

HOW TO FIND A SUMMER JOB

A summer job experience related in some way to your major can be very rewarding. It can be valuable in helping you learn about your career interests and your abilities and strengths, which is necessary information for making sound career decisions during the senior year. In addition, acquiring hands-on experience during the summer will help you develop the skills attractive to many future employers, thereby increasing your marketability. The following information includes helpful hints and strategies to improve your chances of conducting a successful and rewarding summer job search.

TIPS FOR THE SUMMER JOB SEARCH

I. START EARLY -- It is essential to begin your summer job search in the fall semester in order to develop the necessary strategies for success. This will take a great deal of time and planning.

A. The Resume -- Develop a resume which highlights your education, employment history, extracurricular activities, special abilities, and accomplishments. In most cases, the resume is required to obtain a formal interview for summer employment. (Refer to handout "RESUME PREPARATION.")

B. Cover Letters -- Create and write effective cover letters to accompany your resume. Long distance summer job searching will require you to contact potential employers by mail. *Never* send a resume to a company without a personalized cover letter. (Refer to handout "LETTER WRITING.")

C. Locate Job Opportunities -- Once you've had your resume and cover letter critiqued, it's time to generate a list of potential job search sources. Some suggestions:

1. eRecruiting – Sign up for an e-Recruiting account in the Career Center. An account with eRecruiting offers many job and internship opportunities targeted toward college job seekers. Visit the Career Center to register for an eRecruiting account.

2. Newsletter - Read the weekly "Career Center Newsletter" for summer job announcements by companies visiting Clarkson as well as for other opportunities. Internships are also advertised in the newsletter. Hint: For those companies visiting the campus to interview graduating students (but not for summer jobs), attend the information sessions with a cover letter and resume in hand, or drop a copy off to be included in the recruiting packet. Follow up by trying to see the recruiter during a break in their interview schedule.

3. Networking - Develop a personal referral network by informing friends, family, relatives, and former employers of your interests and availability for summer work. (Refer to handout "NETWORKING.")

4. Directories/Published Material - Check the Career Library located in the Career Center.

5. Government Employment - Utilize the resources for summer job opportunities with the Federal Government and the State.

6. Advertised Jobs/Want Ads - Read local newspapers, search bulletin boards at local libraries,

supermarkets, post offices, industrial sites, etc.

7. Summer Jobs File (Career Center, Career Library) - Check the file drawer for current professional and non-professional (e.g. camps) summer job opportunities.

8. Temporary Employment Services - Contact agencies such as the Kelly Services and Manpower, Inc., who send temporary help to companies that are in need of personnel to fill unexpected job openings. The demand for these openings tends to rise in the summer months.

9. Internships and Volunteer Work - Do not overlook unpaid summer internships or volunteer work as a means to develop your professional skills and create contacts for future career possibilities. An unpaid professional job is much better than unemployment!

10. Be an Entrepreneur - Do not overlook creative business opportunities you can run yourself. Painting, landscaping and sales are only a few examples.

II. IMPLEMENTING YOUR JOB SEARCH -- Once you have your resume and cover letters prepared and have located job opportunities, it is time to take action and pursue the job!

A. Contacting Employers -- If at all possible, go in person to inquire about openings and arrange interviews. It is much harder to ignore a person than a phone call. Take your resume with you and remember that first impressions are important, so take care of your appearance (dress, grooming, etc.). The more professional the potential job, the more professionally you should dress. Take all the information you will need to fill out applications: phone and social security number, addresses and official titles of people you are using for recommendations.

B. The Interview -- Because summer jobs are brief, an employer wants someone who is adaptable, personable and who learns quickly. Be prepared to sell yourself as this type of individual. Research the organization so you can convey that you have a sense of what their needs might be and of how your skills can meet those needs.

Dress and act professionally. Talk about your interests for summer employment, but be flexible to the organization's needs. Look at the job as a learning experience. (Refer to handout "THE INTERVIEW PROCESS.")

III. FOLLOW-UP

A. It is important to send thank you letters to employers after the interviews as well as to other referral sources you have contacted for help. You want to be remembered as a conscientious professional. (Refer to handout "LETTER WRITING.")

B. The key concepts of follow-up include persistence and a positive outlook. In many cases, the decision to hire you will be delayed and prolonged. Send letters that reaffirm your interest in the summer job. Speak to employers on the phone with an enthusiastic attitude, explaining your sincere interest in summer opportunities.

C. Once you have accepted a summer job, proper etiquette and business ethics require that you inform other potential employers of your status.