



Preparing for the

Tips from an Expert

By MELANIE REMBRANDT

Q: What recommendations can you offer students who are not going to college and entering the work force right after graduating from high school?

A: It's important to try different kinds of jobs so you can discover what you likes and dislikes are. Once you determine the kind of work you enjoy doing, then you can check into any additional training needed to succeed at that particular career. Also, talk to someone who does the kind of work you are interested in to get his or her perspective.

Q: What steps can students take while in school to prepare for a career?

A: Internships are a great way to try different kinds of jobs and get experience. You will learn new skills and get exposure to the working world. Experiment with different work environments and tasks, and consider part-time jobs. Remember that the term "internship" may be applied to any nonpermanent job. Visit your school's career resource center or log on to the Internet to find internships.

It is important to start your career investigation as soon as possible. The longer you wait, the more competition you'll face in the job market.

Q: Where can students find career information?

A: Check out the comprehensive overview of jobs by occupation from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics at <http://stats.bls.gov/ocohome.htm>. It gives necessary qualifications, earnings, chances for advancement and the outlook for each occupation. Visit online job sites and talk to your working friends of all ages. Ask them what they like and dislike about their occupation, how they found their job and the skills and education they needed to get hired. CareerSite's Career Resources page at www.careersite.com also contains an informative occupation investigation section for registered job seekers.

Q: Are there any classes you would recommend to students for making career choices and preparing for the job market?

A: It's important to get a solid, broad-based education with a focus on something that you like and know is usable. Include computer, business and language classes in any curriculum. All prospective employees should know how to create and use a spreadsheet and a database, and how to use a word processor. Remember that no matter what field you go into,

AS A YOUNG ADULT, WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE JOB MARKET?

In a recent interview, Sandra Grabczynski, director of employer development at the Employment Wizard/CareerSite Network, author of *Corporate Guide to College Recruiting* and former director of recruiting in the Office of Career Development at University of Michigan Business School, offers some good advice.

Yourself

Job Market

you will need to understand basic business skills and build on this knowledge. You're always going to need a second language because of the expanding global economy and open market.

Q: What kind of college activities do you think employers look for on a résumé?

A: Employers consider what you bring to the company, how you can solve problems and how your skills and actions affect the bottom line. Many employers ask prospective candidates if they have ever been involved in a scouting program. This shows an early involvement with organizations and that the candidate can be a team player and leader. If you are involved in clubs and organizations, be an active member and participate in major projects that produce a result and show responsibility. Employers look at well-rounded candidates and will not base hiring on educational records alone.

Q: Do you have any tips for submitting a résumé over the Internet?

A: You shouldn't have to spend a lot of time recreating your résumé on a job site, and privacy is an important issue. Send your résumé as a text file to yourself, and check to see how it looks. If there is unsupported formatting, and the company converts your résumé into text format, it will look unprofessional. At CareerSite, you can enter

your résumé and it will maintain its original look and feel (using a PDF format). This way, you will know exactly what the employer sees, and you can easily make any necessary updates.

You never know who will have access to your résumé on the Internet, so it's also important to block your personal information and protect your privacy. Because of this reason, our company provides job seekers with a confidential profile that gives them complete control over résumé exposure and an anonymous way to market their capabilities to interested employers.

Q: When researching jobs with specific companies, what should college graduates look for?

A: Look for companies that offer promotions, mentoring and educational programs. It's important to look into high-growth industries such as wireless communications, medical device development and technology. Companies applying new technology tend to create new and better careers. When applying for a position, send your résumé to both the human resources and hiring departments. Find a friend or alumni within the company that will help your cause.

Q: As the director of employer development at CareerSite, what kinds of jobs are in demand right now?

A: All technical jobs are in high demand. However, we are starting to

see a need for trade, administrative and executive workers.

Q: Do you think most employers now use the Internet to find candidates? Why?

A: Yes, possibly 100 percent of employers use the Internet in some way or another. Even if they put an ad in a newspaper, the job listing might be posted online without their knowledge. It is one more valuable tool hiring managers can use to find employees.

Q: Do you have any other suggestions for how young people can prepare themselves for the job market?

A: Do a self-analysis and figure out what you like to do. Research careers and employers that match your interests and obtain as much information as possible. In short, be a sponge! ♦

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BUSINESS BITS

According to Salary.com (www.salary.com), in the United States the median salary for an advertising art director is \$63,647. That's for job candidates with a bachelor's degree and at least five years of experience in the field.