

02

Career Planning

Career Development is a lifelong process. This is how you can maximize your career journey.

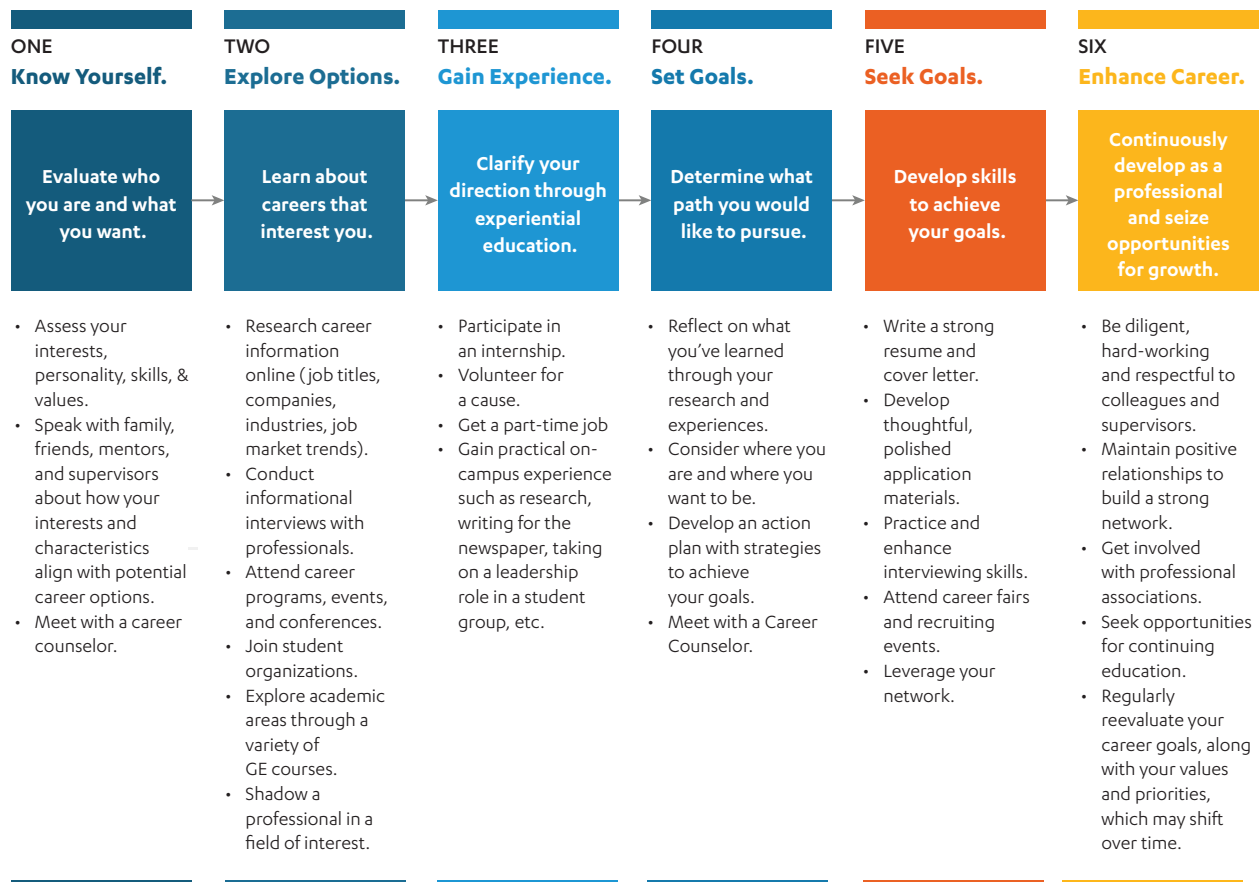
YOUR CAREER JOURNEY

Are you headed toward your dream career? When you are focused and know your strengths and interests, you can target the industries, organizations, and positions that best match your talents and personality.

Your immediate goal should be to make the best career choices possible at this point in your life. Keep in mind; it's only natural that your dreams and aspirations may change over time. Changing interests and personal circumstances, combined with the rapidly evolving nature of the world of work, will require you to remain flexible and make numerous career related decisions throughout your lifetime.

There are six stages in the career development process (see chart below), each of which you may visit at multiple points throughout your life. They often overlap and may occur in any order. However, it is important to start by knowing yourself.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



Are You Career Ready?

NACE's 8 career readiness competencies represent the skills, experiences, and attributes that employers look for when recruiting. Mastering the skills below, will prepare you for a successful transition into the workplace.



Critical Thinking/ /Problem Solving

- Exercises sound reasoning
- Obtains, interprets, and uses knowledge, facts, and data
- Demonstrates originality and inventiveness



Professionalism/ /Work Ethic

- Demonstrates effective work habits and personal accountability
- Demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior
- Able to learn from mistakes



Oral/Written Communications

- Clearly articulates thoughts & ideas
- Able to express ideas to others
- Writes effectively and clearly



Digital Technology

- Leverages existing digital technologies
- Adapts new and emerging technologies



Leadership

- Leverages the strengths of others to achieve common goals
- Uses interpersonal skills to coach and develop others
- Organizes, prioritizes, and delegates work



Teamwork/ /Collaboration

- Builds collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers
- Able to work within a team structure
- Can negotiate and manage conflict



Global/ /Intercultural Fluency

- Values, respects, and learns from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions
- Demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individual differences



Career Management

- Articulates personal skills, strengths, knowledge and experiences
- Identifies areas necessary for professional growth
- Takes the steps necessary to pursue opportunities



Source: Career Readiness Resources; www.nacweb.org>Career Readiness>Overview & Resources.
Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges & Employers

FOUR YEAR CAREER PLAN

FIRSTYEAR :

A Time of Self Discovery

As you begin your college education, it is perfectly okay not to know what you want to do later in life. Take time now to learn as much as you can about your skills, personality, lifestyle preferences, interests, and values. This information will help you choose a major so you can begin to explore the exciting world of career possibilities that await you!

Are you asking these questions?

- Who am I?
- Where do I fit in?
- What do I do best?
- What major should I choose?

If so, follow these five steps.

1. Explore majors through general education classes and develop your interests and skills through student organizations, sports, extracurricular activities, and part-time work.
2. Get acquainted with Career Center resources. Learn about different occupations.
3. Talk about your career interests with parents, friends, professors, and other individuals who are already employed.
4. Register for Handshake (ucla.joinhandshake.com) and schedule a counseling appointment. Complete the On-Campus Recruitment Orientation found on MyUCLA under the "Finances and Jobs" tab. Take self-assessments to learn more about your interests, skills, values and strengths.
5. Study hard and keep your grades as high as possible.

SECONDYEAR:

Expand Your Career Horizons

Continue to explore and gather information about career fields. The best resources are people who work in the career fields that interest you. Summer jobs, internships, and volunteer activities will provide first-hand insights.

Are you asking these questions?

- I know my major, but what can I do with it?
- What career options do I have?
- What's out there?

If so, follow these five steps.

1. Continue to expand your knowledge of career options. Make a list of those which sound interesting and update your "Career Interests" on Handshake.
2. Learn more about the job market by visiting the Career Center and by re-searching materials available online, including the online Occupational Outlook Handbook at www.bls.gov/ooh.
3. Conduct informational interviews with people who work in career industries of interest to you. Spend a day on the job with a professional. Sign onto UCLAone.com to connect with Bruin alumni.
4. Pursue internships, part-time and summer jobs, and volunteer activities to gain work experience and learn more about your work preferences.
5. Attend career fairs and other career-related programs to increase your knowledge of a range of occupations.

THIRDYEAR:

Narrow the Options

Internships and summer employment will help you acquire new skills, learn more about careers, and develop a network of contacts. Aim for outstanding academic performance, especially in your major.

Are you asking these questions?

- I'm looking at several career options— which is the best for me?
-
- What do I need to do to prepare for this career?
-
- How have my interests changed since my first year and how will this influence my present action?

If so, follow these six steps.

1. Narrow down your choices and discuss your career ideas with a career counselor. Are you satisfied with your early decisions?
2. Research companies and work environments. Pinpoint organizations with job titles that use your skills and for which you believe you are a good match.
3. Begin to establish professional contacts through informational interviews (see Chapter 3) to assist with your career exploration and job search campaign.
4. Continue to gain career-related work and internship experience.
5. Start preparing for graduate school if your career choice requires an advanced degree. Check admission requirements, testing dates, and timelines for applications.
6. Attend the annual Admit UCLA: Graduate and Professional School Fair in October.

FOURTH/FIFTH YEAR:

Make a Career Decision

Plan ahead and set reasonable career goals for yourself. Remember that this is just one in a long line of career decisions. Your first job will not be your last and you don't know where it might lead you, so keep an open mind. Remember that graduate school applications, letters of reference, and test scores must be submitted early. Handshake on-campus interviews (OCR), job listings, and career fairs will help you identify prospective employers and career opportunities.

Are you asking these questions?

- What types of jobs are available?
- How do I find the job that's right for me?
- Should I go to graduate school now or later?

If so, follow these six steps.

1. Discover successful job search strategies by attending workshops at the Career Center and consulting with a career counselor.
2. Prepare for your first job. Talk with UCLA alumni about their first year on the job and some of the challenges you can expect. Join the UCLA Alumni Association at www.alumni.ucla.edu and be sure to sign on to UCLAone.com.
3. Use your contacts to identify job opportunities and get referrals using LinkedIn.
4. Explore all opportunities. Attend career fairs and employer info sessions
5. Register for Handshake campus interviews (OCR) and apply for jobs at ucla.joinhandshake.com.
6. Confirm your remaining degree requirements at the beginning of the year so there are no surprises when it comes time to graduate.

03

Career Exploration

Early career exploration is important. Embrace opportunities to explore your interests, values, and skills.

THE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

One of the best ways to find out what an industry, company, or position is really like is to speak with people in careers you're considering. No one else can give you a better sense of the real life experiences, the challenges and opportunities, the specifics and perhaps hidden demands, and the drawbacks and limitations of the career field.

What exactly is an informational interview? An informational interview is a conversation with a professional in a career field you are considering, which will help you gather information and advice to assist in your career planning process.

What Are the Benefits of Conducting an Informational Interview?

- Provides you with a realistic grasp of a career, industry, or company you're considering.
- Evaluate whether your career of interest is compatible with who you are (personality, interests, values, skills, and lifestyle).
- Receive specific suggestions and ideas on where to acquire experience.
- Expand your network of contacts for future opportunities
- Gain referrals to other professionals for additional perspectives.

Are Informational Interviews Only for Students Ready to Graduate?

Not at all! Informational interviews are appropriate for first-year students through alumni. If you are in the process of choosing an academic major, making career choices, beginning a job search, or transitioning to a different career, the informational interview can be an excellent tool to explore your options and increase your career knowledge. We recommend signing on to UCLAone.com to connect with Bruin alumni.

What are some typical subjects discussed during the Informational Interview?

- Work Environment
- Industry Trends
- Ideal Skill Set/Qualifications
- Challenges/Rewards
- Career Path of Interviewee
- Lifestyle
- Typical Compensation
- Career Ladder of Field

How Does the Informational Interview Work?

The informational interview works best if it is done in person in the setting that you are interested in working (i.e., a hospital, investment bank, consulting firm, or nonprofit organization, etc.). However, it can also be done over the phone or Skype.

How Do I Set Up an Informational Interview?

Our career educators recommend a written request followed by a phone call. This professional and respectful approach can have a more favorable response. The letter, sent via email, serves as a preliminary introduction to help communicate the intent of your request—to gather information and advice about a career option (not to ask for a job). Remember, this is their first impression of you. Be formal and professional in your correspondence.

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING CHECKLIST

Searching and Preparing

- Research the field, company, and/or organization that you want to know more about.
- Consult with family, friends, faculty, co-workers, bosses or supervisors, UCLA Alumni, or LinkedIn.com to find people in your area of interest to speak with.
- Contact the person via email or phone.
- Arrange a convenient time for the contact to meet such as a lunch or a coffee break (no more than 30 minutes).
- Be prepared to speak about yourself (major, interests, interest in the field, your experiences, etc.).
- Have a list of specific questions ready to ask (be mindful of the contact's time and schedule).
- Bring a professional folder with a notepad inside, pen, and copies of your resume.

During the Informational Interview

- For a face-to-face meeting, dress in professional attire.
- If you meet at the company's site, ask in advance if the contact is willing to give you a tour.
- For email or phone, correspond and speak professionally.
- Express your appreciation to them for taking the time to speak with you.
- Ask the questions you've prepared in advance.
- Jot down notes.
- Be mindful of the time.
- Ask the contact for their business card and whether you may follow up with them in the future. After Your Informational Interview
- Within 24 hours, send the contact a thank you card or email. A hand-written thank you note is recommended.



After Your Informational Interview

- As you continue to explore, keep the contact updated about your progress.
- If you've decided to pursue the field, ask the contact if they would be willing to review your resume and provide feedback.
- If you were given any recommendations (i.e., a web link, book or article, a contact) be sure to mention what you have done with that recommendation. For example, "Thank you for recommending that I contact Ms. Jones. She and I have a call scheduled for next week."
- Request to connect with the individual on LinkedIn.

REQUESTING AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Develop an Outline or Script

Before you attempt to schedule an informational interview, develop an outline or script of what you are going to say. This will decrease your anxiety and increase your chances of getting the results you want. It may be helpful to rehearse out loud after you plan the kinds of things you will communicate.

Set Up Your Interview

- Say who you are and why you want to get together.
- Make it clear you are not asking for a job.
- Mention a personal referral or mutual interest to stimulate conversation.
- Ask for a brief meeting at a time that's convenient for that person.

Ensure you have a strong cellular connection, preferably indoors (or, ideally, use a landline). Make sure you are in a quiet space, with your notes, paper, and pen so that you can give the interview your full attention.

Be Prepared with Questions

You should develop basic questions about the career field to fit your particular knowledge and experience level. Depending on the interest and willingness of your contact to talk, you may have an opportunity to ask more specific personal, company, and industry questions.

Do some research about the career in advance in order to develop thoughtful, intelligent questions and make the most of the interview.

Based on your research, choose a few questions to keep within your meeting time frame.

- Please describe a typical day as a _____.
- How did you get started? What was your path?
- What is your educational background?
- What do you find most/least satisfying about your job? Rewards? Challenges?
- What skills/qualities does it take to be successful in this field?

- What are the entry-level jobs in this field? What does the career ladder look like?
- What trends/developments do you see affecting career opportunities?
- How would you advise I gain the skills and experience necessary to enter this career field?
- What is the "culture" of your company?
- Are there additional resources you suggest that I look into that would be beneficial for me?
- Do you have suggestions of other people I can be referred to—to learn more?
- May I contact you in the future, should I have any more questions?

Example of Email

Dear _____:

I am a communications major at UCLA and am interested in a journalism career. Joe Bruin suggested that you might be willing to share your work experiences and offer advice on how I might better prepare to break into the field.

At this time, I am not looking for a job, but am interested in learning as much as I can about journalism as a career field.

I would greatly appreciate a few minutes of your time to get your perspectives on the challenges and opportunities in journalism. I will contact you next week to try and arrange a time that would be convenient for you to meet.

Sincerely,

Your Name

contact info: email, telephone #

Example of Phone Scripts

Hello . . . my name is _____.

Joe Bruin suggested I call you because I am doing some research on careers in journalism. He thought you would be a good person to answer some questions I have about the profession. I could meet you for coffee or lunch one day.

Or, if it is more convenient, I could call back at a time when you might have 15 or 20 minutes to spare. Do you think you might be able to find some time for me?

Hello. . . my name is _____.

I recently heard you speak at a Los Angeles Journalism Club meeting. I'm a senior at UCLA and am interested in a journalism career. I'm not looking for a job at this time, but I'd really appreciate the opportunity to discuss some questions about this career field. Could I schedule 15 or 20 minutes with you at your convenience? If so, I'd be happy to meet you at your office.

INTERNSHIPS

The Inside Track to Your First Full-Time Job

More than ever, employers today look at an entry-level job candidate's track record of "real world" experiences and accomplishments before extending an offer for a permanent position. They rely heavily on internships and summer programs to assess the skills, abilities, and qualifications of potential full time employees.

Internships and summer programs provide prospective employers an opportunity to observe your content knowledge, initiative, creativity, skills, values, interests, and other personal attributes, which are a few of the intangible qualities that don't come through on a resume and manifest themselves only briefly during an interview.

An internship or summer job gives you a chance to explore and test your career interests on a short-term basis. You'll be able to get a realistic idea of what the career industry is all about, decide whether the job is one you enjoy, and evaluate whether you "fit" into the company culture. It's definitely a two-way street!

Benefits of Working As an Intern

- Gain valuable real world experience and learn new skills.
- Explore and test different career possibilities before making a long-term commitment.
- Demonstrate to future employers your interest in your chosen career field.
- Make contacts and develop important networking and mentoring relationships.
- Prove yourself on a trial basis to a potential employer.
- Will you get class credit? (Offered through Center for Community Learning or department based internship courses.)
- Is the position likely to provide an entrée into your dream career?
- Is it important for your internship experience or summer work to tie in with your academic pursuits and career goals?

Remember: There does not have to be a direct connection. You may feel a real need to take a break from your studies and explore an industry that may not have an obvious connection to your major.

INTERNSHIP PLANNING

It's important to give some thought to your goals for the internship or summer job. Here are questions to consider:

- What is the primary reason you're looking for an internship or summer job? Develop career-related skills? Gain experience to add to your resume? Test out career alternatives?
To earn money?
- When does your intended industry begin hiring? When should you begin preparing? See our timeline on the inside front cover.
- What are you interested in doing? Where? With whom? In what type of organization?
- What skills can you bring to the job? Why should you be hired instead of any other college student?
- Is money an issue? How much money do you need? What is the bare minimum?
- Can you afford to do an unpaid internship or volunteer work that might relate more directly to your career objective?
- Will you need to relocate? What impact will this have on your financial situation? Does the employer provide any assistance relocating?

Summer and Part-Time Jobs

Summer and part-time work (especially if it is relevant to your career goal) can lead to great opportunities, and it should be a vital component in any job search strategy. Many employers are impressed with a person who has had to work their way through school and has still managed to maintain a good academic record and excel in extracurricular activities.

Temporary Employment

Opportunities range from one day assignments to longer term commitments. Most often these positions can be found through employment service firms and include a diversity of professional and technical opportunities.

Community Service and Volunteer Work

Involvement in social, political, cultural, performing arts, religious, and public service organizations can add valuable experience and leadership responsibilities to your resume. What are your interests? What issues and causes do you strongly support? Volunteer your services and get involved.