

Seeking Employment Following Graduation from BCC?

Here Are Twenty-five Significant “Things-to-Do” Before You Graduate

If you are beginning your studies at BCC, you are probably wondering, “What should I be doing right now to prepare myself for the job search?” OK, you are probably not pondering this question. Rather, you are more likely to be getting used to your classes and teachers. Finding that first “real” job is far from your concerns. But should it be?

Here are some things you should do during your freshman year at BCC:

1. Become familiar with the Job Placement Center (W 115). Visit our website at www.sunybroome.edu/placement.
2. Identify the top 5 skills employers want from their candidates, and plan how you will attain these skills before graduation. If you get stuck, our office can help!
3. Scan the Occupational Outlook Handbook, which is filled with helpful information on hundreds of careers. Within each occupational field you may be preparing for, there are potentially many different jobs available. This is a great tool to discover these paths.
4. Pick up a copy of the “Job Search Handbook”, published by the BCC Job Placement Center. On page 26 you will find a skills assessment exercise. Do this exercise. You will be glad you did! By completing this exercise you will discover or confirm your key strengths and skills. These skills can be expanded upon on your resume. Which leads to,
5. Write your first resume. Yes, during your first semester at BCC. Why? If you do this now you will have a draft that you can update as major events occur in your life both on and off campus. I recommend updating your resume at least once per semester. You can add things like involvement in extra-curricular activities; academic achievements such as making the Dean’s or President’s List; volunteering in the community or taking on a new part-time job. By adding these achievements in this fashion, by the end of your studies all you need to do is tweak or fine-tune your resume. A much simpler task than waiting until just before you graduate, and counting on your marvelous memory to recall all the important facts on your most important document! Remember, our office can help you with your resume. In addition to the “Job Search Handbook”, you can also go to collegecentral.com/sunybroome and register. It’s free and contains a resume builder feature.
6. Attend our annual job fair. It usually occurs on the first Thursday of April, though it depends on when the spring break takes place. This is your first chance to meet employers who are interested in your academic major. It also is your first major test of sharing your resume with employers. Understand that most employers attend to meet seniors and alumni, but freshmen can discover possible internships and part-time/summer job opportunities. Dress like you are going to a job interview, and do make sure your resume has been critiqued by someone you trust. You may email your resume to me at truillolt@sunybroome.edu. I will critique it and get it back to you in a timely fashion.
7. Join BCC clubs that can offer you leadership roles in the future.

8. Consider volunteering in the community. This presents great character building experiences, an avenue to develop job skills, an opportunity to give back to your community, and finally great resume material.
9. Take a cover letter writing workshop, or if one is not available, study the cover letter writing section of the "Job Search Handbook".
10. Begin to amass recommendations from previous and current employers.
11. If applicable, review your participation in an internship or co-op experience. This also includes any health sciences related clinical experiences or liberal arts related internships which are already a part of their respective academic curricula.

Here are some things you should do during your senior year at BCC:

1. Update your resume with your summer activities (see and review #5 above).
2. Explore at least 3-5 career options directly related to your major.
3. When possible, take on leadership positions in clubs or organizations.
4. Although you plan on gaining employment following graduation, consider continuing your studies at least part-time to progress toward a bachelor's degree.
5. Ask your teachers to serve as references or to write letters of recommendation to employers.
6. Complete 3-5 informational interviews with people in careers consistent with your studies.
7. Research potential employers on the internet and if possible speak with recent graduates from your program about the job market and potential employers.
8. Develop an employer prospect list including contact names and contact information from organizations you wish to pursue.
9. Collect information on realistic salary expectations. Our office is available to assist you.
10. Update and tweak your resume one last time and have it critiqued by the Job Placement Center.
11. Draft a cover letter and have it critiqued. See the "Job Search Handbook" for advice and examples.
12. Develop your "sales pitch" for the job fair. It should be no longer than 30 seconds to one minute, and include your name; the job you are most interested in attaining; state briefly your skills and experiences and accomplishments; and your most unique selling point (what makes you special?)
13. Attend the job fair, bring plenty of professional copies, and dress sharp!
14. Follow-up on your job applications, keeping a status record of each one.

It seems like a lot to do, but remember we are talking at least two years here! Also remember if you have questions about any of these suggestions, we are here to help.

Good luck in your BCC experience, and remember to have plenty of fun along the way!

Larry Truillo, Director of the Job Placement Center

truillolt@sunybroome.edu