

McCABE HALL

## CENTER FOR CREATIVITY & CAREERS

➤➤➤➤➤ *BEYOND THE BUBBLE*



# AN INTRODUCTION TO CAREER PLANNING & JOB SEARCH

**Office Hours:**  
Monday – Friday  
8:00 am – 4:30 pm

**Walk-In Hours:**  
Mon, Tues, & Wed  
2:00 - 4:00 pm  
or call 319-399-8581 for an appointment

As a Coe College student pursuing or having been awarded a Liberal Arts degree, you have developed some key skills that every employer needs. Those skills include excellent oral and written communication, analytical problem solving, solid organizational skills, flexible thinking, the ability to see the big picture, and a comfort-level of being able to relate effectively to many different people. These are the skills that translate well into any career, regardless of your major.

The Coe College Center for Creativity & Careers (C3) is here to teach, coach and/or lead you through the process of planning for life-after-college and making connections between your education and your career. In today's global economy, the individual who is flexible, adaptable, and curious as well as a life-long learner will be most successful throughout life.

This packet is only an introduction to the process of planning and preparing for a job search as well as your life as a whole.

**Need help? Call [319.399.8581](tel:319.399.8581) or stop by The Center for Creativity & Careers, McCabe Hall, to schedule an appointment.**

**The best person doesn't always get the job.  
The best-prepared person gets it.**

*Robert Calvert Jr., National Career Development Association*

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# Career Planning Resources

## CENTER FOR CREATIVITY & CAREERS ON-LINE RESOURCES

- 4-Year Plan – starting freshman year through senior year – steps to take & goals to reach each year of your college career
- Coe Connections – Internships, full-time, part-time, and seasonal jobs
- Internship/practicum information
- Graduate school resources and information
- Study abroad
- Resume & Interviewing Guides
- Linked-In Guide

## CENTER FOR CREATIVITY & CAREERS SERVICES

Helping you with the following services:

- Choosing a **Major**
- Individualized **Career Counseling**
- **Events** – Networking Receptions, Mock Interviews
- Meeting the **Practicum Requirement** – see Catalog for current options
- Planning for **Graduate School**
- Assessment tools to assist in determining a “**Life Path**”
- **Recruitment** site for employers
- Teacher Education & **Job Fairs** (transportation provided, by request)
- **Workshops** can include Resume Writing, Interview Skills, Job Search, Social Networking, Prep for Grad School, Life After College, Clark Merit Scholarship
- Access to Coe **Alumni**
- Access to **technology** for job, internship and grad school interviews

# The 4-Year Career Plan - Four Years to Make It Happen

The path to an engaging and rewarding career begins with the plan. Your time at Coe College affords you the opportunity to tap into a wealth of knowledge and resources to help achieve and surpass your goals. You want a career rather than a job. The steps in this plan will significantly improve your ability to explore and identify strengths and values, engage with content and individuals that will help provide context to your exploration, and employ the knowledge gained to help identify a fulfilling career.

## EXPLORE 1<sup>st</sup> Year

The main priority of a first year student is to manage the transition from high school to college. The coursework is more rigorous and you'll need to adjust to new living arrangements, various interpersonal relationships and dynamics, and a new-found sense of independence. Balancing academic requirements with campus activities and a social life is an extremely important skill that is essential for you to be successful throughout your time at Coe. Here are a few activities that will help lay the foundation for a successful future.

1. Join the Alumni Mentoring Program (highly recommended). Connect with a Coe Alum. Discuss transitioning into the college setting, possible majors, and career exploration.
2. Get involved on and off campus. Explore and learn more about different fields or topics to determine potential major or career choices.
3. Join a student organization. Engage with others who have similar interests. Gain valuable experience for inclusion on your resume for summer jobs and internships.
4. Service oriented? Visit Coe's Office of Engagement to see how you can become involved with community service activities and volunteer opportunities.
5. Assess your personal values, interests, skills and abilities. Take the Strong Skills Interest Inventory and the O\*Net Interest Profiler. Discuss your results with staff at the Center for Creativity & Careers or in the Learning Commons.
6. Explore your academic major options. With the assistance of academic advisors choose courses that help you explore different majors.
7. Make a list of previous jobs, volunteer experiences, and courses you've taken. Note what aspects you enjoyed in each experience. See if there are patterns that reveal your strengths and potential majors or career paths.
8. Join LinkedIn. Begin to build community by following companies and groups related to your interests.
9. Develop and implement a personalized 4-year career plan with a Center for Creativity & Careers advisor.
10. Speak with academic advisors, upper-class students, faculty members and alumni about majors, classes and potential extracurricular activities.
11. Bookmark the Center for Creativity and Careers website. Follow/like us on Facebook and Twitter to receive the latest information on new opportunities and events.
12. Plan to apply for summer jobs that will provide you with an opportunity to learn about a career field that interests you or develop transferable skills for later.

## ENVISION Sophomore Year

Having successfully navigated the transition from high school to college, you begin to shift focus from transition to progression. Sophomore year is a time when most students declare a major and engage more deeply with interest areas and topics. Start the process of internship/grad school preparation. Create a resume and/or CV, complete a job shadow or informational interview, and make connections in an effort to expand your professional network.

1. Attend a career-related program or event, especially career fairs and networking events.
2. Participate in the Coe Career Bootcamp to develop career preparedness skills including resume and cover letter development, interviewing skills, and networking.
3. Meet with staff in the Center for Creativity and Careers to talk about career options, majors, summer jobs and internships.
4. Continue your involvement with extracurricular activities for personal and professional development with an eye towards leadership opportunities as a Junior or Senior.
5. Participate in volunteer opportunities on campus or within your community.
6. Join a professional organization relevant to your major.
7. Reflect on your values, interests, skills and abilities and think critically about potential career paths.
8. If you're ready, declare a major and map out your remaining time at Coe with your faculty advisor to ensure you're meeting all departmental and college requirements.
9. Evaluate the long term prospects for your desired career or field of study to determine viability and consider other possible options.
10. Consider your Facebook or Twitter from the perspective of an employer.
11. Consider adding a minor or emphasis to your academic plan or possibly studying abroad to expand your knowledge and experiences.
12. Partner with the Center for Creativity and Careers to arrange for an informational interview or job shadow with someone in a possible future career.
13. Continue to communicate with your Alumni Mentor or seek out a mentor if you haven't identified one already.
14. Login to your Coe Connections account, Coe College's new online job board, to see what internships or jobs are available.
15. Continue using LinkedIn to network with professionals in your field of interest, connect with alumni, and learn more about different organizations.
16. Identify potential internships/externships and apply to ones of interest.
17. Talk to the Center for Creativity and Careers or your Faculty Advisor about ways to complete your Academic Practicum requirement.

## EXPERIENCE Junior Year

Junior year is important for career/graduate school planning and preparation. By this point, most coursework is related to your major. Academic performance may be a significant factor for considering graduate or pre-professional programs. This will be the last summer to complete a college internship. Be fully prepared with a resume, cover letter, and interviewing skills to quickly apply to internships. Feel confident about your skills and abilities to perform admirably in a professional setting. If you haven't engaged with activities or groups, this is a crucial time to be able to add those things to your resume.

1. Seek leadership positions in co-curricular activities.
2. Attend on and off campus career fairs and networking events (especially in the Fall when many companies advertise summer internships).
3. Schedule a practice interview to develop your professional communication skills.
4. Obtain an internship in your chosen field. Check out listings on Coe Connections. Explore links on the Center for Creativity and Careers website.
5. Select elective courses that round out your academic experience and develop different skill sets.
6. Schedule an appointment with the Center for Creativity and Careers to prepare for interviews. Gain helpful tips on what to wear, how to answer specific questions, and how to research your interviewer.
7. Schedule an appointment with the Center for Creativity and Careers to assess your goals and evaluate if you are still on-track with your career development plan.
8. Re-assess your interests, values, and skills as necessary. Meet with your Faculty Advisor or the Center for Creativity and Careers to plan your final year.
9. Meet with a Center for Creativity and Careers advisor to formulate your job or graduate school search timeline and plans.
10. Focus and set career goals. At this time, all the experience and information you have gathered should be crystallizing into solid career goals and plans.
11. Review your First Year and Sophomore activities and update your resume as necessary.
12. Contact graduate schools for specific admission requirements and prepare for entrance exams (GRE, MCAT, LSAT, GMAT, etc).
13. Update your resume and create a cover letter (avoid on-line templates for resumes and cover letters as it can make future edits difficult).
14. Join and engage in career-related student professional associations and discussions.
15. Utilize your network to secure an internship, research experience or other opportunity related to your goal.
16. Expand your use of LinkedIn to build your network. Contribute to discussions in fields of interest. Become active in groups to enhance your reach.
17. Get to know alumni. Actively network with professionals in your area of interest.
18. Continue to connect with your mentor in the Alumni Mentoring Program or identify a mentor closer to your intended career path.
19. Join student chapters of professional organizations to gain career information and to start networking.

## ENACT Senior Year

As a Senior, your focus should be on putting the finishing touches on what should have been an amazing experience. Just like First Year students, this is a time of transitions as you begin to seek out and finalize post-graduation plans. Finish strong and make sure that all academic requirements have been met.

1. Research companies/organizations for career opportunities they offer.
2. Revise and update your resume and draft a cover letter.
3. Participate in a Mock Interview for job interviews or graduate school.
4. Make your Facebook and Twitter profiles private. Consider how you are presenting yourself through social media.
5. Consider relocation possibilities. Research potential cities/states where you may want to live and work.
6. Start utilizing those networks to gain employment.
7. Use various resources for job searching — Coe Connections, professional organizations, websites, networks.
8. Continue to assess personal and professional post-graduation goals.
9. Organize job search strategies for obtaining fulltime employment.
10. Research organizations as part of your interview preparation process.
11. Plan your job search strategy or complete grad school applications.
12. Confirm with your academic advisor that your requirements for graduation are met.
13. Complete all necessary graduation documentation and forms. Request and send all necessary graduate school information, such as transcripts, financial aid, graduate assistant and scholarship applications.
14. Have your personal statement critiqued. Meet required deadlines for graduate school.
15. Formulate an alternative or “Plan B” in case you need to make last minute changes to your post-graduation plans.
16. Use LinkedIn to connect with individuals, companies, or alumni who are employed by the organizations you are applying to.
17. Request letters of recommendation from faculty, staff, and/or employers.
18. Join professional organizations in your field. Attend meetings & conferences.
19. Continue to establish and maintain relationships on campus and in the community.
20. Maintain a good relationship with past employers and professors who are serving as references.
21. Complete the first-destination survey to share your success!



## Understanding & Determining Your Work-Related Values

Choose the five work-related values that you want most from a job. Base your answer on past experiences or simply how you feel today. Then prioritize your five choices, one being the most important value to you, five being the fifth most important. Use your top five values to discern whether a particular career, job, or organization is a good fit for you. The better the fit, the greater your likelihood of success!

<b>Ability Utilization</b>	<b>Moral Values</b>
The value of making the most out of my abilities.	The value of not being asked to do things against my conscience.
<b>Achievement</b>	<b>Recognition</b>
The value of having a sense of accomplishment.	The value of receiving praise for doing a good job.
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
The value of being able to keep busy.	The value of having the freedom to use my own judgment.
<b>Advancement</b>	<b>Security</b>
The value of having opportunities for advancement.	The value of having steady employment.
<b>Authority</b>	<b>Social Service</b>
The value of having a chance to tell people what to do.	The value of being able to help other people through the work you do.
<b>Compensation</b>	<b>Social Status</b>
The value of being well paid for the work you do.	The value of having an opportunity to “be somebody.”
<b>Co-workers</b>	<b>Variety</b>
The value of having co-workers that get along with one another.	The value of being able to do different things in a work setting.
<b>Creativity</b>	<b>Working Conditions</b>
The value of having the ability to do things differently.	The value of having pleasant working conditions.
<b>Independence</b>	<b>Other</b>
The value of having the chance to try my own methods.	There may be one that we have left off our list.

## Skills from a Liberal Arts Degree

Experience Working with Experts  
Written Communication Skills  
Oral Communication Skills  
Application of Knowledge  
Time Management Skills  
Decision-Making Skills  
Working in Groups  
Performance Skills  
Goal Setting Skills  
Judgment Skills  
Creativity Skills  
Listening Skills  
Reading Skills  
Coping Skills  
Flexibility  
Tenacity  
Curiosity  
Work Ethic  
Debate Skills  
Research Skills  
Learning Skills  
Holistic Thinking  
Broad Knowledge  
Appreciation of Art  
Computer Knowledge  
Strategic Planning Skills  
Stress Management Skills  
Appreciation for Diversity  
Relationship Building Skills  
Planning and Organizing Skills  
Networking and Committee Work Skills

# Showcasing Your Off-Campus Experiences

Link your skills and experiences to the job-specific and transferable skills that an employer wants.

## Identify job-specific skills

- O\*NET (Occupational Information Network): [www.onetonline.org/](http://www.onetonline.org/)
- Occupational Outlook Handbook: [www.bls.gov/ooh/](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/)
- Employer website, job posting, and/or job description

## Identify transferable skills

Candidate Skills/Qualities Employers Want:

- Ability to work in a team structure
- Ability to make decisions and solve problems
- Ability to plan, organize and prioritize work
- Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization
- Ability to obtain and process information
- Ability to analyze quantitative data
- Technical knowledge related to the job
- Proficiency with computer software
- Ability to create and/or edit written reports
- Ability to sell or influence others

**SAMPLE:** Identifying transferable skills from your off-campus experience

<b>Ability to work in a team structure:</b>	worked on projects with people from three different countries
<b>Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization:</b>	developed relationships with people at Coe College as well as with community leaders
<b>Ability to make decisions and solve problems:</b>	planned a trip to a country with few native language skills
<b>Ability to obtain and process information:</b>	researched different media about the location before leaving
<b>Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work:</b>	while involved with the theatre troop in France, managed classes and participated with home-stay family activities while maintaining a 3.6 GPA
<b>Ability to analyze quantitative data:</b>	in preparing for a year-long study abroad, developed a budget and itinerary 12 months in advance in order to manage finances effectively
<b>Technical knowledge related to the job:</b>	used Skype and email to facilitate the development of a major PowerPoint presentation while in Washington DC.
<b>Proficiency with computer software programs:</b>	learned how to use iMovie while in New Zealand for a class project
<b>Ability to create and/or edit written reports:</b>	with team members in the ACM Chicago Urban studies project, led a presentation about the conflict issues in a local neighborhood and included solutions
<b>Ability to sell or influence others:</b>	through a presentation to my hometown Rotary Club, I was able to obtain additional funding for my trip abroad.

# Transferable Skills: Critical Competencies That Create Success

A liberal arts degree is preparation for a variety of careers. In fact, the majority of those who graduate with a liberal arts degree do not find employment in fields related to their major (e.g., history majors who do not necessarily become historians).

Whether you are a Religion, English, or Philosophy major, you have (or will develop)

transferable skills that are useful in the workplace as a result of being a successful college student. Examples of the skills learned in a typical liberal arts degree program include the following:

## **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Listening effectively, writing essays and reports, convincing individuals and groups of the importance of your ideas, negotiating disputes and differences.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS**

Assessing needs, planning or arranging presentations or social events, designing programs, coordinating events, delegating responsibility, evaluating programs, managing the implementation of projects.

## **HUMAN RELATIONS SKILLS**

Speaking with colleagues, advising people, helping people resolve problems, communicating ideas effectively, cooperating with others to solve problems and to complete projects, working well with diverse groups of people, teaching or coaching others.

## **PROBLEM-SOLVING OR CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS**

Analytical thinking, thinking abstractly, determining broader issues, defining an issue, identifying several solutions to the same program, creating new ways to handle an issue, persuading others to act in the best interests of the group.

## **RESEARCH SKILLS**

Searching computerized databases and published reference materials, identifying themes, analyzing data, classifying data, handling detail work, investigating problems, recording data, writing reports and term papers.

These skills are the critical competencies that employers look for when hiring new employees. Your ability to prove you have developed these skills as a successful college student will set you apart in the interview process and make you the successful candidate for a job. Start to think about specific ways you have demonstrated these skills in class, during leisure activities, through an internship or summer job, and in student organizations or volunteer experiences.

# Planning for a Job, Internship, or Graduate School Search

## **Experience is everything!**

Your experiences don't have to be paid in order to 'count'! What kind of jobs have you had (or do you have)? Have you done one or more internships? What other experiences (such as research) have you had in which you developed transferable skills (leadership, teamwork, creativity, for example?) Those who have experience – paid or not – will be much better positioned for a full-time professional job than those who do not.

## **Who are you?**

Do some self-assessment so that you understand – and can articulate – what's important to you in regard to your values and the workplace environment. When you know what is important to you then you can answer the commonly asked question "Tell me about yourself?"

## **You are interviewing 24/7**

Your behavior and attitude communicate a lot about you. How you treat people in public, and how you treat your co-workers and friends, is a 24/7 advertisement about YOU. And, you never know whom you meet that will make a HUGE difference in your life. A positive attitude will get you far!

## **Graduate and professional school**

Again, do your homework! How will this help you in the future? How much will it cost, and how will you pay for it? You will need to know this and be able to articulate how your graduate and professional school plans will meet your long term goals. Going to graduate or professional school is very different than earning an undergraduate degree.

## **Stay positive and motivated**

A job or graduate school search is stressful. There will be times when you will feel great about it, but other times when your self-confidence will waiver and your motivation will slip. Don't panic! That is totally normal. Be sure to integrate fun, rewarding activities into your schedule, and contact the Center for Creativity & Careers so we can help you stay upbeat, focused, and motivated.

## **Be open-minded**

Your first job out of college is probably not going to be your dream job. Be open to a variety of opportunities! How you choose to react to your first job will be a greater factor in your long-term satisfaction than the content of the job itself. Be deliberate about learning and developing your skills and your professional contacts.

# Planning *cont* ...

## **Planning**

It is CRITICAL that you plan ahead for internships, professional jobs and graduate school; start at least 6-12 months in advance. Keep in mind that a job search typically takes longer than you think it will! Whether you are a First Year student thinking about a possible career track or a Senior who 'knows' what you want to do, it's best to plan well in advance.

## **Meet people**

Look for opportunities to meet and talk with different kinds of people throughout the rest of your Coe career (and beyond). Online interactions are fine, but if you want to be considered as a serious candidate for a professional-level job you will need to increase your face-to-face activities!

## **Hidden job markets**

80% of job openings are never advertised. How do you find them? You need to be intentional and active in your search! Conduct informational interviews and job shadows, do internships, volunteer in the community, connect with alumni, and participate in campus organizations. When working on the 'inside' you have the opportunity to find out about career areas that you have never thought of before.

## **What are your goals?**

Develop your short-term goals (need money and a place to live) and long-term goals (what you want to do and where you want to live). Be realistic. How can you make your first job meet your short term goals AND help you meet your long-term goals by applying what you learn?

## **Use social networking tools effectively**

Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Snapchat and similar sites can be great for gathering information about jobs and career possibilities. Businesses now have their own social network sites and are connected to other major sites - take advantage of this. And, by the way, others are looking at YOU for the same reason (some sources suggest that more than 90% of recruiters review candidates' social media profiles during the recruiting process). Look at your online presence with a critical and professional 'eye'.

## **Read!**

It's imperative that you know WHAT is going on in the global marketplace. It's expected that you can talk about current affairs and understand how they affect your career plans. Whether you are going to be an MD or an artist, the world economy WILL impact you.

# Creating Your Own Luck

*Adapted from Luck is No Accident, John D. Krumboltz'50, Ph.D. & Al S. Levin, Ed.D.*

## Talk with All Kinds of People

These individuals are helpful contacts because of the history they share with you and their general tie to Coe College. Consult with the Center of Creativity and Careers on how to contact alumni.

- ✓ Network, socialize and build relationships
- ✓ At every meeting or function, aim to speak to three new people
- ✓ Find someone who is passionate about his or her job and ask questions about the job
- ✓ Talk to a friend about your career interests and dreams
- ✓ Talk about your career aspirations with most everyone you meet
- ✓ Talk with someone you would normally avoid because you feel intimidated
- ✓ Talk to someone famous at a book signing or other venue

## Continue Learning

- ✓ Research areas of interest
- ✓ Check out books from the library
- ✓ Email well-known individuals with intriguing questions about their work
- ✓ Take a personal development course, e.g. Toastmasters, community college class, etc.
- ✓ Be creative with your Internet searches in discovering new information about a topic of interest

## Try New Activities

- ✓ Take a different route home
- ✓ Take up a new hobby or sport
- ✓ Volunteer with an organization that intrigues you
- ✓ At a party, pose challenging questions, i.e. "What would you do if you won the lottery?"
- ✓ Create an online chat group that's open to people with similar interests
- ✓ Buy a guitar, rent a piano, or learn some other musical instrument
- ✓ Join a community organization such as Rotary, Jaycees or Impact CR

## Involve Yourself in a Project

- ✓ Join a club, association or interest group
- ✓ Help to organize an event
- ✓ Put together a creative proposal aimed at solving a particular problem
- ✓ Work with C3 on creating your business card
- ✓ Seek a transitional job
- ✓ Start experimenting by taking small steps in an area of interest
- ✓ Produce a creative video or brochure to promote yourself
- ✓ Start up a low-risk business, i.e. dog walking
- ✓ Offer to train/lecture/share knowledge

# Goal Setting: Necessary before the Job Search

Finding an answer to the question, “What do I really want in a career?”, is one of the hardest parts of making a successful transition from college to career. A lot of college seniors can be uninformed about career possibilities and because the topic is usually a complex, anxiety-provoking one, it can be left unaddressed.

## Research Is Key

As you interview with employers, all your communication, both written and verbal, needs to focus first on understanding and then clearly articulating how your qualities can benefit the employer. As you get more involved in your job search, your goals will become refined because your “career knowledge” increases. Even if you’ve always known your general career path, you will now need to get “employer and job specific” to make the maximum impact during your job search.

One stumbling block is focusing too much on the connection between your major and your career path. Computer science majors may work as systems designers, but so may math, chemistry and liberal arts majors. There are many factors beyond your college major that determine your first job.

## Job Functions and Other Considerations

One of the most confusing aspects of understanding employers as part of goal setting is determining the relationship between job title, job function, work environment and industry. People often mistakenly use these terms interchangeably.

- Job title refers to the actual position name used by the employing organization to label a specific job, i.e., systems engineer, tax accountant, manufacturing trainee.
- Job functions describe the activities or tasks the person in the job does on a day-to-day basis. For example, a tax accountant prepares financial records, balances company ledgers and examines cost accounting procedures at client companies.
- Work environment refers to the type of organization where the work takes place. In our example, a tax accountant performs job functions in a large public accounting firm, a small privately-owned agency, a large or small company, a multi-department organization or a small, growing firm.
- Industry is a term describing a series of related products or services that make up a portion of the overall economy. Different industries include electronics, financial services, petroleum and manufacturing. It is important to understand that a person can often perform the same work, have the same job title and the same work environment in different industries.



# Formulating a Career Goal

Putting all the pieces of your first job or career goal together generally requires assistance. This Goal Setting Worksheet will get you started. Seek assistance from The Center for Creativity and Careers staff.

## Consider Major Career Options

## Preferred Duties in a Job

**Salary Needs** (consider housing, lifestyle, geography, loans, transportation, goals, etc.)

## Job Titles Being Considered

**Geography** (city, rural, state, mobility, near home, climate, etc.)

**Work Environment** (size of organization, co-workers, physical facilities, etc.)

**Opportunity Needs** (training, management development, upward mobility, flexibility to move within a company, entrepreneurial opportunity, etc.)

**Industry** (manufacturing, government, communications, high tech, etc., or products, services, ideas or issues with which you want to work)

# Researching Employers & Targeting Companies

Researching organizations and potential employers is an expected part of the job search. Research will probably increase your awareness and insight into a job and allow you to answer questions more intelligently and confidently while avoiding taboo areas.

## Who Does the Hiring?

Think small-sized organizations. Many job seekers focus on large, well-known Fortune 500 companies and lose sight of the largest employer, small business. Small businesses (fewer than 100 people) employ 55% of the U.S. workforce. Medium size business firms (employing 100 to 499 people) employ 24% of the U.S. workforce, while large firms (more than 500 people) employ 21% of the U.S. workforce.

## Government

Twenty million people work for the local, state or national government in the U.S. Just like non-profits, the government employs specialists in all job functions at every stage of experience.

## The Library

- Library Research:  
Directory information, articles and books about particular organizations, people, and trends in your field.
- Professional Associations:  
The Encyclopedia of Associations: Gale Research
- General Business Publications:  
Business Week, The New York Times, Forbes, The Wall Street Journal, Fortune, Inc., Fast Company
- Newspapers: Front page & business sections, feature articles on plans to expand, relocate and hire.

## Think Positive

The non-profit sector offers opportunities for job candidates with endless interests. If you are passionate about a certain issue, there are nonprofit organizations, small and large, that serve your cause. Regardless, non-profits need marketers, accountants, fund-raisers, publicists, researchers, event planners and human resource specialists just like any other industry.

## On-line

- The Center for Creativity and Careers  
<http://www.coe.edu/centerforcreativityandcareers>
- Chamber of Commerce Information  
[www.uschamber.com](http://www.uschamber.com)  
If you move, tap into the local Chamber of Commerce, a great way to identify employers and employment statistics within the target geographic location.
- Individual company web sites  
Corporate web sites house volumes of relevant job search information.

# Alumni Networking

## Contacting a Coe College alum for an Internship or Job Search

### For an Internship Search

- Do research on the alum's company/organization before contacting him/her.
- An email subject line (or LinkedIn message) should include that you are “Coe” student.
- Let him/her know that you are a current student.
- Let him/her know that you are exploring internship/job options; ask for suggestions, advice, and/or specific internship leads (i.e. can you apply for an internship with them).
- Ask if him/her would be willing to review and provide feedback on your resume and LinkedIn profile.
- Be sure to thank him/her. Minimally, by email; to make an impression, postal mail.
- Follow up on any referrals that you are given (and let your alum contact know any results of that follow up).

### For a Job Search

- Do research on the alum's company/organization before contacting him/her.
- Let him/her know that you are a Coe alum and the year you graduated (email- Coe should be mentioned in the subject line).
- Let him/her know that you are exploring a particular career field and/or moving to a particular location; ask for suggestions, advice on how he/she would proceed.
- If appropriate ask for the person if he/she would be willing to provide resume advice.
- Be sure to thank him/her. Minimally, by email; to make an impression, postal mail.
- Follow up with him/her (by email) on any referrals that you are given (and let your alum contact know what the results of that follow up was).
- Shred alum contact info when done.
- If you find the alum contact information is not current, let us know at o-career@coe.edu.

# Navigating a Networking Event

Most job seekers spend the majority of their time scouring online postings and blasting their resume to job boards. But if you ask any hiring manager or recruiter where they find most of their candidates, time and time again they will say through a referral or a recommendation.

**Two out of three people get a job through networking.**

**Since networking is the key to getting where you want to be, you need to make sure you know the rules of the game for networking events.**

No doubt, you may be intimidated by a popular, evening networking event. You may spend an evening at a swanky bar or restaurant in a huge room filled with people you don't know. It may seem scary, but everyone in that room is there because they want to network and talk with people just like you.

## Tips for a Successful Networking Event

1. Do your prep work and know what type of people will attend.
2. Read the news, so you can be up-to-speed on current events and potential conversation topics.
3. Make note of who the event organizers are. Thank them at the event (usually they are the most connected people in the room).
4. Dress the part. Make note of the venue and expected attire.
5. Create five conversation starters or opening lines. It doesn't have to be deep - weather, sports, local news, reasons for being there, etc.
6. Arrive on time. You can meet the organizers and work a smaller crowd.
7. Focus on the people, not the food. It's difficult to shake hands and continue conversations when your hands and mouth are always full.
8. Position yourself in a high traffic area.
9. Be assertive. "Hello, my name is..." Introduce yourself and start conversations.
10. Say something after your name to help lead the conversation. "Hi, I'm Courtney, I'm new to YPC. Are you a YPC member?"
11. Try not to talk with the same two people the whole night. You can follow up with those two over coffee another day.
12. To keep the conversation going, focus on things you both know about - the guest speaker, the networking event, or the organization hosting the program.
13. Listen and ask questions. Remember, it's not all about you.
14. Hand out your business card to those you spoke with, but don't fling them out like flyers.
15. Request a business card from those you would like to follow up with.
16. Bring a buddy if you're intimidated, just don't spend the entire evening chatting with your friend.
17. Jot down notes on the business cards to keep track of everyone you meet.
18. Follow up! After the event, get connected on LinkedIn. Send a personal email to request a meeting to continue conversations.
19. Remember, you are simply meeting people, making connections, and creating relationships. A quality network is priceless in your job search.

# How to Prepare for a Career Fair

## **BE PREPARED TO APPROACH EMPLOYERS**

In our everyday lives, we tend to feel uncomfortable walking up to strangers and introducing ourselves. However, Career Fairs and Forums are networking events where this behavior is the norm! Recruiters expect you to take the initiative to introduce yourself. Walking up and introducing yourself may feel uncomfortable at first, but with practice it will soon become comfortable. Remember, it's *expected* that you walk up and introduce yourself to people (another way to 'social network').

## **BE CONFIDENT WHEN YOU APPROACH EMPLOYERS**

Be prepared to say hello, introduce yourself, and shake the employer's hand. Remember to establish eye contact. A firm handshake and eye contact are signs of confidence. The key is to have a short opening line or introduction to get the conversation started. The more recruiters you speak to, the more skilled you will become at these initial introductions.

## **PREPARE YOUR INTRODUCTION**

A polished introduction creates a positive first impression. Begin the conversation with a general statement about yourself. This general statement could include the degree you are pursuing, your major, when you are graduating, and what type of information you are hoping to obtain from them. For example, "I am in the Business program at Coe College majoring in Marketing. I will graduate in 20XX. I would like to know more about marketing opportunities with your company." (Develop and practice your 30-second 'elevator speech')

## **DRESS PROFESSIONALLY**

To create the impression that you are serious about your future, you should dress in professional business attire. For men and women, the 2-piece matching business suit is strongly recommended. You should be well groomed and use accessories minimally. Even if these events take place on campus, you are still creating your 'first impression' – dress up! Contact the Center for Creativity & Careers if you need help with wardrobe.

## **BRING AT LEAST 25 RESUMES AND BUSINESS CARDS**

Your resume is a part of the initial impression you are making. Your resume should be well-written and professional in appearance. Your resume should be printed on good quality paper – do not bring photocopies. Also, make sure there are no typographical or grammatical errors. Business cards are great to hand to employers as a way for them to remember you.

# How to Prepare for a Career Fair *cont ...*

## **RESEARCH EMPLOYERS**

If you want to show that you are a candidate with strong initiative and motivation, do your research on companies that interest you before attending career fairs. Then when you meet the representatives, you will have more to discuss and will be able to ask more than the typical generic questions most candidates ask.

## **TARGET EMPLOYERS**

Make a list of the companies you want to approach and then prioritize your list. Meet with companies in which you are least interested in first... Once you feel comfortable and confident, approach your top choices. It is important to overcome any nervousness before meeting those representatives from companies that are your top choices.

## **ARRIVE EARLY**

Career Fairs become very crowded a few hours into the event. This makes it difficult for recruiters to spend a great deal of time talking with any one candidate. So, if you want a more relaxed atmosphere and hope to spend some quality time talking with recruiters, be one of the first to arrive at the event. Without the crowds, they have the chance to focus on you and give you more of their undivided attention.

## **SEND FOLLOW-UP LETTERS**

Before you leave an employer, make sure to ask for a business card. That way, you will be sure to have the right spelling, title and accurate contact information for that representative. On the back of their card, write any specific information you discussed.

Within 1-2 days of the event, send a thank you letter. Most candidates do not take the time to do this. By sending a thank you letter, you have an opportunity to distinguish yourself, showcase strong follow-through skills and create a positive lasting impression.

In your letter make sure to indicate that you met the representative at the Career Fair and that you appreciated having the opportunity to meet them. To tailor the letter effectively, include any specific information you may have noted on the back of their business card.

Your thank you letter should be a formal, typed business letter printed on high quality stationary.

# Notes