





Fact Check: You. Are. Awesome.

This should come as no surprise to you. After all, you chose to study one of the hardest subjects known to humankind, chemical engineering.

Lucky for you, you are also a member of AIChE®, the Universe's largest professional society specifically and only dedicated to advancing your career success as a chemical or process safety engineer. AIChE is helping to shape the future of the chemical engineering profession and ensure it remains a positive, responsible force for change that benefits all of humankind. It does this by enabling your triumph as a ChemE superhero.

In fact, you should consider AIChE your strategic career partner. The organization and its leaders and members, 60,000 strong (including 23,000 student members!) in 110 countries and at least 4 galaxies, want to see you succeed in whatever career you choose, because your success is their success. Think about it from a business perspective: The organization is investing in you because the benefits it and its members (including you!) will receive will solidify and ensure the continued growth, expansion, innovation, and triumph of the fields of Chemical and Safety and Process Engineering. Simply put, the stakes are very high. And it is interesting to note the double entendre in AIChE's mission, which is specifically "For the Life of Your Career": it aims to enable your professional victory by arming you with all of the information, ideas, tools, tactics, and networking opportunities that will embolden and enliven your abilities to achieve your wildest professional dreams, for the life of your career. That's right- AIChE is in it for the long haul!

Whether you are looking for your first or third internship, your first or 10th full time job, or anything in between, your AIChE membership provides you a golden ticket to advance, grow, and craft your own career pathway.

Making the Most of Your Membership

So how can you leverage all of these benefits to land your first job or internship?

Network your way to a job, career, and lifetime advancement

Start by recognizing that the most important benefit that AIChE provides its members is extensive networking opportunities, which manifest across all membership offerings. If you look at networking as crafting a win-win alliance with another party, where you are both providing value to each other at different times and in different ways, you'll see that you can and should network with as many AIChE members and representatives as possible. You want to become a "known quantity" in the ChemE community, so the risk in hiring you is mitigated because established leaders have already engaged you and seen you in action. So start building those connections and become an engaged member in AIChE.

Become an engaged member

Start by visiting the Volunteer Central Platform, where you can learn all of the different opportunities you can leverage to become involved in AIChE locally and globally. This Platform aims to share and make it easy to apply for volunteer positions, track participation, and reward engagement. AIChE encourages volunteerism at all levels. Your volunteering can start with small tasks and virtual participation working all the way up to committee and leadership positions. You can even fill out a volunteer profile so AIChE can match you with future volunteer opportunities for which you are both qualified and interested. Looking for a good place to start? Consider volunteering to serve on committees or get involved at the Annual

Seek leadership positions: Demonstrate that you want to make a positive contribution to the AIChE community

Serving in a leadership role in AIChE elevates your brand, attitude and reputation. It gives you a reason to reach out and connect with other members and additional society stakeholders, and it serves as a credential – the organization elected you to this position, so they perceive you as a leader. It goes a long way to even help you create your own career opportunities!

Write for ChEnected and other AIChE publications

When you write an article or a blog for ChEnected, for example, you spotlight your skills, passion, and abilities to the entire community. Readers get a sense of your knowledge, and communications and

Leverage career services

Not every association has a career services division, but AIChE has specifically invested in career services for your benefit! So take full advantage of their offerings. AIChE's career center, CareerEngineer, has job postings that may not be advertised elsewhere, and its resume/CV "bank" is perused surreptitiously by decision-makers looking for people they wish to invite to apply for open positions. Submit your resume to the bank, and join and contribute to listservs reserved for career-related discussions. Attend professional development webinars and workshops.

Research organizations to understand the hiring landscape and corporate culture

AIChE's publications, website, and even the technical program for its conferences provide a wealth of information about the many, many companies and institutions that hire ChemEs. Read through these sources carefully to get a sense of who is hiring, what sectors are growing and where, and what it is like to work for certain firms. You can gather data that will help you determine where the biggest needs are for employment.

Become active on social media

Play an important role in advancing the missions of the profession of ChemE, the ChemE community, your fellow ChemEs, and your own career progression. Tweet and post strategically and professionally on various social media channels with the aim of contributing value to audiences. Share ideas, links to interesting articles, notes about cool conferences, and announcements about awards, fellowships, and even jobs. The more you are active, the more you are



Here's to your brilliant ChemE Career!

Author's Note: Excerpts and some of these concepts have appeared in other works by the author, including her book, *Networking for Nerds* (Wiley, 2015), career columns in *NatureJobs*, *Physics Today*, and *Nature Astronomy*, and other publications.

Alaina G. Levine is an award-winning entrepreneur, STEM career consultant, science journalist, professional speaker, corporate comedian, and author of *Networking for Nerds* (Wiley, 2015). As President of Quantum Success Solutions, she is a prolific speaker and writer on career development and professional advancement for engineers and scientists, and regularly serves as a speaker for the AIChE Annual Student Conference and Annual Meeting. If you are interested in obtaining some personalized career coaching or having her speak at your university or company, contact Alaina at alaina@alainalevine.com, through her website, www.alainalevine.com, or connect with her on LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/in/AlainaGLEvine.