



CAREER *services* CENTER

PHONE 513-745-3141
FAX 513-745-3523

WEB www.xavier.edu/career
E-MAIL csc@xavier.edu

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Looking for a Job or Internship in a Tough Economy

While recent economic news has raised anxiety levels, many employers are still hiring. Assumptions and fears about an uncertain job market should not be one's primary motivation for avoiding the job search and heading right to graduate school. These uncertainties and fluctuations make it especially important for job seekers to learn how to conduct an effective job search and to be actively engaged in the process. If you are looking for an internship or a full time position, you must be proactive. Assessing one's strengths, taking steps to improve skills, and recognizing that a job search might take longer are things to do now to improve your chances. Some recommended steps are outlined below:

DON'T PROCRASTINATE!

Looking for a job or internship takes time (typically months) and needs to be a priority. While you have competing demands on your time (classes, studying, working, campus clubs/organizations, athletics, socializing, etc.) a job search requires time and energy. If you are really serious about finding a job or internship, you must reserve time in your schedule to focus on it.

STRENGTHEN YOUR CANDIDACY AND MAKE CONNECTIONS

If you are graduating in May, what are you doing now to build your resume? Are you interning, volunteering, or actively involved on campus or in the community? Many employers, especially in a tight economy, recruit interns as full-time hires. Positioning yourself within organizations of interest can enhance your chances of getting that first job.

PREPARE YOUR JOB SEARCH MATERIALS EARLY

You need a good resume. You must be ready to respond immediately as you become aware of jobs for which you want to be considered. Visit the Career Services Center website (www.xavier.edu/career) for help getting started on your resume, cover letter, or preparing for an interview, and make an appointment for fine-tuning.

USE MULTIPLE STRATEGIES

Students graduating in May need to begin their job search now. It is important to strike a balance between looking for advertised openings and unadvertised openings (the hidden job market). A complete job search is not surfing the Internet. Most job openings are not advertised, so it is important to concentrate on the hidden job market through networking.

NETWORK!

Most people find a job through other people. Networking resources include professors, family, friends, neighbors, professional associations, current and previous employers (or internship supervisors) and alumni. Tell everyone that you are looking for an internship or job and ask for suggestions or contacts.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY AND FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE

Realize that getting a job is your responsibility, while simultaneously recognizing that there are external factors beyond your control. Don't waste precious energy and time being negative. Instead focus that energy on your internship/job search!

COMPETE!

Throw your hat in the ring, and do so often. If you don't apply, you will definitely not get the job. Do not let what you hear about the job market immobilize you. If you don't apply and don't let people know you're looking, you won't even be considered, much less selected. But compete smart – do a quality job search.

KEEP AT IT!

A job search rarely produces results immediately. It takes time and effort. Some leads will take you to dead ends, and, unfortunately, rejection is part of the internship/job search process. Try not to lose focus and keep going. Pick yourself up and get back into the race.

POSITION YOURSELF FOR THE FUTURE

While you may have to accept the first position that isn't your "dream job" keep in mind that many kinds of experiences can be career stepping-stones. Make choices that increase your future options. Learning new skills, volunteering in a field that professionally interests you while working "just for money," thoughtfully investigating graduate school, and effectively networking are positive steps to take for the long term.

REMEMBER: MOST BIG BREAKS DO NOT JUST HAPPEN – THEY ARE CREATED!

Adapted from a Binghamton University Career Development Center resource