A Note From the Director...

As I watched Dick Clark’s Rockin’ New Year’s Eve, I couldn’t help but wonder how many folks at Times Square had been touched by the country’s recession—mother, father, son, daughter, themselves?? Reports are stating that the US economy has moved into its worst crisis since 1933. We’ve all heard the news—General Motors, Citigroup, Starbucks, Macy’s, Motorola and yes, even Wal-Mart are cutting jobs. Hitting closer to home, U of I’s largest employer, UIUC, is laying off and (to my surprise) healthcare employers made some announcements before the holidays. U.S. unemployment could reach 8.5%. And if that’s not depressing enough, in the final Dec. episode of (my favorite show) “Boston Legal”, financially strapped “Crane, Poole & Schmidt” was bought out by a Hong Kong corporation and became “Chang, Poole & Schmidt”.

So how do we stay upbeat and advise our students about careers in this economic downturn? *Is there any good news??* As a matter of fact, there is. Check out our first article “Hot Careers in 2009”. I didn’t mention any occupation that doesn’t appear to have a positive outlook. 😊

Hopefully I’ll be advising my son re: his job search when he graduates this May from the UI. I just read that economic events have caused a dramatic downturn in college hiring plans for nearly all employer types and geographic regions (great timing). Maybe he’ll join the ranks and go to graduate school. Or maybe he’ll take advantage of technology, look for work overseas and see the world—after all, it’s becoming a much smaller place.

Sandy

Hot Careers in 2009

*Most anticipated job openings 2006-2016* (source: US Dept. of Labor)

**Associate degree**—Registered nurses, nursing aides/attendants, auto technicians, accounting clerks, healthcare technicians, physical therapy assistants, computer support specialists, network administrators, preschool teachers, homeland security and police officers.

**Bachelor’s degree**—Elementary and secondary school teachers, accountants and auditors, engineers, systems analysts, insurance reps. and physician assistants.

**Graduate degree**—College instructors, clergy, social workers, mental health counselors, school counselors, pharmacists, physical therapists and attorneys.

“Cutting-Edge Careers” (source: US News and World Report)

While relatively new, the following careers are emerging as a result of growing healthcare demand, the increasingly digitized world and environmentalism:

- Health informatics specialists, wellness coaches, immigration specialists, ‘green collar’ specialists, solar installers and usability specialists.

Making a career change in midlife?

Consider programs and jobs in accounting, childcare, office support, education, home healthcare, fund-raising, medical assisting and computer support.

What about the economic downturn?

- Despite cutbacks in finance, retail, manufacturing and construction, demand for recent graduates remains high in fields such as accounting, public service, healthcare, education and technology (source: National Association of Colleges and Employers).
- By 2016, nearly 61% of current full-time government employees will be eligible for retirement (source: US Office of Personnel Management).
For Our 505 High School ‘09 Graduates...

Top Ten Reasons NOT to Choose a College

Deciding where to attend college is a huge decision because you will probably be spending the next four or more years there. Students often choose a college for all the wrong reasons and end up transferring to a different college or maybe even dropping out of school altogether. Don’t become one of those students. Here are the top ten reasons not to choose a college:

1. **Your boyfriend/girlfriend is going there.** You may get to college and realize that you want to focus more on developing new relationships. Give yourself the opportunity to experience college life and enjoy your educational experience so you can reach your maximum potential.

2. **Your best friend is going there.** Going away to college means meeting a lot of new, unique people. Making new friends will help you grow as a person.

3. **It’s a party school.** While school should be fun at times, it is more importantly a place for you to learn new ideas and earn a degree.

4. **You decided in the 7th grade that you wanted to go there.** Open yourself up to other possibilities and give yourself other options. If, after you’ve visited the campus, and spoken with college representatives; and you’re still convinced it’s the right school, then you can begin making plans to attend.

5. **Your mom and dad are alumni.** Try to avoid letting your parents persuade you into going to their old alma mater if you’re not interested. To be successful in school, you need to pick a college that is right for you based on a number of factors.

6. **It has a good football team.** Unless you want to be on the football team, don’t choose a college just because you like the team.

7. **Your school counselor told you to pick it.** Your school counselor can be a great resource when you are choosing a college, but remember that this is your decision to make.

8. **The school is prestigious.** Just because a school has a reputation of being prestigious, it does not mean that you are going to like it. What if the school doesn’t offer the major that you want? What if it doesn’t offer the extracurricular activities in which you want to be involved?

9. **The tuition is low.** Money is often a big factor when choosing a college, but keep in mind that a school that is more expensive may offer you a larger financial aid package with more gift aid than a school where the tuition is lower.

10. **It looks good in the guidebook.** Do not choose a college without visiting the campus first. While guidebooks and virtual tours will help you narrow down your choices, it is important to visit your top two or three schools in person so you can get a feel for what the campus atmosphere is like.

Get Ready for a Successful First Year in College

Tips for Your Senior Year:

1. Keep taking math-based and science courses
2. Read a lot to help prepare yourself for intense reading in college
3. Consider enrolling at your local community college to enhance your skills in reading, writing, and math, and get a jump on your general education classes

Source: University of Kentucky Admissions

What Can I Do With a Business Degree??

Your college major is just one factor in deciding which college you’re going to attend this fall. If you’re “undecided,” don’t worry about it—for most degrees, you’ll have at least a year of “gen. eds” to take. The following websites might be helpful to find out what you can do with a variety of college majors:

http://www.wcc.cc.il.us/counseling/default.html
http://www.niu.edu/careerservices/weblinks/index.html
http://www.career.ua.edu/resources/majorin.asp
Six Tips for Top Notch References

“References available upon request” is a statement that can make or break your job offer. Here are six tips for assembling a successful reference list:

1. **Ask, don’t assume.** Ask your references for permission to use their names. Confirm the following:
   - Do the people you include actually want to give you a reference?
   - Does their schedule permit time to discuss your qualifications?
   - Most importantly, what kind of reference will they be? Can the people you ask to do this task give you a positive recommendation?

2. **Let the professionals do the job.** Potential supervisors are not interested in hearing friends or relatives talk about how nice you are. They want confirmation for their main objective: Are you going to deliver the duties of the job?

3. **Provide references with the appropriate tools.** Give each reference a copy of your resume, so that he or she has a complete picture of your background. Provide a description of the job to which you are applying. Knowing the job duties ahead of time will prepare references for questions they may be asked.

4. **Keep your references informed.** Were you offered the job? If so, did you accept?

5. **Thank your references.** When you accept a job offer, take the time to write each of your references a thank-you note. They have been a valuable tool in your receiving an offer.

6. **Update your list.** Just like resumes, references become outdated. As your career builds, keep your reference list up-to-date.

Source: [www.jobweb.com](http://www.jobweb.com)

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Resume Tip of the Month...

Your “Marketing Brochure”

From the perspective of the hiring company, your resume is your initial marketing brochure. Nothing more and nothing less. It cannot “make the sale” any more than a marketing brochure can sell you a car—there still has to be a look under the hood, a chance to kick the tires and the test drive. But if the marketing brochure is effective, you are already sold on the car before you enter the showroom. The same holds true for resumes.

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Interview Tip of the Month...

Don’t Talk Too Much!

A frequent mistake made during interviews is talking too much, for too long. The typical response shouldn’t take more than 90 to 120 seconds. After this, pause and ask the interviewer if they would like you to go on. This gives them an opportunity to inject a question or direct the conversation into another area.