

Spring CAREER PLANNING News

Published by Career Services

January 12, 2010

In this Issue...

New Year Equals New Changes.....page 2

Drop-in Career Counseling Provides on the Spot Help.....page 5

The Value of Internships.....page 5

Building a Professional Resume.....page 6

Networking Your Way to Success.....page 7

Spring Events Calendar.....page 8 & 9

Nittany Lion Career Network (NLCN).....page 10

Are Your References "Available Upon Request".....page 10

What Employers Want.....page 10

Spring Semester Office Career Fairs for Everyone.....page 11

Get the Edge - Practice Interviewing at CS.....page 12

Power Corps - A Volunteer's Story.....page 12

.....page 14

The Job Search Is A Trip

Tips for Reaching Your Job Destination in a Tight Market

When taking a long trip, you'll usually go through the following five stages:

1. Decide where you want to go
2. Pack your bags
3. Map out the best way to get there
4. Hit the road
5. Make stops along the way and meet people

The process of conducting a job search is similar to that of taking a trip. You must first figure out what you want to do and where you want to work (Decide where you want to go). Once you figure out the type of positions you're pursuing, you can prepare an appropriate resume, reference list, and portfolio (Pack your bags). The next step is to determine the best strategies to help you find a job (Map out the best way to get there). Once these strategies are identified, you'll be able to start searching and applying for jobs (Hit the road). Finally, when you obtain those all-important interviews along the way, you want to capture the moment and present the best "you" that you can (Make stops along the way and meet people).

As you read through the five steps below, take special note of the quotes from employers, alums, and fellow students. They offer some great advice and perspective to help you find a job in a tough economy.

DECIDE WHERE YOU WANT TO GO

Choosing the type of positions that you want to pursue is much more difficult for some than it is for others. If you're majoring in Accounting, Nursing, and Elementary Education (or some other "career-track major"), you'll most likely choose to be an accountant, nurse, and elementary school teacher respectively. The decision is pretty straightforward (unless you have a change of heart and want to pursue something outside your major). However, if you're majoring in History, Math, English, Philosophy (or some other "non career-track major"), the decision isn't as clear. You could find yourself working for a large corporation, a museum, a social services organization, a hospital, a government agency, or for a technology company. The sky's the limit!

"The best advice I can offer is that even if you are not sure of the career you want to pursue, get involved with professional organizations and seek out the resources of the career services early on so that you will be able to hit the ground running when your career goals come into focus."

Daniel O'Dea
Senior Finance Major

Because of the many changes in the world of work, most of you, whether you're in a career-track major or not, must clarify your career goals to some extent. One way to approach this decision is to break it down to (a) "what" you want to do and (b) "where" you want to do it.

The What & Where

The "What" deals with *what* skills you have, and more specifically, *what* skills you enjoy using. The "Where" relates to *where* you want to utilize those skills. For example, if you have skills in sales (the what), you must determine *where* you want to utilize those skills. Selling insurance is very different from selling a college as an admissions representative.

Both utilize skills in sales, but do so within two very different environments. Conversely, you may be sure you want to work in the Education industry (the where), but you're not sure whether you want to become a teacher, counselor, administrator, or a curriculum developer (the what). To identify more clearly what you want to do and where you want to work, it's important to learn more about yourself and explore the world of work.

"No job is going to be your dream job. Sometimes you have to work with difficult people, in challenging and mundane roles, and partake in less than ideal situations; however, until you challenge your limitations, you are never really certain what you are capable of. Penn State Career Services helped me to explore all job possibilities."

Hillary Lewis, Analyst
Barclays Capital Inc.
Penn State Class of 2008

Self Assessment

The first step to clarifying your career goals is to engage in a process of self-assessment.

See Job Search on Page 3