

## Job Search Tips for Parents of Upcoming (or Recent) Graduates

- 1. Know your graduate's degree.** Do you really know what career options exist with the degree he/she is pursuing? Believe it or not, most students think traditionally in regards to their degree, i.e, "With an education degree, I can only teach." Or "If I get a degree in political science, all I can do is go to law school." A good site to explore is [www.mymajors.com](http://www.mymajors.com). Check out the Major Information pages. Parents and graduates will be pleasantly surprised at all of the possibilities .
- 2. What does your graduate really want to do?** Which three to five occupational choices is he/she willing to explore? Teaching? Research? Program Management? After conducting their research, the Office of Career Development can help the graduate sift through those options that truly interest him/her.
- 3. Where does your graduate want to work?** Which three to five geographical locations is he/she willing to explore? What factors are important to him/her: climate, weather, population, racial/ethnic diversity, housing options, social life resources, proximity to family/friends, etc.? Believe it or not, this is a key factor in the graduate's early career success. A pleasing physical environment helps make the adjustment to the world of work easier and less frightening.
- 4. What employment values are important to your graduate?** Which two of these three are the most important: types of duties/responsibilities required under the job, location or salary? In essence: what is he/she willing to sacrifice in order to get that "dream job?"
- 5. Have your graduate research his/her field.** Know who the major employers are, what the latest hiring trends are, what career options/paths exist, what salary levels look like throughout the country and specifically with the employer(s) in the geographical area(s) that interest him/her. Your graduate should find out the names and professional backgrounds of those who have achieved success in their desired field to use as resource contacts. The Office of Career Development can assist your graduate with this.
- 6. Conduct informational interviews.** Encourage your graduate to identify individuals in their chosen field who have achieved what he/she hopes to one day and, either by phone, e-mail or in person, learn how they did so. What challenges have they faced? What guidance can they give your graduate? What contacts are they willing to pass on? Professional journals in the graduate's field, his/her professors and the Office of Career Development are good resources for this.
- 7. Join professional organizations related to the graduate's field.** Not only does the graduate get journals and publications detailing the latest accomplishments in his/her field, but he/she learns about conferences, presentations, and workshops that provide

first-hand experience and insight from those actually in the field as well as provide wonderful networking opportunities and contact resources. Virtually all occupations have a professional organization and most have very affordable student memberships.

- 8. *Has the graduate's cover letter and resume been critiqued?*** Students can make appointments or drop in for consultations at the Office of Career Development during office hours, which are Monday through Friday from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm.
- 9. *Has the graduate's interviewing skills been assessed?*** Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Career Development for interviewing skills assessments.
- 10. *New and upcoming graduates should research salaries in their chosen fields and conduct cost-of-living comparisons in their preferred geographic locations.*** Far too often, new and upcoming graduates have unrealistic salary expectations and do not realize the need for cost-of-living analyses to determine the affordability of a particular city. The Office of Career Development can assist students in deciphering this information, thereby making the decision process much easier.
- 11. *Does the graduate understand the do's and don'ts of the salary negotiation process and how to evaluate an offer?*** Unfortunately, far too many new and upcoming graduates don't understand this tricky process and can wind up with serious complications later on. With the Office of Career Development's help, the graduate can wade through these treacherous waters knowledgeably.

By asking these simple questions, parents can go a long way in helping their graduates find their true career passion. The staff of the Office of Career Development is available and eager to help new and upcoming graduates and can be reached at 419-783-2349 Monday through Friday between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm.