

The Career Journal

Caring about your future... Promoting success!

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In the woods at Western: How to blaze a trail

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Two Career Development Case Studies

Daryl:

After four fun years, Daryl was ready to graduate. He came to Western from Charlotte, and he wanted to go back and work in the city, where, with his business major, he was sure to make lots of cash. Now that April was here, Daryl thought, “what do I do to find a great job?”

He’d heard something about career services, so he thought about calling to find out about job opportunities in Charlotte. From his roommate, he learned about *JobCat*, Western’s on-line service where many employers in every field post openings and schedule interviews. He never called, but after a few weeks, he did his first search and saw a management position with a good company. The deadline was the next day. He tried to hit the “apply” button in *JobCat*, but he was prevented because the program required him to upload a resume first. Frantic, Daryl threw together a poorly written, bad resume full of grammatical errors. He did upload it into *JobCat* and applied for the job at the last minute.

After not hearing back from the employer, who was scheduling interviews on campus the next week, Daryl called the contact person to ask about his status. He was told, “You have no co-op or internship experience, and your resume listed no leadership or involvement activity. From your vague job descriptions, we couldn’t tell if you have any computer skills or related knowledge. You listed personal references, not people like supervisors or professors who oversaw your work. You didn’t mention our company or even our industry in your objective. Sorry.”

Fortunately for Daryl, Career Services offers full support to Western alumni. Because he failed to think about gaining practical experience in the form of a co-op, missed lots of career fairs and on-campus recruitment events, and waited until the last minute to build a resume, he lost some opportunities and ground to better prepared classmates. Consequently, Daryl was underemployed for a period of time before he got his act together, took better advantage of his resources, and landed his first real job.

Kate:

Kate came to Western from a rural community, and she wasn’t sure what she wanted to do. Lots of majors interested her, and she had collected information about all of them during her orientation. After talking with her advisor and still not sure what to declare, she called and made an appointment to meet with a *career counselor*.

In that meeting, Kate discussed her interests, abilities, and values. In answering some questions and in light of some data, she ruled out several ideas. She opted to



Trail...

“choose not to take the path of least resistance.”

See Page 2 ...

◆ **Learn how to become a Career Peer Mentor!**

See Page 3 ...

◆ **Success Tips**

Located : 2nd Floor
Killian Annex

Hours of operation:
Monday - Friday.
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Phone: 828-227-7133
Fax: 828-227-7344.

For information go to:
<http://careers.wcu.edu>

Trail continued on page 2

Career Services/Cooperative Education



Helping to make a difference in your future!

Trail Continued...

take and process *vocational testing* that helped her narrow her choices to a couple of options. Her career counselor helped her find more information about these choices, and she was finally able to settle on a major that felt good and was consistent with her occupational goals.

Halfway through her second year, Kate returned to Career Services to check out the possibility of a summer *co-op job*. She sat down with her career counselor and formulated a terrific *resume* that showcased her related coursework, computer skills, and on-campus job duties in clear, easy-to-follow bullet points. She uploaded it onto *JobCat* and became competent using it to search for opportunities on a weekly basis. After attending *Spring Job Fest* in February and talking with an employer there, she sent a quick thank-you note and received an offer for an interview. She got the co-op, and they liked her so much she returned the next summer!

Now, Kate has a standing offer to work for that employer after graduation. Not one to limit her options, Kate still submitted her resume, updated with her co-op experience, to Career Services to be critiqued. She learned how to make a great first impression at the fall *Business Etiquette Dinner*, and she still plans to attend several *career fairs*. Once a week, she spends an hour at Career Services honing her interview skills with the *Perfect Interview* program. She spends time talking with her faculty advisor, career counselor, co-op supervisor, and other mentors about her first career move after graduation. Kate may not know what the future holds for her, but it sure seems bright!

Synopsis:

At Career Services, we see students like Daryl and Kate all the time. Despite huge marketing efforts, newsletters, on-line services, many career events, educational programs and visits to classes, and much more, some students fail to take advantage of the comprehensive resources we provide. They fall in the minority. According to the latest graduating senior survey, most respondents felt that our overall career-related services were good or excellent.

So, how do we reach Daryl? Do you know Daryl? Are you Daryl? If so, please call or visit our website, and review our services **now**, not at the last minute. Think about creating a resume, even if you don't need one tomorrow. How can you find ways to gain experience before graduation? Call or see us to find out. Attend our career fairs and dress professionally, like you want the job. Very importantly, if you don't know what you want to study or do, choose not to take the path of least resistance and let us help you identify your purpose. As Kate knows and Daryl eventually discovered, we hope and work hard to be your ally in the development and

Become a Career Peer Mentor!!!

Be a leader, and gain valuable experience at the same time!!!

Represent your major, and help other students learn what they can do with it!

Provide direction and help other students write resumes, find co-ops, and use JobCat!

Meet employers and develop important skills that will make you a successful professional!



CPMs must have completed 60 course hours by May 2005, be full-time, have at least a 3.0 GPA in their major and 2.0 overall.

Pick-up an application form in Career services today!
227 Killian Annex.

Feel free to contact Jessica A Elwell
at (828) 227-3815 with any questions.

Chart your way to success



Students and Alumni take advantage of our many services offered.

- √ **JobCat and MonsterTRAK** are internet - based recruiting systems on our website which include jobs as well as opportunities to post a resume and sign up for interviews
- √ **Career Counseling** - If you have a career concern that you would like to discuss, call for an appointment with a career counselor
- √ **Career Testing** - If you are having difficulty making a decision about a major or a career, we offer career testing and interpretation
- √ **Cooperative Education** - Co-op is a program that allows you to work in your career/ major field and receive directly related experience and credit WHILE you are still in school
- √ **Resume Critiquing Service** - Drop off your resume (cover letter too!) and it will be ready (suggestions and all) in 48 hours.
- √ **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. See them at careers.wcu.edu
- √ **Career Library** - Our Career Library offers books, directories, and videos to aid in your career decision, including DISCOVER, a computer-aided-guidance program. Also available at careers.wcu.edu
- √ **Interviewing Skills Assistance** - You can participate in the PerfectInterview program and improve your interview skills.
- √ **Career Days and Recruitment Events** - Career Services offers 10-12 recruitment events every year including Career and Graduate School Expo, Allied Health and Nurses' Career Day, Spring Job Fest, Summer Job Fair, Creative Professions Career Day, Education Recruitment Day and multiple etiquette development events

For more information on any of these areas please go to...
<http://careers.wcu.edu>

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Career Services Calendar



Event Showcase!

for February

Resume Doctor - In The House!

February 8 & 9, 2005
UC Atrium, 2nd floor
11:30am - 3pm

Drop by and have the "Resume Doctor" give your resume a check-up just in time for the spring recruiting season. Our Career Counselors will be on hand for you to drop by with a copy of your resume and have it critiqued while you wait!

Business Etiquette Reception

February 15, 2005
UC Multipurpose Room
6:00pm – 7:30pm

Join Career Services for the Business Etiquette Reception. This is an excellent opportunity to network with employers from the Spring Job Fest. Our host is Dr. Rita Noel, Professor of BCISE, who will share some tips on business etiquette and how to make the most of a business reception. Please visit Career Services & Cooperative Education on the 2nd floor of Killian Annex to secure a spot at this event.

Spring Job Fest

February 16, 2005
UC Grandroom
10am - 3pm

See JobCat for on-campus interview schedule!

Deadline for Spring JobCat interviews February 9!

Graduating seniors and grad students have another opportunity to attend a career fair to network with employers to find a post graduate position. Spring Job Fest gives rising juniors and seniors a chance to secure a co-op or internship. Business casual to professional attire is required and several copies of your resume are suggested. Post your resume on JobCat or get help in the Career Resource Center (2nd floor Killian Annex) to develop one.

Attention Students!!!

The Career Journal was updated on January 1st. JobCat will be updated with new jobs almost everyday, so you should **check for updates regularly!** For more information, go to <http://careers.wcu.edu/jobcat.asp>

To apply for jobs located on JobCat you **must** do the following first: First, Log into JobCat at <http://careers.wcu.edu> Next, Complete a personal profile, Then, Upload a resume, Finally, Submit your online application by the deadline.



Welcome back students!

For more information go to <http://careers.wcu.edu>