

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Career Planning at a Glance

The Career Development Center strives to help each student develop and articulate an effective, personal action plan for clarifying and pursuing her goals. Each student should possess an ability to:						
clarify interests, values & skills <i>by:</i>	research careers & academic fields <i>by:</i>	develop practical career & life skills <i>by:</i>	explore career fields <i>by:</i>	develop job search skills <i>by:</i>	present oneself as a viable candidate <i>by:</i>	prepare for graduate school <i>by:</i>
identifying personal and lifestyle values, interests and skills	locating and using print and electronic resources to find information on careers or graduate programs	communicating effectively with others in person and in writing	using available resources to identify relevant types of experiential learning	devising a plan and time-line for one's job search and application process	initiating contact with employers face-to-face, by telephone, or in writing	investigating possible career goals; researching academic programs with those goals in mind
understanding the origins of own values and interests; explaining how they affect career choices	conducting informational interviews with professionals to learn more about fields	networking effectively with peers, alumnae, professors and others to develop personal and professional contacts	identifying internships and experiences to explore career fields that fit one's skills, qualities, values and aspirations	identifying advertised and non-advertised positions using available resources	writing targeted resumes that address the particular needs of the evaluator	developing own criteria for "ideal" graduate program; evaluating programs based on those criteria
articulating own definition of success	identifying academic requirements in given field; evaluating one's current academic qualifications and course of study	developing, maintaining relationships with mentors, advisors; knowing how to request recommendations and references	researching organizations in preferred career fields	identifying organizations that employ people in positions of interest	writing targeted cover letters that address the particular needs of the evaluator and that complement the resume	researching academic programs using print and electronic resources; contacting current students, staff, faculty in chosen programs to gather information
developing a set of personal criteria to use when making decisions	identifying opportunities for exploring careers through experiential learning	presenting oneself appropriately in professional situations	practicing job search skills by applying to internships with compelling resumes, cover letters and interviewing abilities	researching one's target organization and its mission; knowing its services and products	conducting interviews that address the stated and unstated needs of the evaluator	identifying and applying for funding opportunities
realistically appraising own strengths and weaknesses	investigating salary ranges, hiring patterns, employment prospects and possible career paths in chosen career	reflecting on and evaluating experiences, making adjustments to career plan as needed	applying knowledge, skills and values in an experiential setting to clarify career choices	identifying the knowledge, skills and qualities sought by the organization	articulating one's interest in and enthusiasm for the chosen position and organization in specific terms	establishing academic contact with potential mentors in one's chosen programs
identifying skills or qualities to develop	allowing for possibility of changes in chosen career path; exploring alternatives	identifying and capitalizing on opportunities	identifying professional attributes valued in chosen career field(s)	articulating how of one's knowledge, skills and qualities would benefit the organization	preparing and presenting supporting documents or portfolio	establishing a "credentials file" at the CDC; requesting recommendation letters to be filed there
identifying possible career paths based on interests, values, skills, traits and aspirations		practicing personal and professional ethics	reflecting on skills, knowledge, and accomplishments resulting from internship/learning experience	understanding the culture and norms of the professional field and organization	preparing for various interviewing methods and styles	identifying requirements for applying, e.g. tests, essays, recommendations, transcripts; developing application time-line to set goals and meet deadlines
identifying the characteristics of preferred work environment		identifying ways of compensating for current weaknesses and acquiring new skills and qualifications	affirming or re-evaluating chosen career path	identifying appropriate salary ranges and benefits given the field, position, geographic location, regional costs of living, one's training and qualifications	maintaining contacts made through interviewing process	writing personal statements and research proposals that detail one's interests, qualifications, goals, and how they connect with the chosen program
identifying lifestyle preferences		transitioning effectively from life on campus to life on one's own	devising plan to acquire knowledge and skills to enhance qualifications for entry into career field of choice	understanding and practicing appropriate job search etiquette and ethical and professional conduct	evaluating and negotiating job offers based on personal and professional criteria	evaluating and negotiating admission offers
		maintaining a balance between work and personal life	establishing and maintaining contacts with professionals in field	learning how to follow-up effectively with an employer after interviewing		

To learn more, visit the Career Development Center in the Daniel L. Jones Building, and on our website: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/offices/careers>

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