

WORKING PROFESSIONALS RECRUITING ROADMAP

Balancing full-time work while navigating a career shift is no small task. Partner with the Career Development Office (CDO) to create a plan that fits your goals and schedule.

COMMITMENT TO GROWTH

Your MBA journey is full of possibility and it will challenge you to grow in new ways. Managing work, school, and life can stretch your limits, but it's also an opportunity to build resilience and sharpen your focus.

It's tempting to delay career planning until your second year, but we encourage you to stay engaged from the start. You are the driver of your career, and the earlier you begin, the more opportunities you'll have to explore, plan, and prepare.

Whether you're looking to grow within your current company or make a complete change, connect with your advisor to understand your options. The CDO and student leaders are here to support you, and we offer tools and guidance to help you move forward with clarity and confidence.

FALL

- Settle into student life and adjust to classes.
- Join student industry associations and explore areas of interest as you research post-MBA roles.
- Network with peers and attend as many learning events as you can - time will go quickly.
- Start thinking about conducting alumni coffee chats at your company to do a deeper dive as you target roles.

SPRING

- Plan to take elective classes to bridge skills or knowledge gaps for your new target roles.
- Begin prep if you are pursuing Consulting as a second-year student - case prep all spring and summer.
- Network and lay the foundation - companies start recruiting for full-time roles starting in August until graduation. Know the norm for your industry.

INTERNSHIPS

Not 'One Size Fits All'

The PMBA, Hybrid MBA, and MBA@Rice programs are designed for working professionals, and internships are not a built-in component. While some career paths benefit from internship experience, many do not require one to make a successful switch. Investment banking is a notable exception. Note: the Hybrid MBA **does not** support an internship due to the limits of the academic calendar as well as course requirements.

Test Scores

If you're targeting competitive paths like investment banking, consulting, or leadership development programs, strong metrics can help. A GMAT Focus score of 650 or above is considered competitive.

Timeline

Traditional internships typically run 10–11 weeks, 40+ hours a week, in the summer. Unless your employer offers a generous leave policy, you'll likely need to resign. If you receive a return offer, your full-time role typically starts post-graduation. That may mean you are without full-time employment during your second year. Be sure to plan ahead for income and health insurance coverage.

Whether you're climbing higher, changing your career, or mapping out your next steps, this roadmap is designed to help working professionals strategically navigate the recruiting journey.

CAREER ACCELERATORS

Career Accelerators are looking to grow within their current industry or function. Whether you're aiming for a leadership role or a shift within your organization, the MBA can be a powerful platform to take that next step.

- Define your target early and begin networking.
- Build connections across programs and industries. Your peers are a powerful resource.
- Consider finding a mentor at your current company who can help you navigate internal opportunities.
- Talk to your manager about your goals and how the MBA fits into your professional path.
- Work with an advisor to sharpen your pitch and create a resume that reflects your value.
- Attend recruiting events and get involved with student associations to stay informed and engaged.

CAREER PIVOTERS

Career Pivoters are pursuing a new industry or function, or sometimes both. The MBA offers a natural transition point, but the more dramatic the shift, the more effort and planning it will take.

- Consider the scale of your transition. Changing industry and function in a new city is more complex than making one change at a time.
- Time management will be key. Recruiting and interviews take significant preparation.
- Join student associations related to your target industries to access resources and meet like-minded peers.
- Learn from second-year students who've navigated similar transitions.
- Choose classes that align with your interests and stretch your capabilities.
- Own your story. Show how your past experience adds value in your new direction.
- Stay connected to the CDO. Attend company sessions and networking events to stay visible and informed.

PLANNING AHEAD FOR RECRUITING

Searching in Your First Year

If seeking a full time role in your first year, keep in mind that you are not yet eligible for MBA jobs. The CDO job boards are specific to internships and MBA level roles. You can still work with an advisor on your job search strategy and prep.

Graduating on an Extended Timeline

If your graduation date extends beyond the traditional two-year path, plan ahead. You'll have access to campus recruiting only once: either the summer before your final year for internships, and during your final academic year for full-time roles. Talk with an advisor to map out your timing and goals.

VISA CONSIDERATIONS

If you're an international student considering a career change, work authorization can add complexity. Some companies have policies or restrictions that affect eligibility.

- H-1B and L-1 visa holders may face additional hurdles in the recruiting process.
- Consult an immigration attorney for up-to-date information specific to your situation.
- Connect with Rice's [Office of International Students and Scholars \(OISS\)](#) to ensure you understand visa rules and remain compliant throughout your MBA experience.