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Some advice to keep you on track.



Photograph by Aron Daniels, WCU Alumnus



Dear Students and Alumni:

Whether you are hearing about our QEP, listening to an RA or other mentor, or reading almost any article on challenges facing college students today, you'll almost certainly be told about the importance of having a plan. As the word *synthesis* implies, we at Western believe you should be intentional about your career goals, incorporating the right major, related service, undergraduate research, leadership, and co-ops or internships into your overall education. That's why we covered those topics in the first three editions of the Career Journal this year. We believe that synthesizing school and related co-curricular activities creates a plan for success both in college and in life afterward.

If you are about to graduate, you should be implementing another kind of plan. Job seekers should develop a structure for their search – they need to establish how they will look for jobs, they should have already fine-tuned resumes, cover letters, and other materials, and they should devote regular time each day or week to their searches. This edition of the Career Journal offers you guidance on using the resources we provide in order

Congratulations, Graduates!

By Eric Newsom

You've taken your last exam of your college career, paid your last fee, and bought the cap & gown. Your family has arrived, and the festivities are in full swing. You're graduating, and they are proud. So are we, and we wish you the best as you step out into the real world.

But, you say, what am I to do now? Where will I go from here? Am I really prepared for this "real world?"

If anxiety is setting in because you have to do it on your own, don't fret. We aren't abandoning you. Career Services is still available to help you, as alumni, with all your job search needs.

What do we offer?

- **JobCat** is a portal to job recruitment through the Career Services website (<http://careers.wcu.edu>) with listings of potential jobs, internships, and actual job interviews. Through this online system, students and alumni can upload their resumes and cover letters, search for and receive alerts on the availability of open positions from regional companies, and schedule interviews with employers that visit WCU at career fairs.
- **Career Fairs.** Career Services hosts a number of specific field-related fairs and events that bring regional and national employers to WCU for the purpose of spreading information about their companies and interviewing students as potential employees. Majors and fields represented at fairs range from criminal justice to education to

Career Services Programs for Success

Students and Alumni: Take advantage the many services we offer!

JobCat, MonsterTRAK, and Localjobs.com

Internet-based recruiting systems on our website that include jobs as well as opportunities to post a resume and sign up for interviews.

Career Testing

If you are having difficulty making a decision about a major or a career, we offer career testing and interpretation.

Career Counseling

If you have a career concern that you would like to discuss, call for an appointment with a career counselor.

Cooperative Education

Co-op is a program that allows you to work in your career or major field and receive directly related experience and credit WHILE you are still in school.

Career Days and Recruitment Events

Career Services offers 18-20 recruitment events every year, including the Career and Graduate School Expo, the Allied Health and Nurses' Career Day, Spring Job Fest, Summer Job Fair, Engineering, Math, and CS Fair, Construction Management Fair, Education Recruitment Day and multiple etiquette-development events.

Resume Critiquing Service

Email your resume (cover letter, too!) to mdespeaux@wcu.edu or mashe@wcu.edu and make an appointment to discuss it!

Student Employment

Need some cash? The student employment office can help you find a part-time job. We offer listings for on-campus as well as off-campus employment. Visit them at <http://careers.wcu.edu>.

Career Services Website

Our website offers links, articles, event calendars, job search tools, directories, videos and DISCOVER, a computer-aided guidance program to help you in your career decision. Available at <http://careers.wcu.edu>.

Interviewing Skills Assistance

You can participate in a mock interview and improve your interviewing skills through the Perfect Interview program.

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Want to get on the career path?

Use JobCat.

1. Log into JobCat at careers.wcu.edu
2. Complete a personal profile
3. Upload a resume
4. Submit your online application by the deadline.

JobCat is updated with new jobs almost every day, so check for updates regularly!

The Do's and Don'ts of Job Hunting

By Brandy Kiger

Summer is here and the job hunt is on. Whether you're a recent graduate (congratulations!) or just looking for a summer job, here are some tips to help get you started:

Do's

- ☑ Stay positive!
- ☑ Put together a resume, a cover letter, and a portfolio of your work. Show off your strengths.
- ☑ Update your resume. Now's the chance for you to clean it up and make it look professional. If you've just graduated you can add that to it, and any honors you received at graduation. Make sure you proofread it before you send it out.
- ☑ Research the company. Knowing what you're applying for and who you're going to work for is always a good thing.
- ☑ Use job boards in your job search. Career Services has the local job board and JobCAT you can check out, and they are updated frequently!
- ☑ Dress appropriately for interviews, and dress for the job you want to have. Steer away from too casual and too sexy. Instead, be conservative.
- ☑ Network whenever you can. It's not necessarily about what you know, but who you know or who you've impressed.
- ☑ Ask good questions when interviewing. It shows you are interested in the position, that you're thoughtful, and that you've done research.
- ☑ Say "Thank you," because courtesy

counts. After an interview, make sure to send a thank you note to whoever is in charge of hiring. Nearly 15% of employers said they would automatically dismiss a candidate who didn't send a thank-you note.

Don'ts

- ☒ Don't sit around and wait for a job to come to you. Be proactive in your job hunt, create a schedule and stick to it.
- ☒ Don't go it alone. Job searches can be tedious, so the more help you have the better. Feel free to drop by Career Services for advice and information regarding your job hunt.
- ☒ Don't spend time applying for jobs for which you're not qualified. Research the expectations and qualifications for the job before you send off your resume.
- ☒ Don't waste time applying for jobs you're not really interested in. Instead focus your time and energy looking for what you do want!
- ☒ Don't talk negatively about your last boss, it makes the hiring committee wonder what you would say about them.
- ☒ Don't make your private life public. Instead, clean up that profile on Facebook or MySpace to present the best, most professional version of you.
- ☒ Don't give up!

Information courtesy of CareerBuilder.com

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to find jobs, writing resumes and cover letters, and related advice. On our web site, you can log into JobCAT and find job listings, actually practice interviewing through the Perfect Interview Online program, and take advantage of many of our other services. In our office, we remain available to you all summer, and alumni can always turn to us for help. Personally and professionally, we take great pleasure in providing you with support, and we're proud to see you succeed.

Sincerely,
Michael Despeaux,
career counselor and
publisher of the
Career Journal



WCU Career Services has a Facebook page!

Become a fan , and we can send you updates on Career Services and Co-op Event Happenings. Find us online by searching keyword "WCU Career Services" on Facebook.

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Graduation, continued from p. 1

business to construction management. A full schedule of career events can be found on the website at the beginning of each semester.

- **Job Search Assistance.** Career Services offers help in fixing up resumes through a critique program. Counselors are available for consultation in person or through e-mail. With help from a counselor, students and alumni can turn lackluster resumes into successful selling points that help secure jobs.

- **Interview Preparation.** The Perfect Interview is an online computer program that allows participants to take a virtual job interview. Users are provided with options that allow them to view examples of how best to answer questions and a coach that explains subtexts for each question. The program also discusses what factors should be in the user's answer. Answers are recorded either in text or on video, so users can see how well they did at communicating their responses.

Counselors are also available for mock interviews where they can provide firsthand commentary on the quality of responses, and advice and support for those who are about to go through the real thing.

So march proudly today, and celebrate your achievements, WCU graduates of 2008. And, tomorrow, when the reality of finding a job sets in, give Career Services a call at (828) 227-7133. We'll be waiting to hear from you.

