



**OFFICE OF CAREER PLANNING**

# Employment Searching



**WOOSTER**

Advising, Planning, Experiential Learning

# Employment Searching Overview

This guide serves as general advice for searching for employment, use this guidebook in conjunction with Career Planning staff that will offer individual guidance.

Before you begin submitting applications:

- **Schedule a meeting with the Career Planning** staff through Handshake
- **Explore Scots Career Hub** for different industry trends and employment
- Research where other College of Wooster graduated landed after graduation with the resource ***What Do Wooster Graduates Do with their Major?***
- **Participate in career programing** and career fairs
- **Update your career materials** such as resume and cover letter As you begin your search for employment, think about:

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## Explore

Reflect on who you are and your interests, skills, values, and identities.

In Scots Career Hub, the following assessments are available to you to help:

- **PathwayU** – assessments to gain insights on your interests, values, personality, and workplace preferences
- **Clifton StrengthsFinder** – review your top five strengths

*Both assessments should be discussed with a career advisor after completion*

## Investigate

Gather information about potential employment opportunities.

In Scots Career Hub, these resources are options to research employment opportunities:

- **Vault** – research industries, companies, and specific professions
- **GoinGlobal** – search 16 million+ worldwide postings in the local language and English, site includes H1B resources

## Identify

Characterize potential employment opportunities and the nature of that work.

In Scots Career Hub, gather and network possible employment opportunities:

- **LinkedIn** – search jobs, join Wooster alumni groups, follow companies once you have a polished profile
- **Handshake** – update your profile to network and find opportunities
- **Interstride** – an interactive career platform designed to enhance the career exploration and job-search experience for international students

## Launch

Refine your career materials to apply, interview, and eventually accept an employment opportunity.

In Scots Career Hub, practice, refine, and apply for employment opportunities:

- **Big Interview** – ace your next job interview with our proven, step-bystep job interview preparation system
- **Handshake** – apply for opportunities in the job board
- **Fighting Scots Career Connection** – network with alumni

*Meet with a Career Planning staff member to organize your employment searching.*

# Application Process

Launching a search for employment whether full-time, part-time, or internships, organization is essential to manage the application process.

## Organizing Your Search

Once you decide on opportunities you are interested in applying for, create a system to keep track of deadlines, requirements for submission, and other important notes in your search.

## Submitting Career Materials

Once you have finished your final drafts of career materials accurately submit all required materials on time. Generally, you can expect to submit:

- Resume\*
- Cover letter\*
- Reference page\*
- Unofficial transcripts

## Interviewing\*

If an organization is interested to move you forward as a candidate after reviewing your career materials, an interview or interview follows. Here are important notes for interviewing:

- Every organization's interview process is different and asks different questions
- This process is where an organization assesses your skills, education, and potential
- Use Big Interview to ace your next job interview with our proven, step-by-step job interview preparation system

## Negotiating

Generally, the negotiations period follows the interviewing and reference checking.

Negotiations will look very different depending on your industry. Below are suggestions before and during negotiations:

- Research industry averages for the position in relation to location of employment
- Calculate your living expense
- Ask about benefits beyond compensation like insurance, retirement, or paid time off

Ask about valuable pay opportunities like bonuses, commission, or stock options.

## Accepting or Declining an Offer

The application process ends when an offer is extended, or you decide to withdraw as a candidate. Reflect on the following as before you make your decision:

Does this job allow me to strengthen my marketable skills?

- Will my supervisor and I work well together?
- Does the job use the best of my talents, skills, and abilities?
- Does this job make a difference?
- Could this job be a steppingstone to something better?
- Does the organization culture fit my personality?
- Does the organization have room for advancement?
- Is the company's industry growing?

## Building your Network

*"Networking is making links from people we know to people they know, in an organized way, for a specific purpose, while remaining committed to doing our part, expecting nothing in return."*

–Donna Fisher,  
Power Networking

Networking is the best way to find opportunities. Recent surveys of employers indicate that about **70 percent of all open positions are filled through networking.**

Building a network can be helpful approach to:

- **Connect with potential organizations or employers** you are interested in joining
- **Build community** with others in fields of interest, share experiences, and mutual connection
- Leverage existing relationships to **learn about or find opportunities**
- Create a pool of trusted colleagues to offer feedback or **professional development**

There are several techniques to build our network both within and outside The College of Wooster, include:

- Join **Fighting Scots Career Connections** through the Alumni and Parent Engagement Office and request a career conversation with Alumni
- Updating your **Handshake profile** and connecting with employers or organization representatives
- Create a **LinkedIn profile** to connect with Alumni, faculty, staff, peers, and family
- Attend **professional or industry conferences** and interact with other participants
- **Shadow experiences** at organizations or industries of interest
- **Develop or attend a networking event** with Career Planning or a student organization

### Network on LinkedIn

- Complete your profile - make sure you have a well written summary.
- Continue to build your network, upload your contacts, and connect to those you trust.
- Customize your requests to connect with a friendly note, a reminder of where you met, who you met through, or what organization you have in common.
- Join Wooster Alumni groups and other groups that align with your goals.
- Prepare specific questions to ask of individuals in these groups.
- Follow organizations of interest and locate people in your network who work there.
- Request informational interviews; ask for a brief phone conversation to seek their advice.
- Do your homework before any kind of interview or networking event.
- Interact with relevant influencers such as liking, commenting, and sharing posts.
- Create content to share with your network like recent project, internships, or LinkedIn Learning certification

## Professional Reference Page

A reference page is comprised of the following information:

- One-page document that include **names and contact information** of your references
- **Same formatting** as your resume and cover letter
- Make sure to convert the resume to a PDF once finished

As you write your reference page, remember:

**Ask a trusted person to serve as a positive reference.** Reflect on your values, skills, and interests as it related to the opportunity you are applying to decide who would best speak to the skills required of the opportunity. Make sure you get a recommenders' consent to be a positive reference on your behalf.

**Select a group of references that can positively showcase your skills and accomplishments.** Choose three to five references to show you are a well-rounded applicant. References could be former or current supervisors, faculty members, and mentors or coaches. One suggestion is to have three references that can speak to your skills, work ethic, and strengths.

**Provide your references with relevant information.** Some suggested items to provide your references to avoid confusion for your reference include:

- Updated resume and cover letter,
- Relationship to the applicant like current supervisor, if required for the application
- Link the position description or job overview
- Any specific examples that you want your reference to mention during the reference

**Write your reference page on one page that has the same formatting as your resume and cover letter.** Make sure your reference page information is accurate to avoid an organization from thinking you are disorganized. Include your references':

- Full name, make sure they are spelled correctly
- Organization affiliation and job title
- Email and phone number

**Follow up with your reference after you submit your application with the reference page.**

Tell your reference you submitted your application and ask if they need more information from you.

**Thank your recommender for serving as a reference.** Serving as a reference takes a considerable amount of time, send a thank you email for speaking positively on your behalf. After you complete your interviews send thank you emails to interviewers and your references.

Some questions that may be asked of your reference include:

- How do you know this person, and for how long have you known them?
- Do they work well in a team?
- What are some of their strengths and weaknesses? Would you hire this person?
- Is there anything else you would like to share to help us in our hiring decision?

**Consider using the example reference document on the back of this page.**

# Name

Email | Phone | LinkedIn | Wooster, OH

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## REFERENCES

Name  
Title  
Organization  
Phone  
Email

Name  
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# The Value of Independent Study

## Skills Gained Through Independent Study

- Time Management Strategies
- Decision Making Capabilities
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Organizational and Project Management Experience
- Research Techniques
- Presentation Skills
- Writing Skills
- Creativity
- Stress Management

## Utilizing Independent Study as an Example of your Work

- **Personal Statement:** Mention Independent Study in your application for admission as a reason why you are interested in continuing your studies.
- **Interviews:** Discuss Independent Study with employers and graduate schools utilizing the S.T.A.R. method.
- **Resume:** List Independent Study on your resume in education or experience.
- **Cover Letter:** Write how Independent Study prepared you for the duties of a position.

## Tips for Explaining Your Independent Study to Others

- For people who are not familiar with Independent Study they might be surprised at the scope of this academic requirement.
- Explain your project in a logical fashion: start at the beginning and explain your activities sequentially, emphasizing specific skills gained and results found during the process.

## Review examples on ways to discuss your Independent Study

- "Independent Study is required of all seniors at The College of Wooster for graduation. I chose \_\_\_\_\_ as my topic of study and proposed my ideas to faculty members for approval. Realizing I needed funding to complete this study, I wrote a grant proposal explaining my interests and was awarded \$\_\_\_\_\_ toward my efforts. I then utilized \_\_\_\_\_ to conduct research relevant to this topic and designed a series of experiments to test my hypothesis. I conducted the experiments and recorded the results. In analyzing my findings, I noted that \_\_\_\_\_ and I wrote a \_\_\_\_\_ page thesis describing my Independent Study and presented and defended the results to the department. I've also been asked to present my study at \_\_\_\_\_ conference and/or submit an abstract for publication to journal."
- "Independent Study is a yearlong, self-designed, faculty mentor research project that all College of Wooster students complete before graduation. I chose \_\_\_\_\_ as my topic of study and prepared a detailed outline planning my project that included targeted completion dates for each phase of the project. Realizing that I would need monetary support to travel to New Mexico to interview members of the Indigenous population I connected to my topic, I contacted various professional organizations and submitted grant proposals to secure \$\_\_\_\_\_ of funding toward my efforts. I then conducted research databases to identify sources for additional information relevant to the topic. I prepared a draft of interview questions to be used and discussed my strategies for interviews with participants. Upon my return, I transcribed the qualitative portion of the interviews and entered the quantitative data into \_\_\_\_\_ statistical program to complete an analysis. Once the findings had been determined, I wrote an 80-page thesis describing my study and used Microsoft Excel to create a variety of graphs for presenting the numerical results. I then defended my Independent Study to members of my academic department."

## Career Fair Tips

Career fairs are an opportunity to make important contacts with potential organizations enabling you and the organization to meet for a few minutes and exchange information. Listed below are tips to help you make the most of a career fair:

### Before the Career Fair

**Review the list of companies** who will be attending and research those that interest you.

**Bring copies of your resume** printed or a PDF version ready to upload into the employers' application system.

**Prepare your elevator pitch** customizing it to the needs of each organization. Include your name, education, and career interests.

**Be prepared** treating career fairs like interviews: dress the part, have questions, and research the organizations. Arrive early to find organizations you are meeting.

### During the Career Fair

**Chart your course** determining the order of organizations you will visit.

**Ask questions** that show you have done your homework about the organization and showcase your enthusiasm. Avoid questions about salary or benefits.

**Stay focused on your target employers** and not the "freebies" being offered.

**Greet each employer** using your elevator pitch to introduce yourself and why you are interested in the role or organization.

**Be considerate of other students** wanting a chance to speak with the organization recruiter. By preparing an elevator pitch, you can share your qualifications and interest while being courteous to others.

**Ask for the next steps in the process** thanking them for their time. Leave a copy of your resume, ask for a business card, and follow up process. Write brief notes on the back of the cards about the recruiter, the company, and your conversation.

### After the Career Fair

**Follow through with what employers have requested of you**, such as completing online applications or sending additional materials.

**Write thank-you notes** within one week. Send thank you emails or letters to every recruiter you spoke with. Use the notes you wrote on the back of their business card to personalize the thank you notes.

**Be persistent** after you followed the next steps the recruiter shared, email them about the status of your application after two weeks if you have not heard back.

*Make an appointment with a Career Planning staff member to plan your career fair process.*



## Articulating Your Liberal Arts Skills

Employers seek the skills acquired through a liberal arts education deeming them critical to a candidate's potential for career success and more important than the undergraduate major. It is essential to **articulate to potential employers that you have these skills and give examples of how you acquired them.**

Practice articulating how you developed the skills listed providing concrete examples.

### **Skills**

### **Examples of How They Can Be Acquired**

#### ***Oral Communication***

In-class presentations and participation requirements, speeches, group projects, internship presentations, theatre performances, defense of independent study

#### ***Written Communication***

Writing intensive course requirements, essay tests, article summaries, creative writing, internship reflections, independent study thesis

#### ***Collaboration/Teamwork***

Group projects, sports team participation, campus organization involvement, research projects

#### ***Critical Thinking/Analytical Reasoning***

Journal article critiques, analysis, and critiques of arguments during class, analytical papers

#### ***Decision Making & Ethical Judgment***

Explain your thought process in making important decisions and give examples of when you made ethical choices and have shown integrity (I.S., Study Abroad, Campus Organizations)

#### ***Quantitative/Applied Technology***

Data interpretation, statistics, coding, economics, lab reports, abstract and formal reasoning

#### ***Creative & Integrative Thinking***

Independent Study and other projects that have encouraged alternative approaches

#### ***Flexibility/Adaptability***

Independent Study, study abroad, group projects

#### ***Motivation/Initiative***

Searching for and landing internships, working to improve grades or skill in a sport/musical instrument, start a campus organization

#### ***Leadership***

Group projects, campus organizations, sports teams, peer mentoring, teaching apprenticeships

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### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Career Planning provides guidance and resources for students to integrate their values and strengths, liberal arts education, and experiences into purposeful career paths.

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