

Career Services Newsletter

University of Maryland University College

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CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

Job Search Spotlight

Revisit and revamp your career goals

▶ JOB SEARCH STEPS

- 1 Determine your goals.
- 2 Do your research.
- 3 Network for opportunities.
- 4 Market yourself.

1 The first step in an effective job search is to determine a specific job goal. A specific goal helps you target your job search. People who conduct targeted job searches are likely to find satisfying jobs much faster than the average job seeker.

A common misconception for many job seekers is the idea that the search should be broad and open to several options so that not one potential opportunity is missed. Instead, determine your goal, which will let you focus your search, narrow the competition, and build your confidence to sell yourself as the best-qualified candidate.

To determine your job goal, identify the tasks you enjoy and the skills you have. Next, decide on the industry in which you want to work and the type of products or services with which you want to work. Lastly, identify the type of company, potential work environment, and the geographical location of your dream job.

Once you have completed these tasks, you are ready to craft your specific job goal. Here is an example:

I would like an entry-level position in criminal justice in the area of law enforcement. I would like to work in criminal investigation, preferably for a federal agency within a 50-mile radius of my home.

2 The second step in an effective job search is research. One of the most popular and effective places to begin your research is the Internet. Use the four Ws to help you get started

- **What** kinds of jobs are available? What skills are needed?
- **Who** is hiring? Who has the best compensation package?
- **Where** are the companies or jobs located?
- **Why** do I want to work for this company? In this job? At this location? Use your favorite search engine or, if you are a student, use the library databases to begin your quest for information.

3 The third step is to network for opportunities. Studies have shown that as many as 80 percent of jobs are found through networking—creating and building relationships with people who can have a positive effect on your career or job search. You can begin to develop your network of contacts in several ways. One way is to make a list of people you know, using the FRANK formula—friends, relatives, acquaintances (from school or work), neighbors, and those you know through your kids, if applicable. You can also build your network by attending networking events sponsored by your school or professional association. Read trade journals and check bulletin boards, newspapers, the phonebook and, of course, the Internet.

4 The fourth and final step is to market yourself. Creating a résumé and cover letter designed to market you for the job you want is vital to your job search. Your résumé should be targeted toward your specific job goal. It should highlight your qualifications for the job for which you are applying; it should not be a summary of your life's work history, showing everything you have done or are capable of doing. It is better to have three targeted résumés than to have one generic one. When you decide to submit your résumé for a job opportunity, always include a cover letter. Keep your cover letter simple. It should be approximately four paragraphs: an introduction, two paragraphs describing how you are specifically qualified for the position, and a final paragraph that requests a meeting, provides contact information, and thanks the reader for his or her time. ■

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CAREER SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

In support of the university's mission, Career Services provides quality resources and services to assist UMUC students and alumni worldwide with their career planning and job search needs. From enrollment through graduation to the world of work, our programs and services are designed to reflect the evolving needs of UMUC's talented and diverse adult population.

STEPS TO RESEARCH JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- 1 **Choose** an industry.
- 2 **Look for** companies, businesses, or federal agencies within that industry.
- 3 **Choose** a company.
- 4 **Visit** the company Web site and check out current employment options.
- 5 **Identify** job titles and open positions to apply for.

TIPS FOR TARGETING YOUR RÉSUMÉ

- 1 **Choose** a specific job to target.
- 2 **Make it clear** to the reader what you are seeking.
- 3 **Sell it**, don't tell it! Focus on your accomplishments and what you have to offer, not just tasks and duties.
- 4 **Stay on track**—include only information that supports your job target.
- 5 **Perfect your package.**

HOW TO BE A STANDOUT CANDIDATE IN A COMPETITIVE MARKET

- 1 **Look for the Right Fit.** Apply for positions that you want and are qualified to do.
- 2 **Don't Be Generic!** Be specific and personalize your cover letters and résumés for each position.
- 3 **Be Positive and Prepared for Networking and Interviewing.** Know what you want and how to articulate it. Avoid sharing negative personal experiences.
- 4 **Stay in Touch!** Send a thank-you e-mail or note. Make sure you print and proofread before you send it.
- 5 **Be Flexible.** Look for related opportunities. Be willing to negotiate.
- 6 **Get Connected.** Expand and broaden your network. LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter are some very popular networking sites.



CAREER SPOTLIGHT: CRIMINAL JUSTICE

WHAT CAN I DO WITH A DEGREE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE?

Criminal justice majors learn the about the nature of crime and the institutions and processes that prevent and respond to crime. They become very familiar with the American justice system and develop a worldwide view of the law in other countries.

With this kind of expertise, criminal justice majors can work in a variety of entry-level positions. The three main areas that most focus their careers in are law enforcement, corrections, and the courts.

These areas encompass a variety of settings, including local, state, or federal law enforcement; probation and parole; corrections; juvenile justice; social services; the court systems; and private companies. A degree in criminal justice is also good preparation for those who choose to continue their studies by pursuing a law degree.

Further education and/or experience may be required for higher-level positions. ■



Professional Associations in Criminal Justice

If you're interested in a career in criminal justice, you may find information and networking opportunities with the following associations.

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS)
www.acjs.org

American Correctional Association (ACA)
www.aca.org

American Jail Association (AJA)
www.aja.org

American Probation and Parole Association (APPA)
www.appa-net.org

International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
www.theiacp.org

American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS)
www.asisonline.org

American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS)
www.aafs.org

American Bar Association (ABA)
www.abanet.org

CAREER SERVICES HAS RESOURCES FOR

- Current students
- Students with disabilities
- Alumni
- Employers
- Faculty members
- Staff members



Keep your spirits up! The job search process can take several months to several years depending on what you are seeking. It is important to stay positive and remember that the hiring process is two-sided. The company has to believe that you would be a good fit with its culture and environment, and you need to believe that the company has something to offer you. If you stay focused and continue to target jobs that meet your goals and are within your skill set, you will be successful. Remember, Career Services can help you along the way.

For more information on writing effective résumés and cover letters, visit www.umuc.edu/careerservices/jobsearch. If you would like a career counselor to review your résumé and/or cover letter, contact Career Services and one of our counselors will be happy to assist you.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

A Conversation with William Sondervan, EdD

Director of Criminal Justice, Investigative Forensics, and Legal Studies and Collegiate Professor, UMUC

CAREER SERVICES: What can you tell me about criminal justice as a major and the career paths associated with it?

SONDERVAN: Criminal justice is a system. The main functions are the police, courts, and corrections. Jobs can be found at the city, state, and federal levels. For the police component, you can work for the city, state, or federal government, including the FBI, DEA, or ATF. The corrections component includes the county jails, state prisons, juvenile facilities, parole, and probation and home detention units. The Federal Bureau of Prisons also has broad opportunities. The courts component includes courthouse security, bailiffs, and special court police for use at the Supreme Court

level. Up and coming areas of criminal justice include criminal intelligence and the enormous need for private security and private corrections. These areas have exploded just since 9/11.

CAREER SERVICES: What is the job outlook for criminal justice graduates?

SONDERVAN: There are many job opportunities across the spectrum at the local, state, federal, and private levels. Since 9/11, criminal justice jobs have been increasing. Plus many veterans are retiring because of the 25-year career limitation, providing even more openings. Many of the positions require higher education.

CAREER SERVICES: What advice do you have for current criminal justice students?

SONDERVAN: There are multiple ways to enter the field of criminal justice. Some only require a high school diploma while others may need a BS, MS, or law degree. The higher the responsibili-

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ties, the higher the education needed. Work hard and set goals to continue your education. That way you can rise to the top of your field. It is important to be passionate about the field—don't look at it as just a job.

CAREER SERVICES: What do employers look for?

SONDERVAN: Employers are looking for motivated, well-educated people who can demonstrate character and integrity. All criminal justice jobs require a background check, and some may require a polygraph—so keep it clean!

CAREER SERVICES: What job search tips would you suggest?

SONDERVAN: Use the different Web sites and job boards that cater to criminal justice jobs. Networking is really important—it's really the best, because if someone knows you, they can get you right to the top of the list! Look for internships and visit the different agencies. Look for a mentor to help you navigate the process. Be proactive—look for opportunities.

CAREER SERVICES: What can you tell us about the new master's degree in criminal justice management?

SONDERVAN: Our program is specifically designed to prepare students for leadership positions in the criminal justice system. As a result, we developed a specialization in criminal justice within the Master of Science in management program. The program includes leadership, management, communications, strategic planning, budgeting, etc., along with specific criminal justice skills. Graduates will be well-rounded in criminal justice leadership and ready to assume positions at increasingly higher levels.

CAREER SERVICES: Any final thoughts?

SONDERVAN: I have worked in criminal justice in a variety of positions for the past 38 years. I've loved every minute of it and never had a dull day!

William Sondervan spent 23 years in the U.S. Army Military Police and twice served as chief of police. He spent 10 years as the commissioner of corrections for the state of Maryland. ■

A Conversation with William J. Goodwin Jr.

Retired fire chief for the city of Baltimore, Maryland, and adjunct associate professor at UMUC

CAREER SERVICES: Why is criminal justice a good major?

GOODWIN: Criminal justice is a good major because it is very broad and envelops most of our urban areas. There is a huge overlap between law enforcement and public safety. When you look at the opportunities in public safety, it is important to include all of your first responders, police, fire, paramedics, etc. A foundation in criminal justice is a solid place to start.

CAREER SERVICES: What tips and advice can you share with students who are looking for career opportunities in the criminal justice field?

GOODWIN: First and foremost, you should get the education. It helps to raise the bar of entry-level positions. Current degrees are very valuable. Always look for ways to improve your skills. Make sure that you take your network and the skills that you learn in school on to your job.

Be flexible and broad in your job search. Don't look in just one environment. Remember there is an overlap between law enforcement, emergency management, public safety, and homeland security. So look for opportunities across the spectrum.

William Goodwin retired from Baltimore's Fire Department in 2007 after 33 years of service, including six years as fire chief. A UMUC alumnus, Goodwin currently teaches courses in leadership and management for his alma mater. He also holds a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University and completed a fellowship program in leadership at Harvard University. ■