Job & Internship Search  
*Make a plan for success*

*Would you buy a car, a house, or an expensive electronic item without researching it, and seeing how it fits into your life? Life after college is similar in that you have to "try before you buy", or graduate.*

**Gain career related experience by:**

***It is not the most qualified persons who get the best jobs; it is those who are most skilled at finding a job.***

* Volunteering
* Job Shadowing
* Internships – the sooner, the better; more time to explore options
* Part-time/Seasonal Jobs
* Research (in your major) – on-campus or off-campus
* Student Activities/Clubs, especially with leadership positions

**Career-related experiences are particularly beneficial because you can:**

* Test career choices early and develop a better sense of your interests – making job/graduate searches easier!
* Confirm, or deny, career interests and clarify your professional goals
* Gain professional confidence by learning about personal strengths and weaknesses
* Apply your classroom knowledge and skills in a work setting
* Develop skills that enhance your employability, such as teamwork, communication, and leadership skills
* Learn and develop personal responsibility and commitment
* Establish and maintain a network of professional contacts
* Gain a competitive edge in the job-market and possibly gain a full-time job

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***Did you know…***

* Employers prefer applicants with team work and communication skills (oral and written), leadership experience and/or involvement on campus, and analytical skills
* Most companies prefer to hire well-performing interns…meaning an internship could lead to a full-time job offer!

**|| Game Plan**

Taking the time to reflect, craft a good resume, and build a strong network will result in a successful search.

* **Criteria:** evaluating what is most important to you in relationship to your options is critical in making good decisions. We offer a worksheet to help you determine your needs, wants and important criteria.
* **Self-Reflection:** employers want applicants who have a clear sense of who they are, and why they are interested in that particular industry and/or specific company. You may have a variety of interests, but when searching for an internship/job narrow it to 3 main industries.   
  *Next, ask yourself these questions:*
  + What are my skills, values, and interests?
  + Does my resume reflect my skills and interests?
  + Why am I interested in this field?
  + What do I know about this industry already? Where can I find more information?
  + What personal qualities it takes to succeed in this field?
  + Where do I want to be, geographically? Hometown, out-of-state, abroad?
  + When is the best time to intern? Most students intern during the summer(s) – some more than one!
  + Do I need to get paid (internship)?
  + How many hours per week can I work/intern?
  + How much time am I willing to devote to my internship/job search process?
  + When was the last time I reviewed my resume, or made edits?
  + Am I comfortable writing a cover letter?
  + Do I have a list of 3-4 professional references, and have the consent to be my reference for applications?
* **Craft a Resume:** the purpose of your resume is to clearly articulate your skills, experience, and accomplishments, with the goal of earning an interview.
  + You will need a customized resume to the particular opportunity you are applying for
  + Consider creating a master resume, which contains all of your experiences, honors/awards, etc. A master resume allows you to make a customized resume with ease and choose which entries to leave and keep.

See *Resume* handout in Career Education

* **Stay Organized:** juggling multiple applications may lead to missed opportunities.
  + Take a little time to set up a system to manage applications and related information. It can be as simple as file folders, a notebook, or as elaborate as a multi-tabbed Excel spreadsheet.
  + A job/internship search can be a full-time job, so make sure to carve out time and resources to be successful. Scheduling time for your plan keeps you on track towards your goals.

See *Job Search Syllabus* for a plan to stay organized and make time for your plan.

* **Build A Network:** One of the best things about Hampden-Sydney is the potential for you to build a strong network with our alumni. But you can't wait for people to offer assistance, you must seek it yourself!  
  See these handouts for more info: *Networking, Contacting Alumni, Informational Interviews*

*Not sure how to get started?* Schedule an appointment with a Career Coach to get going!

**Once you have a strong resume in hand and targeted industries you’re ready to put your game plan into action!**

**Career Education suggests the following strategies you can use to find your next opportunity.**

**|| Where to Search for Your Next Opportunity**

* **TigerConnections** (.com): THE H-SC job and internship resource
  + Download the app & check often for new opportunities – search ‘Careers by Symplicity’
* **Company/organization’s website:** employers like for prospective employees to have visited their sites and to “follow” them on LinkedIn – positions are often on LinkedIn and you can apply this way
* **Internet Job Sites**: find employer openings for a variety of fields through sites such as
  + *Indeed.com*
  + *USA Jobs*, official site for the **federal government jobs** (<http://www.usajobs.gov/>)
  + *Idealist*, for **non-profit jobs** (<http://www.idealist.org/>)
  + Career Ed: <http://www.hsc.edu/Career-Education/Research/Explore-Careers-and-Employers.html>
* **LinkedIn:** has a job search function under the ‘Jobs’ tab (on black banner at the top)
* **Chamber of Commerce:** search for the Member/Business Directory.
  + Extensive listing of businesses in a geographic area. Check company websites for current openings, or contact them to see if they anticipate hiring.
* **Professional Associations:** great resource for specific industries, and often have job/internship boards
* **Newspaper Classified Ads:** the classic paper version, or online listings
* **Career Education Library & Website** – Here you will find dozens of resources including guides helping you search for opportunities in a particular career field, location or company
* **Academic Department:** meet with your advisor or one of your professors to obtain leads
* **Career EDge newsletter:** check your email regularly for our email newsletter for up-to-date info
* **Social Media:** connect with us on Twitter @hsccareers and H-SC Career Education Office on Facebook
* **Career Fairs:** this is the easiest way to get yourself in front of a recruiter and company for which you are interested and to speak with them one-on-one about your interests and how they fit with their company and opportunities.
  + See our handout *Career Fairs* for tips to prepare for meeting employers at fairs
  + Develop and practice your ‘elevator speech’, 30-seconds introducing yourself and the types of jobs/internships in which you have an interest.
* **On-Campus Recruiting:** each year many employers visit campus to host information tables and sessions, and even hold interviews.

**See the Career Education Events Calendar to stay up to date on career fairs and employer events.**

[www.hsc.edu/Career-Education/Calendar-of-Events.html](http://www.hsc.edu/Career-Education/Calendar-of-Events.html)

*Check often as updates are made daily during the semester!*

* **Employment Agencies:** employment agencies (or temp agencies) do much of the work for the job seeker.
  + Some agencies work with only one type of job so they may not have opportunities in your interest area. You may only want to work with agencies that are “Fee Paid” meaning the hiring organization will pay the employment agency.
  + If you use an employment agency, consider the following:
    - Be sure they hire for the industry you are interested in (they may specialize)
    - Be sure you are aware of any financial obligations on your part before you sign anything
    - Be assertive about the kind of positions you want and do not want
* Using with a temp agency may be one avenue for making some money while looking for a permanent job, and some temp employees are offered full-time employment if the opportunity arises.

**|| Network, Network, Network**

Although networking does not appeal to most people, the reality is that some positions are never advertised and many professions operate through informal “networks” or the “hidden job market” where referrals take precedent. While your contacts may not be giving you a job, they can provide valuable information, job leads, and referrals to other professional contacts. It is helpful to make contacts with people who are in your network and who may know of position openings or can refer/recommend you.

When growing your list of professional contacts:

* If this is new to you, schedule an appointment with a Career Coach to help you get started.
* **Develop a list of possible contacts**, including, yet not limited to:
  + Professionals in your field of interest
  + Individuals who may know someone in your field of interest
  + Professors
  + Internship supervisors and/or past employers
  + Friends
  + Coaches
  + Contacts through professional associations
  + Alumni (there are over 1,000 sortable alumni on LinkedIn under the ‘Find Alumni’ search tool)
* **Initiate Contact:** email, phone call, or letter
  + Start with people you know to build your confidence and get comfortable selling yourself
  + Introduce yourself, say how you got their name (if appropriate) and your purpose (career information and job search advice – do not ask for a job)
  + Determine the best time to talk with them
  + Check the Career Education events schedule often for chances to meet employers and/or alumni
* **Prepare for the meeting** by
  + Researching the employer/company that the person works for
  + Brainstorming questions to ask about the field, company and the job search process
  + Reviewing handouts and materials in Career Ed Library and online
* **Conduct an informational interview** and make a good first impression by
  + Being punctual
  + Dressing appropriately and being prepared
  + Taking a copy of your resume with you to share your skills and experiences
  + Guiding the conversation by preparing questions ahead of time; remember this is not a job interview but a time for you to gather information
  + *Tip:* Do not make the person feel like you have trapped them into a job interview! They are there to give advice, not to get you a job.
* **Send a thank-you note** expressing your appreciation and indicating something specific that you learned.
* See these handouts for more tips and tricks to networking: *Networking, Informational Interviews, Contacting Alumni,* and *Professional Correspondence*

**|| Targeted Outreach** involves marketing yourself to employers when not responding to a specific job/internship opening. It requires research and planning, but can be very effective and shows determination!

Steps to take in using this method include:

* **Develop a prospect list:** through using Chamber of Commerce websites, professional associations, online searches, newspaper articles, etc. – make a list of companies where you would like to work.
* **Research the employer:** find out as much as you can about the employer, i.e. clientele, industry trends, etc.  
  Sources can include:
  + LinkedIn, the organization’s website, and articles from papers and journals.
  + Most employers have annual reports and promotional literature on their websites
* **Call for the name and title of the person who heads the department in which you are interested**.The receptionist most likely will not put your call through to that person, but may give you their name, title and contact information.
* **Write a targeted cover letter to the department head/contact**  
  By writing an individualized email/letter to the person who could hire you, you are increasing your chances of getting a positive response.
  + You letter should emphasize your relevant skills and your research about the organization.
  + You may also wish to send a customized resume, relevant to the type of position/industry
* **Follow-up with a phone call**  
  Wait until the person has had time to receive your email/letter, then call to see if you can arrange a time to talk with her/him about your skills and qualifications. Although there may not be an opening at that time you will be able to express your interest, elicit more information about typical positions, how often they become available, and where they advertise future openings.  
  *Tip:* It is helpful to plan what you will say before the call.

**|| What financial support does the College offer?**

Visit the Career Education Internship Scholarships page to learn all about this program, which offers scholarships of $300 to $3000 to H-SC students interning around the country and the world.

<http://www.hsc.edu/Career-Education/Students/Internship-Scholarships.html>

**|| How can I find somewhere to live?**

Are you relocating for your job or internship? There are many housing options and sometimes it just requires a little creative thinking.

* Interning near a college or university?
  + Contact their housing office – with students gone during the summer, most schools open their dorms to interns. Often, this is very affordable.
  + Check university bulletin boards online for students looking to sublease off-campus housing.
* Do you have friends, friends of friends, or family in the area? Why not take them up on their offer to stay at their house for a few months?
* Sublease an apartment or take advantage of a short-term rental.
  + Check the local newspaper, utilize [Apartments.com](http://www.apartments.com/) or contact a realtor in the area for leads.
* Hampden-Sydney Alumni Network
  + Alumni may be willing to give suggestions for housing, or know of others in the area looking for renters.

|| **A Checklist for Your Job/Internship Search**

Your job search can be overwhelming, so it's helpful to break the process down into manageable steps.

Work through this list and check off what you've completed as you go. Before you know it, you'll be well on your way to a great opportunity.

**ASSESS**

* I have identified my personal interests, strengths, likes and dislikes.  
  *A job/internship searcher without goals tends to have a longer, more frustrating search and may end up in an unhappy position.*
* I have compiled a list of job titles and careers that are of interest to me.
* I can name at least 2 specific careers and/or jobs that I plan to pursue.

**RESEARCH**

* I have researched potential career fields including job titles, salary levels, and geographic locations.
* I have identified specific geographical areas where I would like to live and work.
* I am reading the appropriate industry and trade journals related to my field of interest.
* I have researched market and employment trends for the job(s) I wish to pursue.
* I have talked with a number of professionals in the field to gain greater understanding of trends and events affecting entry level hires.
* I have planned to use my H-SC email account or I have created a new, professional one to correspond with potential employers.
* I have developed a list of network contacts whom I correspond with on a regular basis.

**PREPARE**

* My resume has been reviewed by a Career Coach and is up-to-date with my skills and experiences.
* I have met with a member of the Career Education staff to discuss my future plans.
* I have registered for or updated my profile on Tiger Connections at  [www.tigerconnections.com](https://hsc-csm.symplicity.com/students/).
* I have registered for an account with [Internships.com](http://www.internships.com/welcome/HampdenSydneyCollege) if searching for internships.
* I have identified 3-4 individuals to serve as professional references.
* I have, or plan to, attend workshops offered by Career Education on preparing my professional portfolio, interviewing, effective networking and the job search process.
* I have developed my interview skills by reviewing the *Interviewing* handout.
* I have the appropriate interview attire: one conservative suit, pressed dress shirt, sensible tie (or bow tie), matching shoes and socks, belt or suspenders.
* I have created a professional sounding voicemail message at my primary contact number for potential employers to call.

**SEARCH**

* I have gotten a copy of the *Job Search Syllabus* and made a plan for my search.
* I have identified and/or attended at least one job fair offered through the Career Education Office.
* I have identified at least two or three job search resources that I check frequently.
* I check Tiger Connections regularly for new job/internship opportunities.
* I have developed an organized system to keep track of my contacts, interviews, follow-ups and other job search related activities.
* I prioritize job application deadlines and respond to all interesting leads immediately.
* I have participated in *at least* one on-campus interview.
* I have developed a list of questions to ask employers during interview(s).
* After each interview, I send a hand-written thank you note to each person who interviewed me.
* I am remaining patient and focused, and understand this is a process.