

# Finding the right job for you: a step by step

The Bureau of Labor Statistics warns that one out of four college graduates will not be able to find a job that fits abilities or expectations. If you're Black, figure it will be worse. Graduates will have to work harder at career planning and job hunting.

So where do you start? Instead of beginning with what's "out there," begin with who you are. Begin with an analysis of your interests, transferable skills, values, psychological needs and so on.

If you who are in harmony with what you do, fulfillment is most likely.

Two-thirds of the working population are not happy with "what they do." So, begin by focusing on who you are. One of the best places to get help with this is your career planning and placement office.

Meet with career counselors at your college or university. Take advantage of individual and group career counseling. Ask for recommended readings. Attend workshops, seminars and courses. Let them help de-mythologize some of this career planning business with you.

Here are some tips to help energize your career planning and job hunting:

## Develop your skills

**1. Get Experience.** When employers were surveyed about advice to college students on how to increase their employability, they said emphatically: Get experience. Paid or volunteer. Part-time or full-time. Work or internships or extracurricular activities. The successful always seem to have some experiences which serve as foundation building-blocks to bigger opportunities.

Actively seek our experiences that will enable you to:

- Develop responsible work attitudes and habits;
- Develop leadership skills;

- Handle responsibility
- Demonstrate your interests in living color
- Gain new interests
- Learn how organizations operate;
- Meet new people and contacts
- Expose yourself to new role models.

Good grades can be important. But when you enter the employment market, the second question an employer asks you (after your name) is, "What have you done?"

## Market yourself

**2. Take some courses that enhance your marketability.** Especially if you are studying liberal arts, take a few electives to heighten your chances with a wider range of employers. Recruiters have recommended courses in accounting, computer science, statistics, management, technical writing, and so on. Even if you are aiming at the non-profit sector, you will quickly find that these organizations also use such business tools to get the job done.

## Learn to communicate

**3. Search out and conquer high levels of transferable skills.** There are two specific areas that employers find most lacking in prospective job hunters: Human relations skills and communication skills.

Regardless of the field you enter, you will need to relate well to colleagues, the public and various constituencies, and your supervisor. And you will also be expected to speak articulately and write clearly and concisely. There is hardly a judgement job anywhere that doesn't revolve around these two areas. So, identify courses, activities, and experiences that will enhance your human relations and communication skills. Don't assume that they come only from courses,

although that's a start. Leadership roles, for example, often require you to learn how to interrelate with others, to make presentations, to complete proposals and reports, supervise others.

Career planners make a bad mistake to assume that they need only master some content (like marketing, Shakespeare, or engineering) to get a good job. In many cases, the content of a job can be learned on the job. It is the transferable skills—applicable in any number of occupations—that will contribute to success or failure.

## Invest in your career

**4. Determine to spend money and time on your career planning.** The class of 1984 will retire in the year 2032 A.D. If you are twenty-two at graduation, that leaves approximately 48 years you will spend in the workforce, until mandatory retirement at age 70! We are talking about a sizable investment of your life and the fulfilling use of your talents, so don't assume it is going to be either easy or free.

A good rule of thumb: Figure on spending about the same amount of time and money on your career as you would for one college course (out of 36 to 40 courses). At a private institution, you would spend about \$500 for a course. And, if you're a sharp student, you would probably spend about 15 hours per week on a course, counting class time. Isn't your own career worth at least that much attention?

Don't be afraid to invest in career planning materials, non-paying internships, and—especially—travel to research your chosen career field. You are worth it!

## Research opportunities

**5. Pursue information aggressively.** You can't choose

something you don't know exists! Most students who are planning a career are overwhelmingly ignorant about what possibilities are available. Please—don't take this personally. It's not your fault. A good 80% of the jobs are not listed anywhere: They're not in the newspapers (did you ever look to see what you could do), they're not in the employment agencies, and most are not in the placement offices. Yet these tend to be the more fascinating, the more meaningful, and the more lucrative jobs of society. Why aren't they listed? Because they tend to work through an ol' boy network—contacts. More on that later.

"Knowledge is power," said Francis Bacon. Empower yourself and your career planning by becoming knowledgeable about career possibilities. Research careers harder than you've ever tackled any term paper—the pay-off is much greater. Study the trends, the career information, the files in your career planning office.

The only other way you will ever find that "perfect niche" for yourself is luck. But why take the chance? Instead, pursue career information with "intentionality"—take charge of your life or happenstance will take charge of it for you.

## Make wise decisions

**6. Learn how to make decisions frontwards.** That's right, many people make decisions backwards. Like when they let someone else hand them a decision—a parent, a teacher, a counselor, a book, a friend. But learn how to make decisions and make your own decision—you're the one who has to live with the consequences.

Study the decision making process. Again, your career counselor can help with this. Realize that there are some clearly defined steps to making good choices: Getting

ideas, researching information, calculating risks, weighing options and alternatives, prioritizing, making the choice and living with it, and continuing to modify. The alternative: impulse. Simply "grabbing onto something" because at the moment, you feel like it, is not good planning. Failing to plan is planning to fail.

## Seek out advice

**7. Interview people for information.** Go out and interview people for information and advice—people who are doing what you would like to do someday. It's downright irresponsible to plan on becoming a biomedical engineer if you haven't ever talked to or seen a biomedical engineer.

- What are some of the problems you encounter?
- What dreams do you have for this function or department?
- What advice would you give someone like me who wants to enter this field?
- Can you give me the names of three other people who share our mutual interests?

Once you have started, one interview leads to three more. Three lead to nine, nine to twenty-seven... more than enough.

Along the way, you will make contacts. In fact, without even knowing it, you will plug into that network of contacts, the "ol' boy" system, and uncover some of those "hidden opportunities." That's not your purpose, of course. Not now. You are simply seeking advice and information. But as a by-product, you will make contacts that can be

## In the job market of the 80's failing to plan is planning to fail.

Don't talk to the personnel people. Interview the functional specialists who are doing what you are preparing to do. Pick their brains. What courses to they recommend?

How can you ever really know what a field is like if you haven't researched it personally? Personal information is so much better than printed information. Never settle for one or two opinions—get at least a dozen or so. The real inside story.

Why would they bother talking to you? Human nature. People love to be interviewed about what they are doing. They enjoy giving advice, especially about what is most meaningful to them. Some typical questions you might ask are:

- How did you get into this?
- What do you like about? Hate about it?
- What is the mission of your organization? Goals and purposes?

helpful later. To start, get some ideas, contacts, and names from your career planning and placement office, alumni office, parents, parents of friends and so on. Seek out people you admire and find out how the employment market really works. The information you receive will be well worth the investment.

Incidentally, a good book to explain this approach in greater detail is *Go Hire Yourself an Employer* by Richard Irish (N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1978).

## Congratulations

### Class of '87

## Careers in Gerontology

Gerontology, or the study of aging is a relatively new field. A gerontologist is a professional in the area of human development and Aging. Gerontologists have the knowledge and understanding about the physiological, psychological, economical and social aspects of aging, and their interactive and additive effects. An increasing number of individuals are being formally educated at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) offers a very limited number of geriatric post-doctoral (after completion of the Ph.D. or M.D.)

fellows. Gerontologists are working for government and non-profit agencies and institutions, businesses, industries, health and human services. The role of the gerontologist is to address issues related to program planning, development, evaluation, policy development, administration, training and delivery of direct services. Society is just beginning to recognize the need for specialists who can identify issues and recommend policies for the elderly. Gerontologists, therefore, are assuming roles as counselors, consultants, career planning specialists,

policy analysts, long-term care and health administrators, planners, educators, program developers, managers and researchers.

Gerontology helps professionals understand aging individuals and aging populations. Geriatricians or aging practitioners, such as geriatric nurses, social workers, psychologists, dentists and physicians apply their gerontological knowledge in treating older people or groups. Geriatrics is the application of gerontological knowledge to the diagnosis and treatment of the elderly.

## Degrees presented at ceremonies

Approximately 950 degrees have been awarded in commencement ceremonies at the University of the Pacific campus in Stockton.

There were a total of 800 undergraduate degrees and 150 graduate degrees presented at individual commencement ceremonies

for each of the seven schools and colleges.

UOP was founded in 1851 as the first chartered institution of higher education in California. It is comprised of a liberal arts college and professional schools in music, pharmacy, education, engineering,

business and public administration, and a graduate school, all located in Stockton. The university's McGeorge School of Law is in Sacramento and the School of Dentistry is in San Francisco.

## PSU started them on their way — it can work for you, too!




Margaret Carter, Oregon state representative from the 18th district, and George E. Richardson, Jr., director of corporate budgeting and strategic planning at Northwest Natural Gas Co., believe that PSU is a great place to start a career. Both civic leaders received their bachelor's degrees from Portland State University and both are actively involved in education. Mrs. Carter is a college counselor and teacher, and Mr. Richardson is a member of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education. They enjoy returning to campus and talking with current students like Ardella Todd and Tim McBride, both seniors majoring in psychology, and Tami Gallegos, a sophomore majoring in business administration.

*They all agree* — Portland State University started them on their way, and it can work for you, too!

Find out how it can work for you. Call PSU Admissions, 229-3511, or Maria Alanis, minority recruiter, 229-4417. Or visit the Admissions Office, 104 Neuberger Hall, SW Broadway and Harrison.

## Portland State University

www
abcd



Your child can **LEARN TO READ**  
in 3 to 6 months with Monica Foltzer's  
**PROFESSOR PHONICS KIT**  
effective, attractive, step by step  
**HOW TO** approach for parents

"Miracles happened since using PROFESSOR PHONICS." Mrs. H. OR

"My children are reading way beyond grade level." Mr. G. WI

"A phonics book plus a total language arts program!" Mr. R. KY

Prof. Phonic Kit, only.....14.70  
primary and remedial

Advanced Remedial.....4.80

Total Master Kit.....19.50

S.U.A. PHONICS DEPT.  
1339 E. McMILLAN STREET, CINCINNATI, OH 45206

abcd
abcd