Opportunities in Retailing

Mention retailing and many think of the tired look of store clerks on Saturday afternoons. College graduates shunned the field for many years, but now things may be on the upswing. According to the National Retail Federation, the average store manager earns $60,000, while district managers earn around $105,000.

The best opportunities may be with chains, where Best Buy, Target, and Walgreens are among the most active recruiters. In a sign of the demand, the University of Arizona reports its 100 retailing graduates easily received positions, and said that they could graduate four times that and still not meet the demand.

Source: Career Opportunities News Sept. 2007

Accounting Majors in Demand

Accounting graduates from American colleges and universities declined from around 60,000 in 1995 to 45,000 in 2001, as bright young college students were more attracted by technical jobs with dot-com firms. The reactions to the Enron scandal and other reports of corporations misleading investors led to increased demand for accountants and auditors. Now the demand for accountants is so great that signing bonuses and higher salaries have placed the field among the most desired, and college enrollments have risen once again.

Source: Career Opportunities News Sept. 2007

Consider Informational Interviews in your Career Search

An informational interview is a conversation with a person who works in a career field you are considering. The purpose is to develop contacts and gather information when you are trying to make a career decision. When setting up a meeting, say who you are and how you got the person’s name. Make it clear that you are not asking to be considered for a job; you are just asking if they would have 20-30 minutes to meet with you because you’d like some advice regarding your career. Do not send a resume in advance (unless asked) but have a copy ready to give out. Take notes during your meeting and keep your contact information for future reference. Thank them for their time, ask for a business card and follow up with a thank you note! Some sample questions you might want to ask:

- How did you get into this field?
- What do you find the most challenging?
- What skills/qualities are most important to succeed in your work?
- What educational preparation would you recommend?
- Can you suggest other people I might talk with?
Boost Your Career through Co-op or Internship Programs

Both co-op and internship programs offer students an opportunity to gain experience, develop your interests, and test-drive your skills. They can be credit or non-credit, paid or unpaid, however unpaid programs usually require that you seek academic credit for your work. Like co-op, for-credit internships are monitored by the student’s college, but there is no standard schedule for alternating terms of work and class like in co-op. Internships also range in duration from as little as a week or two or as much as a semester. Both types of programs give you the chance to:

- Apply what you’ve learned in the “real world”-and vice versa
- Gain a range of professional skills that will make you more competitive
- Build your resume for your post-college job search
- Make contact with professionals in your field of interest
- Confirm that the career is a good fit for you

Santa School Trains for Christmas Jobs

Each fall, when the air in the upper Midwest turns crisp, an interesting group of workers assembles in Midland, Michigan. This is not your usual-looking group of job applicants. Most are heavy - really heavy - and the majority have white beards. The 70 or so assemble to attend the Charles W. Howard Santa Claus School, a three-day program which has been operating since 1937. They pay the relatively modest tuition of $300 to learn to become Santas.

Many return year after year to recharge their batteries and because they relish the camaraderie. They learn how to dress and wear their hair (or false beards, if that is necessary), what the hottest items are in Christmas toys (as imparted by the manager of a Toys-R-Us store), and even tips for conduct when riding in a parade (number-one rule: keep seated). Much of the job involves learning how to adjust to various ages of children who come up for a visit or a photo, from the one-year-old who doesn’t know what’s going on to the three-year-old who is simply terrified by that big man in the red suit. Then there are the six-year-olds who ask “Are you really Santa Claus?” to which the best answer may be “Just pinch me, do I feel real?”

Source: Career Opportunities News Sept. 2007

“Just a note to thank you for helping me with my career search. I appreciate your candor and not being in a rush during my visit.”
- Parkland Student

Dream Job

When asked to name their dream job, nearly one in four adults replied, “President of the United States.” Their childhood fantasies were much different. It was “princess” among the women who are now administrators and “firefighter” for men currently in executive positions.

(Business Week)
Interview Tip of the Month...

Answering Behavioral Interview Questions

Behavioral interview questions are becoming more common and it's not always easy to prepare for them. They are designed to see how you've responded to situations in the past and as an indicator of how you may behave in the future. Employers ask situational questions such as “What would you do if....” or “Can you give me an example of a time in which...”.or “Can you describe...”, etc. Consider how your qualifications enabled you to demonstrate leadership, initiative and problem solving ability and be ready to give examples!

Federal Government Salaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member of Congress</td>
<td>$168,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal District Judge</td>
<td>$165,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain, U.S. Army (four years of service)</td>
<td>$52,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President of the United States</td>
<td>$215,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President of the United States</td>
<td>$400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Justice, U.S. Supreme Court</td>
<td>$203,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Federal Worker, Washington, DC (with 16 years of service)</td>
<td>$89,128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Washington Post

Resume Tip of the Month...

Listing Employment References

“Professional references” are people who know your capabilities and character and are willing to talk with or write an employer on your behalf. They should be work or education related and someone who will give you a positive reference. Always ask permission and verify spelling of names, titles and contact information. If possible, send them a copy of your resume and the job description in which you are applying—they will be better prepared when an employer calls!