

Self-Assessment and Job Search Handbook



Steps in Conducting a Successful Job Search

Stage One: Get to know yourself.

- ✓ Set realistic career goals
- ✓ Be able to articulate strengths, values, and specific skills
- ✓ Gain exposure to fields you're considering
- ✓ Conduct informational interviews
- ✓ Job shadow
- ✓ Obtain experience through an internship, part-time job or volunteering

Stage Two: Prepare for the job search.

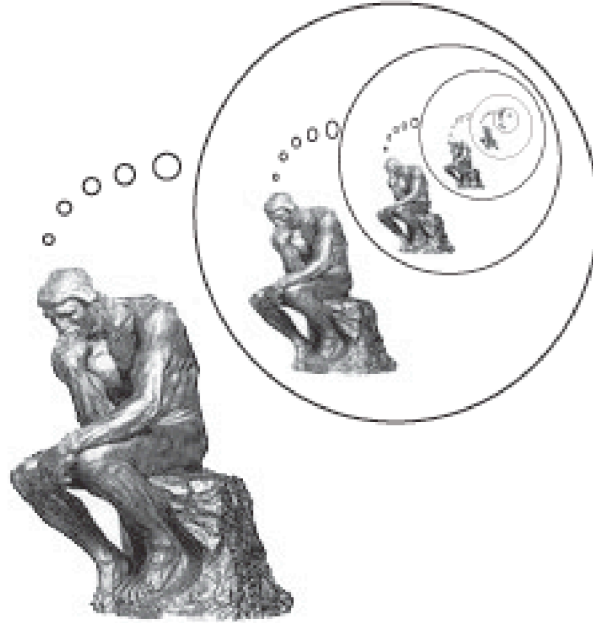
- ✓ Résumé is perfect and reflects strengths
- ✓ Purchase interview attire, including shoes and accessories
- ✓ Participate in a mock interview
- ✓ Interview skills are polished
- ✓ Basic cover letter is written and proofed
- ✓ Become familiar with dining etiquette in case a meal is part of the interviewing process

Stage Three: Conduct a job search.

- ✓ Use ReferenceUSA in the Career Center
- ✓ Register with eRecruiting
- ✓ Participate in on-campus interviews
- ✓ Attend Career Expo
- ✓ Network, network, network
- ✓ Utilize multiple job search strategies
- ✓ Understand the negotiation process

Stage One: Get to Know Yourself

Self-assessment and goal setting are very important in the job search. By identifying your strengths, interests, skills, and values, you become a self-aware individual who can confidently target a job choice. The Career Center offers the Self-Directed Search (an interest inventory) and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (a personality inventory) for further self-assessment.



Strengths

What are your areas of strength? List positive self-characteristics:

1. _____

6. _____

2. _____

7. _____

3. _____

8. _____

4. _____

9. _____

5. _____

10. _____


Interests and Activities


Respond to the following exercise with your first thoughts. Be sure to include everything you can think of that fits the topics below, no matter how unimportant it may seem.

1. List all classes and training that you liked and felt successful with:
2. List any activities or accomplishments, including volunteer, professional or extracurricular, that you particularly enjoyed and felt successful with:
3. List any kinds of tasks that you have done well or really enjoyed in the past—at home, school, elsewhere:
4. Write down any accomplishments that others have said you did well:

Skills

What skills do you possess? Check the first column if you possess that skill and the second column if you enjoy using that skill.

	Skills	Do you possess this skill?	Do you enjoy using this skill?	Examples
Management Skills				
Communication Skills				
Research Skills				
Creative Skills				
Service Skills				

	Skills	Do you possess this skill?	Do you enjoy using this skill?	Examples
Selling Skills	Persuading			
	Informing			
	Promoting			
Financial Skills	Calculating			
	Projecting			
	Budgeting			
	Numerical			
Technical Skills	Designing			
	Drafting			
	Building			
Clerical Skills	Recording			
	Bookkeeping			
	Administrating			
Manual Skills	Operations			
	Mechanical			
	Constructing			
	Repairing			

Interests

Read all the statements below. Which really fit your interests? Mark the top five that you would like to use in your job:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serving or caring for other people | <input type="checkbox"/> Working with machines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Managing people | <input type="checkbox"/> Working on a time schedule |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handling or managing money | <input type="checkbox"/> Working with animals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selling things or services | <input type="checkbox"/> Taking or receiving orders from others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Using mathematical skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Repairing or fixing things |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with children | <input type="checkbox"/> Following directions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traveling or frequent moving | <input type="checkbox"/> Developing new ideas or concepts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working outdoors | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertaining or being in front of others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working indoors | <input type="checkbox"/> Making quick decisions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making plans and organizing things | <input type="checkbox"/> Working with artistic forms and designs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with the sick and disabled | <input type="checkbox"/> Having minimal work pressure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with the elderly | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work that requires patience and accuracy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talking, speaking to, and convincing others | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working in a high-risk job with high demands and rewards | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having more structure and little pressure | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with lots of variety and change | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working alone | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having adventures and challenges | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being your own boss | |



Review the interests that you marked. What do they have in common?

Values

What are your work-related values? Rank your top values from 1 to 10, with 1 being the most important:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| ___ Moral fulfillment | ___ Independence | ___ Friendships |
| ___ Making money/profit | ___ Adventure | ___ Challenging problems |
| ___ Making decisions | ___ Status | ___ Recognition for work |
| ___ Fast-paced | ___ Work with others | ___ Proficiency in skills and knowledge |
| ___ Helping others | ___ Supervise others | ___ Precision work |
| ___ Variety/change | ___ Location | ___ Work alone |
| ___ Job security | ___ Opportunities for advancement | ___ Job tranquility |
| ___ Competitive work environment | | |

Summary

Using the previous exercises, record your top three strengths, interests/activities, skills, and values:

Strengths:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Skills:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Interests/Activities:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Values:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Ideal Job

Describe your ideal job from the self-information you provided:

Your ideal job is the goal of your job search and provides focus as you approach opportunities in the world of work. Your ideal job may be a long-term goal. If so, what possibilities (i.e., internships, summer or part-time jobs, extracurricular involvement) would fit your education and experience at this point and relate to your long-term goal?

If you had trouble responding to the last two questions, you may want to do some additional career exploration at the Career Center through:

- ☒ Individual career testing/assessment
- ☒ Researching written material from the career library
- ☒ Using the Internet

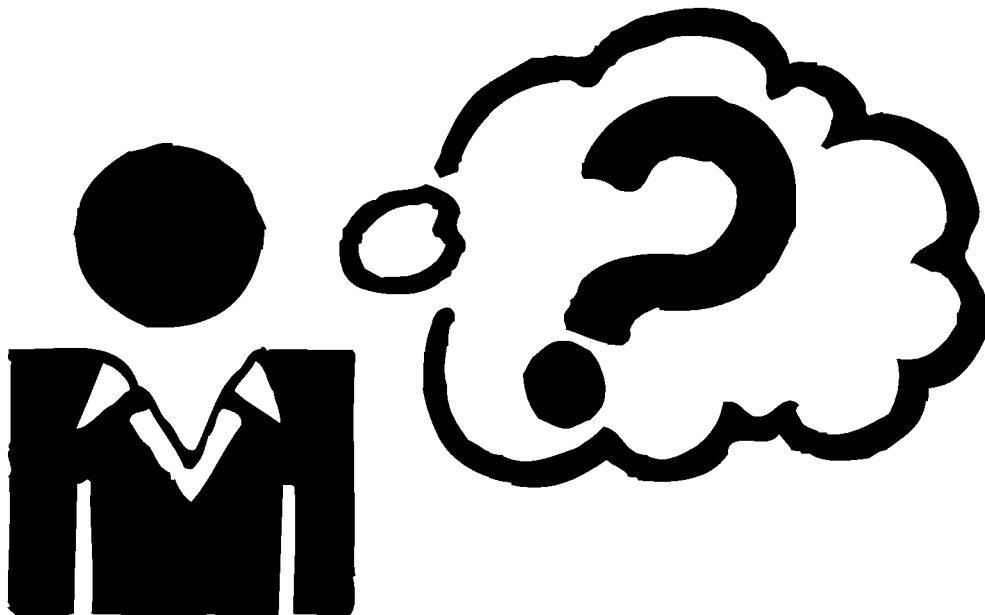


Informational Interviewing

Informational interviewing can be an invaluable resource in gathering information about a particular job, career path, company, or industry. By asking questions such as those below, you gain tremendous insight into a field you're considering. You should schedule an appointment to conduct an informational interview, which can be by phone, e-mail or in person. The Career Center's eRecruiting system has an alumni mentorship component, BulldogNet, that can greatly assist you in locating Truman alumni in a field you're interested in.

Questions to ask:

- ✓ What do you like best about your job?
- ✓ What do you like least about your job?
- ✓ Is the demand for people in your field high or low?
- ✓ What is the typical career progression (entry level vs. advancement)?
- ✓ What recommendations do you have for someone considering this field?
- ✓ What is your education and experience background?
- ✓ What is a typical day on the job like?
- ✓ What is the market like?



Remember!

It is always a good idea to send a handwritten thank you note to those you conduct informational interviews with.

Obtain Experience

Job Shadowing

After you narrow your career focus through self-awareness, research, and informational interviews, it is a good idea to job shadow with individuals in the fields you're most strongly considering. Once again, eRecruiting can be an invaluable resource in locating Truman alumni you could contact about job shadowing. Whether for a half-day or entire week, job shadowing gives you a first-hand view of the day-to-day realities of a job you're considering.

Completing an internship, summer job or volunteer experience prior to graduation is a key to effective job hunting. The direct, hands-on experience will assist you in developing the skills required for the job you seek.

Summer Jobs

Summer jobs can include opportunities at seasonal businesses like hotels or camps, temporary work at fast-food chains or retail businesses, or a job you create by starting your own business.

Depending on the type of summer job you'd like to obtain, the Career Center offers a variety of resources. Books, job listings, websites and Career Expo can be used to find a summer job.

Volunteer Experience

You may want to consider volunteering during the summer, even if you are working a paid job or internship. Not only can you gain experience, but these positions can be a great source for networking.

Most organizations welcome volunteers, so you can get your foot in the door by simply calling an organization. Do your homework to locate the type of organization that will best help you further develop your career goals.

Internships

According to the National Society for Experiential Education, an internship is "a carefully monitored work or volunteer experience in which an individual has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning throughout the experience." Truman recognizes many internships with academic credit.

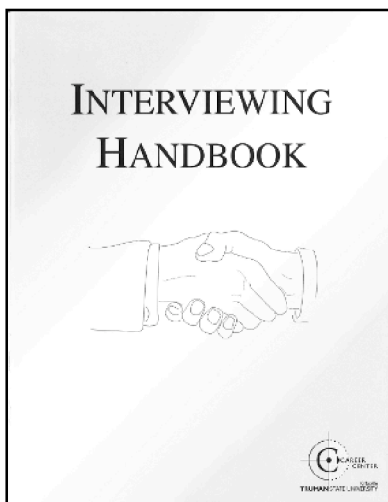
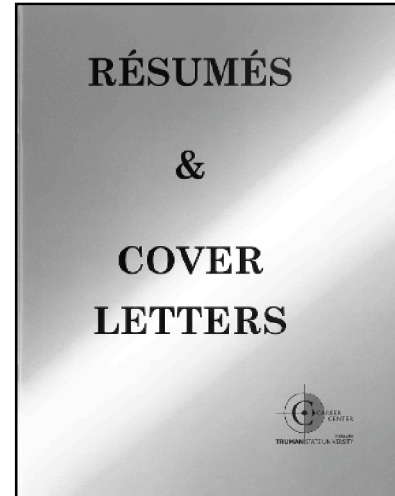
Many students are hired in full-time positions as a result of their internships. This approach permits you and the employer the freedom to evaluate if the job is right for you and if you are the right person for the job.

There is no one way to obtain an internship. The Career Center is a great place to start. You can find current internship openings through eRecruiting, consultation of various internship directories and by attending Career Expo, where many students find internships. You can also schedule an appointment with the Career Center's internship coordinator to plan a complete strategy for obtaining an internship.

Stage Two: Prepare for the Job

Résumés and Cover Letters

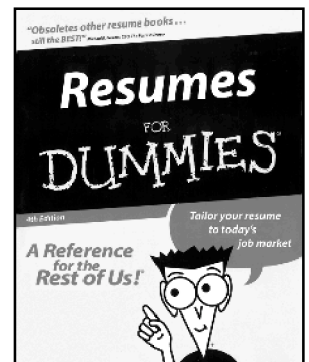
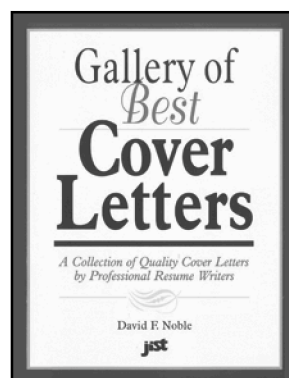
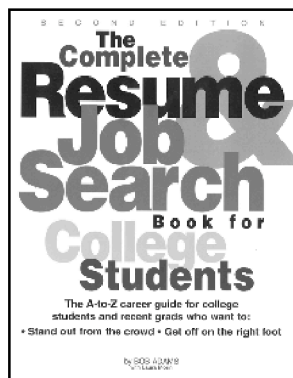
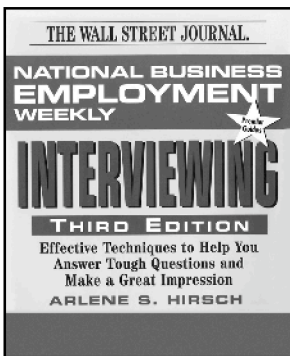
Stop by the Career Center to pick up your free copy of the Résumé and Cover Letter Handbook, which offers helpful tips as well as sample résumés. You are encouraged to bring your résumé and cover letter into the Career Center for critiquing (no appointment required.)



Interviewing

See the Career Center's publication, "Interviewing Handbook" for assistance in navigating the interview process. Also, be sure to take advantage of mock interviews conducted through the Career Center.

See the Career Center library for more!

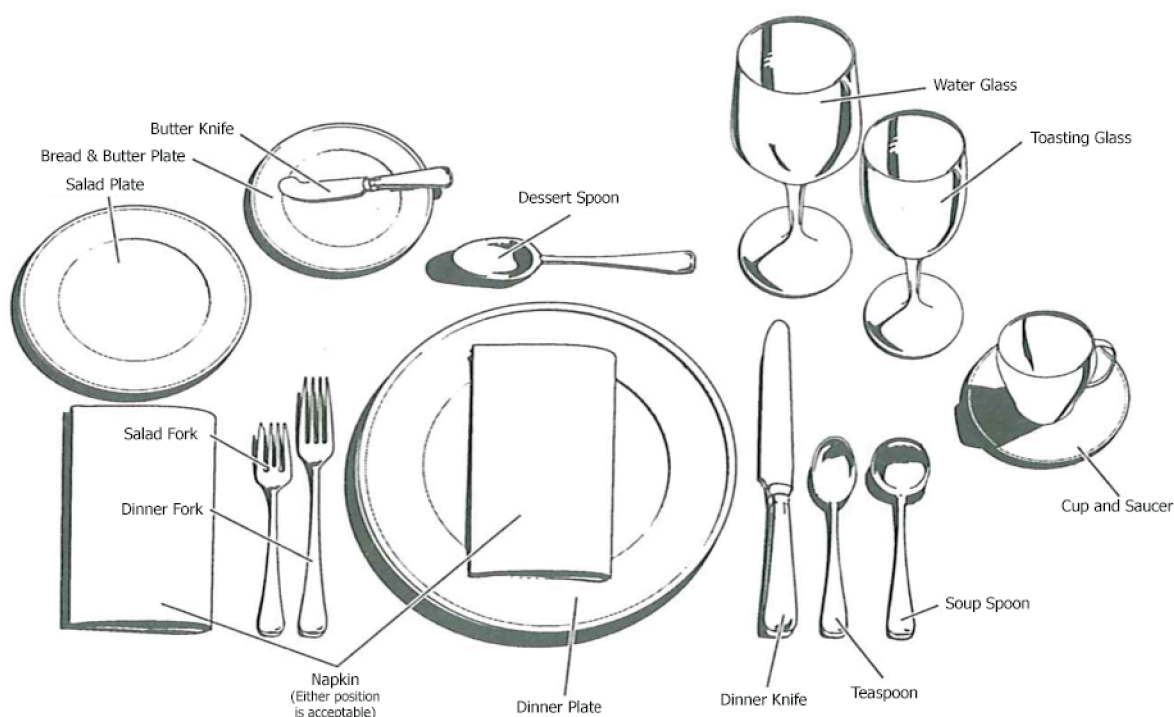


Dining Etiquette

If you are taken to lunch or dinner as part of the interview process, be assured that the employer is not concerned about your nutritional needs! This is a chance for the employer to see how you conduct yourself during a meal, and your behavior can determine whether or not you are offered the job. Furthermore, a meal may be part of the interview process for future promotions.



A person is rarely told that he or she did not get a job or promotion because of dining manners, but this is often the reason. In addition to several etiquette books available in the Career Center's library, you are strongly encouraged to attend an etiquette workshop. See the Career Center for upcoming dates.



Stage Three:

Conduct a Job Search

Job & Employer Search Resources

An effective job search utilizes a multi-pronged approach. Here are some of the resources you may want to utilize in your job search:

✓ **eRecruiting**

A web-based system provided by the Career Center to access job/internship listings at <http://truman.erecruiting.com>. Token password is “Bulldogs.”

✓ **ReferenceUSA**

Available in the Career Center library to research employers by industry, location and/or company size.

✓ **Career Expo**

Offered every fall and spring semester; approximately 100 employers attend from a variety of fields.

To find the date of the next Expo and which employers will be attending, visit the Career Expo web page at <http://career.truman.edu/CareerExpo/>

✓ **On-campus Recruiting**

Employers visit Truman throughout the school year to interview candidates for full-time positions and internships.

To find out which employers are scheduled to interview on campus, visit the Career Center’s master calendar at <http://career.truman.edu/Calendar/CalAll.asp>

✓ **Truman State University Career Center**

Meet with a full-time staff member to generate ideas, leads, contact information, etc.

✓ **Volunteering and Internships**

Both help you to create a professional network, as well as focus your career goals.

✓ **Networking**

Particularly helpful in identifying positions that are not advertised.

Involves letting everyone you meet know about the type of position you're looking for to identify ideas, leads and referrals.

✓ **Professional Associations**

Join as a student member to begin networking with professionals in a field you want to get into.

Attend meetings of civic organizations (such as Rotary or Kiwanis) as a guest of someone you know, and use the opportunity to network.

✓ **State/Employment Agency Services**

Although these should not be a main prong of your job search, state employment agencies and private employment agencies can be useful tools, as long as you're not asked to pay a fee.

✓ **Temporary Agencies**

Can be an effective chance to try a company before committing to long-term employment.

Can also give you the "inside track" when a full-time position opens up.

✓ **Trade Newspapers/Periodicals**

Can give you valuable information on company promotions and organizational growth (e.g. who's hiring and who's laying off).

✓ **Direct Employer Contact**

While not the most effective use of your time, making direct contact with an employer who isn't currently advertising an available position can be useful.

The following approaches should be incorporated into an effective job search, but should always be used in collaboration with other methods:

✓ Classified ads

✓ Online job banks

✓ Online resume banks

Social Networking Sites and your Job Search

“Being online” used to mean that you had a computer with an Internet connection. Now, it also can mean that positive or negative information about you is visible to anyone who has access to a computer with an Internet connection. Students – and other job seekers – who set up profiles on social networking sites should be aware of the possible consequences.

NACE Journal, Spring 2006

More than one-quarter (26.9%) of the organizations responding to NACE’s recent “quick poll” on the practice of “Googling” candidates or reviewing their profiles on social networking sites (such as Facebook or Myspace) reported that they have done so at some point.

Sources Accessed by Employers

✓ Blogs	✓ IM-ing	✓ Podcasts
✓ Facebook	✓ LinkedIn	✓ RSS Readers
✓ Flickr	✓ LiveJournal	✓ Ryze
✓ Friendster	✓ MySpace	✓ Xanga
✓ Google	✓ Photobucket	✓ Yahoo

Real-Life Examples

- ✓ An employer decides that the finalists for a position look equal, but the information posted on one of their Facebook pages leaves a bad impression, and the employer decides to eliminate that candidate from consideration.
- ✓ A young man created his Facebook profile when he was 18. Now 20, he had accumulated a good amount of material – typical college musing and photos – that his friend might enjoy but others might view differently. He was beginning to search for an internship, and should have considered limiting access to his profile to just his friends. Understanding the gravity of the situation, he did so. Shortly after, he got the call he had been waiting for. A state agency wanted to interview him for an internship. He prepared for the interview and reviewed the types of questions that could be asked. He was ready, as ready as he could be. But, during the interview, something he was not prepared for happened. The interviewer began asking specific questions about the content on his Facebook listing and the situation became very awkward and uncomfortable. He thought only those he allowed to access his profile would be able to do so. The interviewer explained that as a state agency, the recruiter accessed his Facebook account under the auspices of the Patriot Act.

More Real-Life Examples

- ✓ A young man signed up for interview on campus with corporate recruiters, but was seldom invited. A friend suggested that he research himself on Google. He found a link to a satirical essay, titled, “Lying Your Way to the Top,” that he had published last summer on a Web site for college students. He asked that the essay be removed. He began to be invited for job interviews, and he has now received several offers.

Questions an Employer will Ask

- ✓ What kind of judgment does this person have?
- ✓ Why are you allowing this to be viewed publicly (effectively), or semi-publicly?
- ✓ Is there something about this person’s lifestyle that we might find questionable or that we might find goes against the core values of our corporation?

MySpace “Safety Tips”

MySpace makes it easy to express yourself, connect with friends and make new ones, but please remember that what you post publicly could embarrass you or expose you to danger. Here are some common sense guidelines that you should follow when using MySpace:

- ✓ Don’t forget that your profile and MySpace forums are public spaces. Don’t post anything you wouldn’t want the world to know (e.g., your phone number, address, IM screen name, or specific whereabouts). Avoid posting anything that would make it easy for a stranger to find you, such as where you hang out every day after school.
- ✓ Don’t post anything that would embarrass you later. Think twice before posting a photo or info you wouldn’t want your parents or boss to see!

Final Thoughts

- ✓ “Clean up” your profiles, group affiliations, posting walls, or anything else that may pose a potential issue.
- ✓ Remember that web information can be retained online in many ways; hitting the “delete” button may not mean that the information is gone.
- ✓ Complete a personal internet presence job seeker self-audit. View the results through the perspective of a potential employer.
- ✓ Create an action plan for improving your online image and decide how to use the Internet to enhance the job search.

Job Offers/Negotiations

By now you probably realize that the job search is a search for information about yourself, the world of work, and where you fit. It is your opportunity to evaluate where you can best apply yourself, with what organization, and in what capacity. Somewhere along the line, you will be offered a job. Great! Now you have to decide if it fits. The following list identifies some of the factors that you may want to consider before you accept.

Salary

Have a range in mind based upon your research of the market value of your assets, education, and experience. Your range should start with the minimum figure acceptable to you and go somewhat higher than your desired figure. Benefits and other compensation should also be defined.

Career Field/Industry

Look at the history of growth, the future needs and trends.

Organization/Company

Consider the philosophy, reputation, management, and financial stability of the organization.

Position/Job

Take a close look at the reason for the vacancy, training programs, job description, and opportunity for advancement.

Supervisor/Co-workers

Are you comfortable with the staff? Consider the organizational chart and the relationships between the boss and your colleagues.

General Lifestyle

The geographical location is an important consideration. Look at the opportunities for recreation, culture, and education.

Go back to your original job search goal and look at your priorities. Have your priorities changed? Consider your feelings and thoughts, but form your decisions with careful, factual information.

If all matches, then go for it...and **reward yourself**. You have worked hard!

Four-Year Approach to Career Planning

By setting your goals early, you will be able to make choices relevant to your ultimate career goals: selection of courses, appropriate summer experiences, membership in clubs and organizations, etc.

First-Years

Get to know your Career Center resources...

- Explore your interests and career options by using the resource books and computer programs available in the Career Center.
- Conduct informational interviews and job shadow with professionals in your field of interest.
- Make an appointment with a career counselor to discuss your interests, skills and values, possibly including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Self-Directed Search (SDS).
- Sign up for “Skills for Academic Success” with your first year advisor. Usually, 1-2 sessions focus on career center resources.

Sophomores

Explore your career possibilities...

- Get a part-time job to help you develop basic work skills and learn more about your work preferences.
- Attend programs that bring alumni back to campus to discuss how they found career success.
- Talk with upperclassmen and faculty in the fields that interest you.
- Explore internships and summer jobs.
- Create a professional résumé; have it critiqued by a Career Center staff member.
- Attend Career Expo to explore internship opportunities.

Juniors

Test out career decisions...

- Attend workshops on résumé and cover letter writing, interviewing, job hunting, and graduate school selection.
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals working in careers of your choice.
- Seek career-related summer jobs, part-time jobs, internships, and volunteer experience.
- Utilize the computer-aided tools available in the Career Center to assist with résumé preparation and distribution, job search, and graduate school.
- Attend Career Expo each semester to inquire about internships and summer and full-time jobs.
- Investigate graduate/professional school opportunities, including entrance requirements and application deadlines.
- Sign up for a Mock Interview.

Seniors

Gain confidence in your abilities and marketability...

- Finalize your résumé and cover letter and have them critiqued.
- Attend Career Expo.
- Sign up for a Mock Interview.
- Sign up for campus interviews.
- Plan your job search strategy or graduate school application process.
- Use the Career Center’s website and library to research employers, locate and apply to vacancies, or research graduate and professional schools.
- Have your graduate school statement of purpose critiqued by the graduate school advisor.

Tips for all students:

- It is never too late to start! These guidelines form a basic framework for you to follow in planning your career. So even if you’re a junior and haven’t thought much about what you’d like to do, you can follow the steps outlined for first-year and sophomores to begin the process.
- You may make an appointment with a professional staff member at any time to talk about these steps and to plan your own career or graduate/professional school strategies.



Playing Fair: Your Rights and Responsibilities As a Job Seeker

NACE's Principles for Professional Conduct provide guidelines for career counseling to ensure open and objective employment selections, fair recruitment processes for students and employers and career counseling to support informed and responsible career decision making.

What You Can Expect From Your Career Center...

1. Confidentiality.

Career staffs will maintain the confidentiality of student information including written records, reports, and computer data bases. Disclosure of student information outside the college/university should be made only with your prior consent, unless health and safety considerations necessitate dissemination.

2. Freedom of choice.

You're entitled to be assisted by the career staff in developing a career plan and making career decisions without having staff members' biases or personal values imposed upon you.

3. Access to all services and events.

Career centers may charge sufficiently nominal fees for registering or taking part in certain services or events.

4. Access to career information.

All students should be provided with equal and full access to career information. Career staffs are to inform you of career information sources that may influence your decisions about an employer.

5. Testing information.

Career staff should inform you of the availability, purpose and disclosure of testing and the results.

What You Can Expect From Employers...

1. Confidentiality.

Employers are expected to maintain the confidentiality of student information, regardless of the source, including personal knowledge, written records/reports, and computer data bases. An employer shouldn't disclose information about you to another organization without your prior written consent, unless necessitated by health or safety considerations.

2. Accurate information.

Employers are expected to provide accurate information about their organizations and employment opportunities. This includes, but is not limited to, positions available, responsibilities, career advancement opportunities, and benefits.

3. Freedom from undue pressure.

Employers are expected to provide you with a reasonable amount of time to make a decision about accepting an employment offer. It is improper for employers to pressure you to revoke your acceptance of another job offer.

4. Timely communication.

Employers are expected to inform you of your status in the hiring process and communicate hiring decisions within the agreed-upon time frame.

5. Fair treatment.

If an employer is required by changing conditions to revoke a job offer that you've accepted, you're entitled to a fair and equitable course of action. That can include, but is not limited to, financial assistance and outplacement service.

6. Testing information.

Employers should inform you in advance of the availability, purpose and disclosure of testing and the results.

7. Nondiscrimination.

Employers are expected to avoid discrimination in their recruitment activities and to follow equal employment opportunity (EEO) and affirmative action principles.

What's Your Part?

1. Provide accurate information about your academic work and records, including courses taken, grades, positions held, and duties performed.

You can, however, refuse to provide an employer with specific information about any job offers you may have received from others. You don't have to name the organizations that have made you offers, nor do you have to provide specific information about what salaries you've discussed with those organizations. Instead, you can give broad responses to such questions, naming types of employers – "I've interviewed with employers in the retail industry" – and offering salary ranges rather than specific dollar amounts – "The salary offers I've received have been in the \$25,000 to \$30,000 range."

2. Interview genuinely.

Interview only with employers you're sincerely interested in working for and whose eligibility requirements you meet. "Practice" interviewing is misleading to employers – wasting both their time and money – and prevents sincerely interested candidates from using those interview slots.

3. Adhere to schedules.

Appear for all interviews unless unforeseeable events prevent you from doing so. And, if you can't make the interview because of an unforeseeable event, notify your career center or the employer at the earliest possible moment.

4. Don't keep employers hanging.

Communicate your acceptance or refusal of a job offer to employers as promptly as possible, so they can notify other candidates that they are still being considered or that the position is filled.

5. Accept a job offer in good faith.

When you accept an offer, you should have every intention of honoring that commitment. Accepting an offer only as a precautionary measure is misleading to the employer and may restrict opportunities for others who are genuinely interested in that employer.

6. Withdraw from recruiting when your job search is completed.

If you accept an offer, notify your career center, withdraw from the on-campus recruiting process immediately, and inform employers that are actively considering you.

7. Claim fair reimbursement.

If an employer has agreed to reimburse you for expenses you incur in its recruitment process, your request should be for reasonable and legitimate expenses only.

8. Obtain the career information you need to make an informed choice about your future.

It's up to you to look into career opportunities and the organizations that offer them, as well as acquire any other relevant information that might influence your decision about an employer.

9. Any information you post on the web is considered public information, including your personal web site, a blog, or personal information posted on a social networking site. Any public information could be used to evaluate your suitability for employment. It's best to review a site's privacy policy before publishing any personal information.



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