

April 2010



Career Tips for the Summer

“When the Livin’ is Easy!”

Somewhere between the backyard cookouts, beach fun, family vacations, summer jobs, lawn care for Dad, sleeping in, and the internship position you worked so hard for, you *gotta* take a break! Right? Surely there must be a few leisure moments you can spend thinking about your future.

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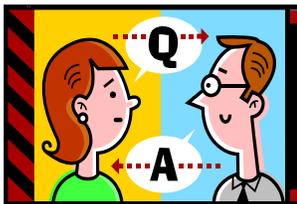
To get started, here are a few ideas to heat up your summer career planning:

- ⇒ Create an action **plan** of what you would like to accomplish next year to help further your future career or graduate school plans. For example: plan ways to become more involved at LVC, investigate opportunities for study abroad, research graduate schools, etc.
- ⇒ Work on preparing/updating your **resume** so you are ready to come in for a resume review appointment with Career Services in the fall.
- ⇒ Make a weekly “date” with your **JOB CENTER** account. Update your profile, including the skills section. Upload your resume and check jobs and internships frequently. Become familiar with the Resource Library. Keep checking for Career Events and On-Campus Interviews (advertising for most Fall events begins in August).
- ⇒ Conduct several Informational interviews with alumni mentors through the **Career Connections** feature of JOB CENTER. This can help build your professional network and give you an idea of what some LVC grads have been doing since college.
** See the back of this newsletter for more on informational interviews and Career Connections*
- ⇒ Build up your **network** by talking to family and friends about what you want to do after graduation. Be sure everyone knows your goals; you never know what connections can be made in your own backyard.
- ⇒ **Read** a professional book and catch up on professional articles and journals. Consider attending a professional business meeting in your area. It is important to keep up to date on current topics and trends in your field.
- ⇒ Catch up on reading the Career Services **BLOG** for more career related tips and articles.
- ⇒ **Volunteer** to do something for your community or neighborhood. Don’t forget to include volunteer/service work on your resume!
- ⇒ Ask to take on additional **responsibilities** at work. Learning and developing new skills can go a long way towards your future job search success.
- ⇒ Ask employers for their willingness/interest in being a **reference** for your future employment search. Develop a plan for keeping in touch with these individuals once you come back to college.
- ⇒ Set aside a percentage of your summer wages for **career related items**: clothing, resume paper, postage and deposits for grad school, admission test fees, etc. Perhaps even plan a shopping trip to purchase one or two professional suits for interviews.

Now, go relax and don’t forget the sunscreen!!

Boost your Professional Network

When you're in the middle of a busy semester, expanding your professional network might be the last thing on your mind. However, the summer months are a prime opportunity for you to make connections and complete a few informational interviews.



What is an informational interview? An informational interview is literally asking questions with the intention of learning more about a topic. The interviewee might be a professional in the field you're interested in, a faculty member in the subject you're considering majoring in, or alumni that you'd like to talk with about their career path (to name a few). The process starts by asking if the person would be willing to meet with you and answer a few questions. People are often more willing to meet when you tell them it's so you can gain information about *X Subject* or learn more about *Y Field*.

Note: an informational interview is conducted for information, not with the expectation that you can ask about a job opportunity (although connections may *eventually* lead to that).

Why should you conduct one? Informational interviews can benefit everyone. If you are an underclassman trying to decide what majors coincide with your interests, conducting informational interviews with classmates or faculty can do wonders. Or, if you are ready to seek out an internship or full time opportunity, talking to professionals in the field can earn you valuable advice on getting there.

Where do you start? Building up a contact list should be your first plan of action. Think about your own circle of connections: friends, family, faculty, employers, co-workers, etc. Also look to other resources, such as professional organizations, local networking opportunities, and alumni from LVC. You can connect with alumni through *Career Connections*, an online mentor program for current students. Through this program you can initiate an email or phone conversation with an alumnus or ask to set up a day of shadowing to get an in depth look into their professional life.

Project CLOSE-UP - This semester, a freshman student, Meggy McLean, utilized our Project CLOSE-UP program to shadow LVC alumnus Dr. Gregory Kohler to get an inside look at his life in the medical field. She has been thinking about continuing on to medical school after LVC and wanted to see if the profession is one she could see herself pursuing. See below for an excerpt on Meggy's day with Dr. Kohler:



"I found the experience to be extremely rewarding and it helped to solidify my resolve to attend medical school and ultimately become a doctor. I truly enjoyed shadowing Dr. Kohler for the entire 10 hours that I had been with him. He answered all my questions with detailed answers and assuaged some of the fears and trepidations surrounding my decision to attend medical school. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity....because not only did it show me what my dream career was truly like, but it prepared me for communicating in the professional world and gave me a greater confidence in my professional personality."

Although Project CLOSE-UP is a program for first year students, any student is welcome to utilize *Career Connections* to set up their own day of observation.

Starting early on Grad School Plans

For those students planning to attend graduate school after LVC, planning ahead is just as important for you. It takes time to narrow down what program you would like to enroll in and where you might like to go. Start thinking about these things during your Junior year so that the summer between your Junior and Senior year can be spent preparing yourself for (and getting a head start on) admissions requirements. Here is a recommended timeline for planning BEFORE you start your last year at LVC:

Junior year (Fall and Spring)

- Research areas of interest, institutions, & programs
- Talk to advisers about application requirements
- Register and prepare for appropriate graduate/professional school admission tests
- Investigate national scholarships
- If appropriate, obtain letters of recommendation

If you are unable to do these things during Junior year, work to complete them in the summer!

Junior year (Summer)

- Take required admission tests
- Write for application materials
- Consider visiting institutions of interest
- Write your application essay

Essays often require a lot of time and several drafts. Get started early!