

Persistence pays when job hunting

Somewhere along with the two-car, two-children, and white-picket-fenced-house ideal exists the dreamy notion that the college experience lasts four years and ends with a secure job lined up upon graduation.

As the college career waxes and wanes, the reality of the job-upon-graduation scenario is belied. Still, you might wonder if some people do actually experience that vision. The idea wouldn't be in our heads if it didn't happen to someone. Right?

Many have never met or even heard about that kind of someone. It is true, however, they do exist. Meet Andrew Seres and Sarah Schirmer.

Seres, 21, was recruited by Macy's executive training program for operations. Translated, this means that he'll be doing everything from inventorying and shipping to overseeing profit per square foot, per store. "(It's) a measure of how come this area of the store gets more people around it and buying than another area," Seres said.

After coming to the University not knowing what he wanted to do and changing from a math to a chemistry major, Seres finally settled on a double major in marketing and management. Until that final academic switch, Seres never had an always-wanted-to-do type of job.

"Am I happy? That's an understatement," Seres said. "I'm enthusiastic, excited, scared, nervous, anxious, and ready for it. I start Sept. 14, I decided to take the summer off to play."

"I'm going to be on the summer staff of the summer camp where I grew up, in Tumwater, Washington, six miles south of Olympia," he said.

Seres got the job through the Career Planning and Placement Service. "I'd like to plug them," he said, adding he is writing to University President Myles Brand about not cutting the service or its funding.

"I think it's one of the most valuable assets the school has," Seres said. "It gives you the tools to write a resume, talk with

people, talk to recruiters.

"I interviewed with over 30 companies, not because I wanted the jobs but because I wanted the experience," he said. "Macy's is in Chapter 11, but now I have the experience on how to get a job. Executives are paying thousands of dollars for these services and this is free."

Seres said one of the best classes he took was CPS 199, College to career, taught by Deb Chereck, CPPS associate director.

"This should be required for everybody to go through," he said.

Seres believes he got through the interview process to the actual job because of his attitude.

"Recruiters are more impressed with attitude, behavior, and personality, not the phony stuff," he said. "Attitude applies to all jobs. Who wants to hire a jerk?"

Seres revised his statement. "Attitude is for jobs where you have to work with people." He added that he also showed genuine interest in the company, wrote them a thank-you note, and remembered their names.

"All the feedback I got from Macy's incorporated the idea that my personality and behavior patterns fit with their corporation," Seres said. "You know if a company is worth your time if they'll let you be nervous." Some companies were so nice. I had cottonmouth and they gave me a lifesaver."

Seres' attitude was backed up by experience from his summer job, working for Vector Corporation. During the summer of 1990, Seres was hired to sell kitchen and some sporting goods.

Throughout the following school year, he commuted to Portland every other week to train as an assistant to the district manager. By the summer of 1991, Seres recruited other col-



Sarah Schirmer

lege students to do the sales.

"I learned more on the job than in school," Seres said. "You learn applicable stuff as opposed to theory, but both are equally important."

Schirmer's experience is similar in some ways and different in others. Schirmer, 22, will be a sales representative with Warner Lambert, a pharmaceutical and consumer health care products company, a position she really wanted to get.

"About ninth grade, I (realized) I wanted to do sales," Schirmer said. "I thought I'd do retail sales through college and then go onto something bigger. I wouldn't say it's a dream. It's more my path."

Warner Lambert came to campus in January but didn't want to interview Schirmer because she didn't graduate until spring. Schirmer wrote the company a letter again asking for an interview, got one on campus, a second interview in Portland, and will be traveling to Vancouver, Washington, to finalize everything.

"Once I started talking to them, they decided to adapt to me," Schirmer said.

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