



Information for a Full-Time Job Search

Initiating Your Career Plan:

Congratulations! You have made a very important decision regarding your career. You have decided to seek full-time employment after you graduate. **However**, your career decision-making has not come to an end, but rather a new beginning. There will be many more decisions for you to make regarding your job search. Please review this page and the adjoining links for information to assist you in making these additional decisions **and** for those you will make after you accept your first full-time position.

Research. Research. Research. While you have decided to conduct a full-time job search, are all of your questions answered? Make a list of questions you have and review them with the appropriate parties (including yourself) so that you have the answers you need.

Consider the following:

- Where do you wish to live upon graduation?
- What industry are you interested in? For example: Finance, Government, Insurance, Manufacturing, Education, Tourism, Industrial, Transportation, Communications, Real Estate, Restaurant, etc.
- What specifically are you interested in doing within the industry/industries of interest to you? For example: Accounting, Sales, Management, Human Resources, Engineer, Family Law, Commercial Real Estate, etc.
- What companies/organizations are of interest to you? Do they have offices located where you wish to live? Do they offer the type of position you seek?
- Research specific companies. What is the company environment like? What do employees value about the company? What does the company value about its employees? Are there advancement opportunities? Do they support employees who wish to further their education? What are the benefits of working for the company...both the monetary (salary, insurance, 401k, education vouchers) and the perks (vacation time, flexible work schedules, 1/2 days on Fridays, access to internet for personal use after business hours, exercise facility at the office, employee discounts at various events or retail stores, location)? Keep in mind that salary and benefits are generally not discussed at the first or second interview.

Communication:

It is especially important that you maintain open lines of communication with the Career Center and the companies/organizations you are applying to for employment. Read the email messages sent from the Career Center; including those that pertain to job announcements, networking opportunities, resume writing, career fairs, and on-campus interviews. Keep a file to refer back to the messages as needed. Keep your email file maintained. The Career Center or an employer could be sending you an important message that does not get to you because you are over quota.

Use your cell phone (or another personal phone with voicemail / answering machine) on your resume to ensure receipt of messages from potential employers. A missed call could be a missed opportunity. Be certain that the message is clear and professional. Callers need to know that they have reached you. Say your full name (Joe Smith) vs. saying Cadet Smith. Return email and phone messages promptly. If you are not interested in a company, return their call and let them know. Do not simply ignore their messages. They will not know you are no longer interested until you tell them otherwise. However, they will give you a limited time to do so before they remove you from consideration.

Visit the Career Center to review resources available at the office. Employers, especially those holding on-campus interviews or attending the career fairs, will send brochures, pamphlets and posters to the office. You are welcome to take the unmarked literature with you. (The Citadel Career Center will set aside a set of a company's materials to place on file. Interested students may take the remaining materials). **Once you accept a position, please inform the Career Center and let us know the company name, your title, and where you will be located.**

Tips and Resources:

- Keep record of all career-related materials to reference what you have learned after you graduate from The Citadel.
- When applying for specific positions, you may need to complete the company's application form. After you complete your first application, keep a copy to refer to as you complete others. You will find that they are similar, but each organization will need its own form completed. Also, keep a copy of each application for your records.
- Senior Cadets:** While graduation seems almost a year away when you first return to campus in August, recognize the importance of beginning your job search from the start vs. waiting until April/May. Most employers begin searching for upcoming

college graduates in the Fall of their senior year. **To compete for the top positions, start your search simultaneously with the first day of your senior year!**

- ❑ Update your resume to include internships, seasonal jobs, leadership roles, etc. Refer to the **Resume Packet** at www.citadel.edu/career_services/ResumeSamples.htm for resume construction tips, samples, common errors to avoid, and other information. **Upload your resume to *The Gate*** after registering (and when you are ready to begin an active search) with this online job/internship posting and resume database system. If you make changes over the course of the year, please be sure to update your account with *The Gate*.
- ❑ Consider **Internship** (www.citadel.edu/career_services/Internships.pdf and www.citadel.edu/career_services/JobSearch.htm) opportunities to assist you in narrowing your options. Cadets should plan an internship during the fall or spring semester of their junior or senior year (only if you have not received academic credit for an internship previously) and undergraduate and graduate evening students may seek one as appropriate. **Being able to rule out options is just as important as finding options of best fit for you.**
- ❑ **Contingency Planning** (www.citadel.edu/career_services/Students/Contingency_Planning.pdf)
The best of plans sometimes have surprise endings that are beyond our control. What happens if you only go after your first job choice and do not get an offer? What happens if the job search takes longer than you anticipate? What if your job will not start until 3-6 months after graduation? Will you need temporary employment? Having a contingency plan is a good investment in your future.
- ❑ **Job Search Process** (www.citadel.edu/career_services/JobSearch.htm). There are a number of things to consider and to work on when conducting a search for your first job out of college/first job after earning a graduate degree. If you started exploring careers and your career interests prior to your senior year/first year of graduate school, you will have more time to put toward this enormous task ahead of you. If you did not, do not give up; simply start at the beginning (**Career Planning & Preparation Timeline: 4-Year for Cadets or 2-Year for CGC Students** via www.citadel.edu/career_services/info-students.htm) and focus on working your way forward to this point.
- ❑ Visit **Information for Students** at www.citadel.edu/career_services/info-students.htm and thoroughly review the various resources and events listed.
- ❑ **Additional resources** are available at www.citadel.edu/career_services/Education.htm for those seeking a teaching or related position and at www.citadel.edu/career_services/Students/Resources/MBA_Resources.pdf for those earning/considering an MBA.
- ❑ **JOB CHOICES**, current job search annuals from the National Association of Colleges and Employers, are available at The Citadel Career Center for all seniors, graduate students, and juniors. *JOB CHOICES* identifies many firms that plan to hire new graduates over the coming year and *JOB SEARCH* gives guidelines on many aspects of finding the job that is right for you.
- ❑ **Occupational Outlook Handbook** is available in Career Services and on-line at www.bls.gov/oco. This handbook provides information about specific careers including: working conditions, needed training and education, earnings, and what workers do on the job. Use this guide in addition to taking **FOCUS** for your career exploration.

Accepting/Declining an Offer:

Refer to **Evaluating an Offer**, as well as **how to accept or decline an offer**, via www.citadel.edu/career_services/Interviewing.htm.

- Everyone has a set of expectations regarding their first job out of college / after graduate degree. There are certain responsibilities you want to have and others that you do not want. There are certain perks you are hoping for, such as a company car. There is a salary range you are anticipating. Keep in mind that your first job places you back in line with everyone else who is starting out. You will need to compete for certain perks and promotions; they will typically not be given to you. You will need to start at the bottom (Cadets, much like being a Knob again) and over time you will begin to work your way up the chain. Thus, you may not get the salary you had in mind or the company car and you will likely have aspects about the job that you would rather not do...but will need to do. Most everyone, regardless of how long they have been in the workforce, will not be completely satisfied with every aspect of their job. As you contemplate whether to accept or decline an offer, re-assess your expectations so that they fall in line better with what is reasonable and come to appreciate what is unlikely now, but possible in time.
- Do you have a significant other to consider as you make your decision? Is s/he willing / able to relocate? Are you willing to relocate alone for a few years? A compromise will likely be necessary for you both to get what you are each hoping for upon graduation.
- Envision yourself doing the job you are being offered. Can you picture yourself in the daily routine as you have come to understand it? Will you be able to handle the challenges that will likely be involved?
- Is there room to advance within the company? If this is something of great importance to you, then it should be factored into your decision accordingly.