



Advice from Career Services

Career services at the college level are often compared to high school guidance counseling. However, a college career service is much more comprehensive, offering an array of services designed to support students':

- self-discovery
- career exploration
- access to part time employment
- internships and other career-related experiences
- preparation for graduate programs
- connections to employer
- connection to alumni networks

While the names of the offices that provide career services vary across campuses, you may see one of these names used on your campus: *Career Development, Career Center, Career and Professional Development*.

Job titles for career development professionals include: counselor, advisor, coach, navigator, specialist, mentor, as well as industry liaison or career field expert.

Career services offices provide:

- individual consultation for students
- group coaching sessions
- workshops, i.e. career exploration, professional branding, job search strategies, interviewing skills, and salary negotiation.

The role of the career advisor often includes curating content for students because of the sheer volume of career information that exists in:

- career & occupational information
- job boards
- workforce trends

Career advisors are **connectors** as well, connecting students with **employers and alumni** in fields of interest, and serving as a **referral source** to other resources on campus (i.e. academic advising, tutoring, and personal counseling).

Career services are highly contextual, varying by academic programs, location of the campus, history and tradition, as well as institution type (i.e., at a community college there may be a focus on transfer; at a research university, the focus is likely on research internships; at co-op schools, the natural focus is employer development for co-op placements).

Moreover, the extent to which career development is woven into the **fabric of the academic experience** also varies. While career services offices do not manage clinical or teacher placements for licensure programs, **the best career services' operations are those with deep**



ties to faculty and academic support systems. Utilizing college career services has always been optional, never required.

Here is a table showing expected career outcomes for students and the career services that can help students with each outcome:

Career Outcomes for College Graduates	How Career Centers can help
Know your values and interests	Provide inventories, sometimes known as “career tests” to get you started.
Gain a sense of career direction (not a hard decision)	Curate career information to help narrow; work 1:1 with clients to think/talk through.
Develop deep knowledge of an industry sector	Provide curated access to career information databases and alumni networks.
Get experience to develop skills & industry knowledge (course-based projects, part time work, internship, volunteer, etc.)	Provide jobs/intern databases. Host virtual and F2F recruiting events. Work with faculty to infuse industry-related projects into coursework.
Understand personal strengths and career competencies; be able to confidently articulate those to potential employers	Provide strengths-based inventories. Offer 1:1 and group coaching to help clients identify skills and craft professional branding strategies (i.e. resume, LinkedIn, personal statements). Provide practice for interviews, often with alumni and employers.
Establish the beginning of a professional network	Provide access to alumni and employer professionals; guide clients in professional outreach practices to individuals and professional associations.

Gaining experience & finding internships / work

To the job seeker with IH diagnosis - a traditional 9-5 employment arrangement may not be best-aligned with your situation.

Recommendations:

1. **Hone skills that align with independent work**, such as writing, computer programming, design, data analysis, accounting, investigative / research skills.
2. **Prepare an e-portfolio** to highlight your projects & accomplishments > evidence that your work product outcomes are high quality.
3. Request quotes or **testimonials from your references** that you can use in your e-Portfolio and on your LinkedIn profile.
4. Look for a work arrangement that allows for **self-paced work**, where work would be produced within a flexible time period.
5. Connect with the IH **community to learn from others** how they successfully manage work obligations.

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