

Job Search Strategies & Becoming a Career Services Professional

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The tips below relate to things that are important to do while you're in school and working/interning in various settings, hopefully related to your future career goals. Others relate to specific steps to take once you begin your job search in earnest. Much like we tell our clients, take advantage of all the resources at your disposal. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you feel stuck.

- Maximize your opportunities in the work settings where you intern, have assistantships; seek to go above and beyond, e.g., it may mean volunteering to do workshops in the evening, working on a journal article or research project on the weekend, doing extra hours when the office is short-handed. Be visible as someone who is making contributions and taking initiative.
- Schedule time to talk with key staff and supervisors about your career goals, and job search strategies that will help you reach those goals.
- Review current job announcements in the field (ACA Job Center, *Chronicle of HIE*, NACE Jobwire, etc.); note the gaps in your resume/vita and look for/ask about opportunities, experiences to fill those.
- Ask for regular feedback on your performance, resume, vita. What can you do to improve it? Regularly update your resume so it is "ready to go" when needed.
- Document your skills, accomplishments, and experience using an electronic or paper portfolio.
- Think about what a supervisor or faculty member would put in a reference letter about you, what are your strengths? What about your accomplishments, experiences, work ethic, etc., stand out?
- Practicing what you "preach." Applying your best knowledge and skills to your own job search process. This is sometimes an intimidating experience—"I should be succeeding because I tell others how to do this!"
- Target geographic locations, career fields, or work settings in which you have an interest and ask faculty and staff for contacts, referrals. Talk with them about the best way to network with respect to a particular job search target.
- See handout on some issues to consider if you're seeking a career services position in a college or university-based setting.

Involvement in NCDA

- Write an article for *Career Convergence*—this may be based on research you did for classes, projects you did as an intern, graduate assistant, etc.
- Learn about NCDA committees (visit www.ncda.org); ask questions about those you have an interest in; ask how you can be involved; follow through on any commitments you make
- Volunteer at the annual conference—sessions, registration, helping with AV equipment, graduate student reception, etc.
- Partner with staff in your work setting or on your campus to submit a program proposal to the annual conference

Connect to Related Associations

American College Personnel Association, <http://www.myacpa.org/>, Commission for Career Development, <http://www.myacpa.org/comm/careerdev/>

Association of Career Professionals, <http://www.iacmp.org/>

Association of Job Search Trainers, <http://www.ajst.org/>

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), www.nacweb.org, regional and state associations, <http://www.nacweb.org/about/regions.htm>

National Association of Employment Counselors,
<http://www.employmentcounseling.org/neca.html>

Society for Human Resource Managers, <http://www.shrm.org/>