

# Career Planning Checklist

*Choosing your unique place in the world of work is a personal, interactive, and lifelong process for which you alone are ultimately responsible. The sooner you begin to seriously evaluate your skills, values, interests, and work options, the more informed your career choices will be. Additionally, with the changing nature of the workplace, your success also depends upon your awareness of local and global trends as well as technological advances.*

**The Career Services Office is here to assist you in this process. Be proactive - if you haven't yet begun, start now.**

<b>FIRST YEAR</b>	<b>SOPHOMORE</b>
<b>Q U E S T I O N S</b>	<b>R E S E A R C H</b>
<p><b>Most Critical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explore your interests, abilities through required academics</li> <li>• utilize interest and career inventory tools</li> <li>• consider volunteer positions to help build your resume</li> <li>• collect information on internships, co-ops, and summer jobs that are available through the EBE, 228 Swetman Hall</li> <li>• join university organizations that will offer you leadership roles in the future</li> <li>• attend on-campus career and job fairs to gather information on potential careers and employers</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talk to faculty, alumni, advisers, upperclassmen, and career counselors about possible majors and careers</li> <li>• familiarize yourself with the services and resources available at the Career Services office</li> <li>• leaf through the many career-related books in the career library</li> <li>• identify at least four skills employers want and plan how you will acquire these skills before graduation</li> <li>• familiarize yourself with the Career Services home page and other career-related resources on the internet</li> <li>• attend a combo seminar and drop by our office to create a first draft resume</li> </ul>	<p><b>Most Critical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• choose a major that you will enjoy studying for the next two years</li> <li>• obtain an internship or field experience through the Experience-Based Education Office, 257 Swetman Hall</li> <li>• take on more responsibilities in worthwhile extracurricular activities</li> <li>• explore at least three career options available to you through your major (if you have one)</li> <li>• attend campus alumni/ae programs</li> <li>• review your progress in learning four (or more) skills employers look for in new hires</li> <li>• attend on-campus career and job fairs and employer information sessions that relate to your interests</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make a special effort to get to know some professors on a personal basis</li> <li>• consider obtaining a summer, and/or school-break job that relates to your interests</li> <li>• learn about possible career fields in the Career Library</li> <li>• identify organizations and associations in your interest areas for shadowing opportunities and informational interviews</li> <li>• join as least one professional organization related to your major in order to make contact with and learn from people in the professional world</li> <li>• begin to collect recommendations from previous and current employers</li> <li>• update your resume and have it critiqued in the career services office</li> <li>• attend a combo seminar to learn how to write a quality cover letter</li> <li>• put together an interview outfit.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Winter and Summer Break Ideas Any Year</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research web for information related to your career interests</li> <li>• set up an internship, part/full-time job related to career interests</li> <li>• meet with alumni and other professionals and conduct info. interviews (see Networking/Informational Interviewing Handout)</li> <li>• volunteer part-time with an organization related to your interests</li> <li>• finalize your resume</li> <li>• research professional/graduate schools</li> <li>• shop for your professional wardrobe</li> <li>• do some soul-searching and work towards defining your career goals</li> </ul>	<p><b>"You must choose in life or life will ultimately choose for you."</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Author unknown</i></p>

# JUNIOR

## D E C I S I O N S

### Most Critical

- complete at least five information interviews in careers you want to explore
- shadow several professionals in your field
- find out more about career opportunities related to your major
- attend on-campus career and job fairs and employer information sessions that relate to your interest
- narrow your career interest areas
- ask former employers and professors to serve as reference or to write letters recommendation

### Optional

- begin to figure out what is really important to you - (ie. your values, educational goals, geographic preferences)
- Think seriously about your future plans
- add a double major, minor or concentration in another field to strengthen your career preparation
- review your progress in learning four (or more) skills employers look for in new hires
- research potential organizations in the career library and talk to recent graduates in your major about the job market and potential employers
- talk with employed professionals to find out what their jobs are like and what they look for when hiring someone new
- obtain an internship or other practical career experience
- obtain or continue leadership activities in student organizations
- schedule an appointment with a career counselor or drop in to have your updated resume critiqued
- participate in career services combo seminar to learn about the most important job search strategy - networking
- practice your interviewing skills during a mock interview

### Graduate School

- read "Graduate School Timeline" handout in office
- consider graduate school and get information on graduate entrance examinations
- start writing for applications to graduate school and other pertinent information
- read current Peterson's Graduate School catalogs in the Career Library
- continue to build your professional wardrobe

### Oswego State University Career Services Office



606 Culkin Hall 341-2255  
M-F: 9am - 4:30pm  
Wed. until 8pm

[www.oswego.edu](http://www.oswego.edu) ⇄ Campus Life  
(scroll to Career Services)

# SENIOR

## J O B S E A R C H

### Most Critical

- obtain an additional internship or more volunteer experience in your field
- finalize your course selection and make sure you meet graduation requirements
- summarize and analyze all of your experiences in the past four years
- stay abreast of the career services calendar and participate in the on-campus recruiting activities, such as interviewing and resume referral
- register with the Career Services office so your resume can be referred out to hiring organizations
- attend career fairs to learn about hiring organizations and to network with professionals
- join the Career Services listserv to receive resource reviews, vacancies, program details, and much more
- familiarize yourself with our resume lab and printing procedures
- participate in combo workshops and practice interviews
- develop an employer prospect list with contact names and addresses from organizations you are interested in pursuing
- determine your career-related strengths and skills; determine what you have to offer an employer
- visit the career services office to have your updated resume critiqued before you have it professionally duplicated
- check vacancy listings in office or on web page every two weeks
- consider having letters of reference submitted and held for you in the Career Services Office
- draft a cover letter that can be adapted for a variety of employers and have it critiqued
- attend local association meetings to meet potential employers
- read two or more professional or trade publications from your major and career field on a regular basis
- find information about these organizations in the Career Library in Culkin Hall or on the web (see our handout "Internet Research and Job Searching")
- gather information on realistic salary expectations
- go on second interviews
- evaluate job offers and accept one

### Graduate School

- read "Graduate School Timeline" handout in office
- if applicable, register and take graduate school entrance exams and complete applications
- search for sources of funding
- secure letters of recommendation
- finalize list of graduate schools to which to apply
- follow up on all applications and keep a record of the status of each

**"Don't bunt. Aim out of the ballpark.  
Aim for the company of immortals."**

*David Olgilvy*