dinner, where students learn how to navigate eating with the correct fork while being interviewed for a job.

*Yes, and* you can practice a “virtual interview” with the Career Center’s online system called InterviewStream. ([Log into the Career Center’s JobTracks and click on the InterviewStream icon at the bottom of the left navigation bar.](#))

**I’m a freshman, so should I use the Career Center?** When I’m not in class, I prefer to use my time working or being involved in campus activities.

*Yes, and* work experience and campus involvement are important in the career development process. The freshman year is the perfect time to learn about this process. Don’t wait until you are graduating to discover you should have been using the services throughout your college career.

*Yes, and* work experience is something employers look for when hiring—specifically work experience related to your career field. But how do you get experience in your career when you’re still in college? Internships. In fact, some companies end up hiring their previous interns. Involvement in campus and community activities also helps you gain experience and build skills. Plus, the networking (building relationships and developing contacts) is priceless. The Career Center can help you learn more about transitional skills, networking, and other career-related issues.

**Does the Career Center website have more information?**

*Yes, and* you can find us on social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Pinterest. [Be sure to read our blog and subscribe to our e-newsletter also.](#)

*Yes, and* you can see our schedule of activities for the semester.