

UTSA University Career Center: Four Year Career Action Plan

Submitted By: UTSA University Career Counselors

Freshman Year: Self-Assessment and Enhanced Self-Awareness

Goal for this year: Identify the criteria that make an occupation a good fit for you!

Register with and create a profile with The University Career Center, by logging on to Handshake at www.joinhandshakeutsa.com to learn about employer/career related events/jobs/internships for your major, and to utilize all of the resources to assist

Take one (or several) of the Career Assessments available to identify your personality, values, skills, and/or interests – and how your V.I.P.S. relate to or are not related to different occupations

Meet with a Career Counselor in the University Career Center to review and interpret your assessment results with you to determine occupations and majors that you can later research/explore in more detail

Prepare a list of questions or identify information that you want to know about different occupations you have been considering

Get involved with the Mentorship program to identify a mentor by utilizing the mentor feature on Handshake

Become aware of and start attending campus events related to your career or majors of interest. An example of these types of events – Business Career Days, Health Professions Day, Student Affairs Career Month, athletic events, debate, or even Student Organization involvement

Complete the _____ (Heidi – I am referring to the document you use with your class/students) document that summarizes your assessment results, identifies majors to consider, and covers occupations related to your assessment results and majors of interest

Think about Professors that are teaching concepts or conducting research related to the things you are interested in. These professors will take the shape of career advisors, mentors, and authors of important and much needed letters of recommendation

Sophomore Year: Exploration and Engagement

Goal for this year: Learn about the occupations that match the criteria you identified to be a good fit!

Make it a priority to seek out experiences outside of the classroom that expose you to the field or occupation you have committed to/are interested in. Some examples include – get involved in related Student Organizations, approach a Professor to assist with research/conference presentation, attend related campus events, and seek involvement with professional associations/student organizations

Using the questions that you developed, consider conducting informational interviews with professionals in occupations/field you are interested in committing to

Utilize Handshake to identify and participate in Externships (day long employer site visits and job shadowing opportunities) related to your major or field of interest

Complete the Guided Exploration activity with a Career Counselor that will guide you through the process of researching and learning about the occupations you are interested in

Identify Student Organizations that are related to the occupations or industry you are interested in. Get involved with the organization as an active member during sophomore year, and position yourself to take on leadership or committee involvement during your junior year

Consider getting involved with a local (or when you return home) non-profit organization as a consistent and on-going volunteer, as volunteerism is a great way to explore careers, build your resume with related experience, and network with professionals

Plan to attend career fairs, employer information sessions, industry days, or other career related events that are coordinated and presented by The University Career Center. You will receive outreach, through Handshake about upcoming career related events

Start looking at Handshake, asking within your academic department, and attending career events (see prior checklist item) and identify prospective internships to target for the summer or for your junior year

Junior Year: Focus on Getting Relevant Experience and Expanding your Professional Network

Goal for this year: Gain as much related experience to add to your resume (formal internship, formal volunteer, related part-time or formal research experience) and utilize/build your network

Schedule an appointment to meet with your Career Counselor to develop a plan of attack for applying to the internship(s) you were exploring/considering during your sophomore year

Practice your elevator pitch

Make sure that you have an up to date resume that is related to the type of internship/volunteer/research experience you possess an interest in

Conduct a mock interview or attend a general mock interviews session to practice your interview skills in preparation for a possible internship interview

Take on leadership or officer role within the student organization that you have been involved with as employers, in most/all industries indicate that they value leadership/on-campus involvement

Consider assisting a Professor with research related to topics of interest

Attend networking events offered by The University Career Center, the college you are enrolled in (Business Career Days, STEM Career Fair, etc...), or student/professional organizations you are involved in

Create a Linked In profile, utilizing the Linked In profile checklist, and start making connections with industry employers, UTSA Alumni, previously made networking contacts

Determine if graduate or professional is required to become credentialed or qualified in the occupation/field you have decided to commit to

Senior Year: Prepare for the Job Search and Transition to the World of Work

Goal for this year: Solidify specific job titles of interest and find associated job postings, identify list of employers you want to target, and leverage your network via Linked In and other involvements

Develop realistic expectations regarding a successful full-time job search as a recent college graduate. Typically, it takes a recent graduate 6 to 9 months, of full-time job searching to land and secure their first full-time salaried employment endeavor

Continue practicing your interview skills by scheduling another mock interview, attend a Professional Interviewing 101, Group Mock Interview, or use Interview Stream from the UCC Website

Utilize your network (personal and professional) to identify suggested companies to consider or job postings that have been recommended for you to apply with. Try to leverage your contacts to solidify direct employment leads and gain insight as to how to present yourself and apply for those positions.

Create different resumes for the different types of positions you are interested in. Your resumes should all be very targeted and related to the type of positions you are seeking

Create different cover letters for the different positions you are interested in that also require the submission of a cover letter as a cover letter may not be required for each position you apply for

The job search process can be rigorous and competitive. Be sure to build in time for self-care and take steps to ensure that you maintain a positive attitude throughout the process, as you may experience rejection throughout the process

Make sure that you are very organized as you execute your job search. Be sure to track each position for which you applied, each company that the positions were associated with, the dates of your submission and/or follow-up

Develop a script or approach to use as you follow-up after you apply to and submit your resumes for job postings, either email or phone correspondence