Choosing a college major and career are only the first two steps in your career journey. While enjoying your college years, the tasks outlined below will also help with your career preparation:

1. **Get involved in student organizations and clubs**—Participation in these organizations shows an employer that you are the kind of student who takes initiative, manages time effectively, and has a wide range of interests and concerns.

2. **Join professional associations**—If you can’t attend conferences, read the association’s newsletter or website to keep abreast of trends in your chosen profession.

3. **Provide community service**—Of course you want to “do well” in college, but also consider the importance of “doing good”. Time is limited when you’re a student, but nothing says more about the content of one’s character than involvement in community service.

4. **Obtain relevant work experience**—Part-time jobs, summer employment and internships provide valuable work experience, especially if they are related to your career field.

5. **Develop leadership skills**—Recruiters will be impressed by the skills you demonstrate in leadership positions—problem solving, interpersonal communication, conflict resolution, initiative, etc.

6. **Improve computer skills**—While your career may not involve programming or coding, you will almost certainly be using computer applications in your work. It is important that you gain as much knowledge as possible in the applications used in your career field.

7. **Strengthen communication skills**—All jobs require communication skills, and those employees who excel at listening, speaking, writing, negotiating and customer service are typically those who advance through the ranks.

8. **Demonstrate cultural competence**—We live in an increasingly diverse society, and you are at a distinct advantage when you can demonstrate your knowledge of and sensitivity to diverse people, cultures and values. You will also personally benefit from your exposure to new traditions, ideas, belief systems and perspectives.

### Start Preparing Now for Your Career Later

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| Businesses with 500 or more people employ 17 percent of the U.S. workforce | 17% |
| Businesses with 100 to 499 people employ 26 percent of the U.S. workforce | 26% |
| Businesses with less than 100 people employ 57 percent of the U.S. workforce | 57% |

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Include a good mix of small, medium, and large companies in your job search.

- Statistical Abstract of the United States

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Career News

From the Parkland College Career Center, serving more than 15,000 students, employers, and District 505 residents each year.

217.351.2536 • www.parkland.edu/careercenter

October 2009
A New Job Just a Tweet Away

More Companies are tweeting for hires. As online job boards have grown crowded, many big companies, including Microsoft, Verizon, Raytheon Corp, and Viacom Inc.'s MTV Networks, now list job openings on the Twitter microblogging site.

For employers, Twitter—where users post updates, or “tweets,” of no more than 140 characters—offers one more way to find and attract candidates, and a cheaper alternative to big online job boards. It also helps companies target social-media-savvy job hunters and convey an innovative image. For job seekers, Twitter offers the chance to interact one-on-one with recruiters and can be more convenient than job boards.

With so many people looking for jobs now, some employers say they like that Twitter yields just enough job leads—but not too many. Job boards have “become saturated,” says Mike Rickheim, vice president of global talent acquisition for Newell Rubbermaid Inc.

“The Wall Street Journal

The Age Debate

If two candidates are pitted against each other, one being young (by professional standards) and the other being significantly older, who’s going to get the job? Anthony Balderrama says it’s not as cut and dry as age. Here are ways you can stress the attributes of your age without having to actually talk about your age. Why? Well, because no employer wants to hear “I know I look old, but…” Instead, phrase it all in terms of experience.

If you’re an older worker:

• **You’ve already made mistakes**—Everyone makes rookie mistakes, and hopefully you learned from it so that you can point to a time when you didn’t know your limits and now you do.

• **You’ve been around the cubicle** (for lack of a better metaphor) - If you’ve been in the work force for 10, 20, or 30 years, you’ve probably held different positions. That experience informs the decisions you make today. The skills you’ve acquired have come from hands-on experience, which is something school alone can’t teach you.

If you’re a younger worker:

• **You know the current trends**—On average, younger workers (especially those straight out of college) are familiar with today’s technology and new industry trends that are just now making waves. For many employers, that’s a huge asset because their current employees might be more focused on what’s worked before and not think as much about what’s coming up.

• **You’re willing to take risks**—No employer wants to hire a liability, but if you’re still trying to establish yourself in the professional world, you’re more likely to try new ideas. Unconventional ones that might not appeal to others could be a boost for you.

Remember, your focus needs to be on what you bring to the company. Employers want good workers regardless of age or gender. Source: CareerBuilder.com
Top-Paid Bachelor’s Degrees
*Where 49 or more offers were reported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Average Salary Offer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemical engineering</td>
<td>$65,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
<td>$58,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>$65,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical/Electronics &amp; Communications Engineering</td>
<td>$57,404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Science/Management</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>$46,655</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers 2009 Graduate Survey

Resume Tip of the Month...

Academic Honors

Don’t forget to include academic ‘honors’ (e.g. dean’s list, scholarships awarded) or your G.P.A. if it is over 3.0.

Interview Tip of the Month...

If you want the job, be sure to ask for it!