Make the Leap - College to Career

Prepare Now

• Make the most of your time at Muhlenberg. Learn what you can and take advantage of all possible resources (The Career Center, for example.) Don’t wait for opportunities to fall in your lap – go after them!

• Pump your leadership activities for all they’re worth. Employers seek candidates who demonstrate initiative, enthusiasm, leadership potential, and can demonstrate these accomplishments on campus.

• Do the same with your internships. (You are what you make of your experiences!).

• Network, network, and network. It will be an important career management tool throughout your work life. Networking opportunities exist all around you, on-campus and off. See networking resources in this guide.

• Don’t run up credit card bills (in fact, try to pay them off each month). You want your career decisions to be based on what will be satisfying, not necessarily what will help to pay for last year’s spring break. Also, a few employers actually check your credit history (really!).

• Attend Reality MC in January.

• Start to determine what will be a realistic budget. What will you absolutely need for living expenses? What would be nice, but not essential?

• Let The Career Center know where you end up! Complete the Senior Survey at www.muhlenberg.edu/careercenter/seniors.html.

Real Life

• Know it will not be easy. You’ll be making a major life change. This is the first time the grades and paths to promotion won’t be as clear-cut. Expect it to be a learning experience.

• It is considered unethical to renege on acceptance of a job offer. Consider the acceptance carefully and discuss with friends, family, faculty and The Career Center.

• There’s no such thing as a perfect job or perfect boss. Even with your self-reflection, research and preparation, there is still a chance that your first position won’t be all that you had imagined. Do a reality check — are your expectations reasonable? Before you jump ship, give it enough time to know whether or not they are a good fit.

• Practice excellent communication skills. You will be judged on how well you communicate in writing, by e-mail, on the phone, and in person. Be professional. Always use proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

• Be a problem solver. Show excellent listening skills. Keep organized. Always keep a positive attitude.

• Be a sponge – learn all you can about your organization and your job. Find a mentor.

• Get ready for lifelong learning. In today’s economy, organizations are constantly changing, requiring employees to be adaptable and able to learn new skills. Be open to learning – it will be the key to a successful career!

Take a look at these books and many others in the Job Search Resources section of the Career Resource Library for more great tips to “Make the Leap!”

• Backpack to Briefcase, Life After Graduation
• Ditch the Flip Flops
• Gradspot.com’s Guide to Life After College
• Career Secret Sauce, 9 Winning Strategies for Building a Great Career
• Welcome to the Real World
• Can I Wear My Nose Ring to the Interview?