Spring 2012 | Preparing Carolina students for lifelong career management

As the reputation of the University of South Carolina grows, so do career opportunities for USC students and graduates. According to Career Center Director Tom Halasz, students are working to make the most of those opportunities and are very active—and competitive—in their job searches.

**Students find advice, opportunity, assistance at Career Center**
To help students develop lifelong career-management skills, the Career Center provides service in three areas:
1. **Decide it.** Career counseling/advising to help students make informed decisions
2. **Experience it.** Experiential education opportunities, including job shadowing, internships and co-ops
3. **Live it.** Employment assistance to enhance students’ job search skills and to connect them with potential employers.

**Center’s employer outreach boosts Carolina graduates’ success**
25% more employers registered for the 2012 spring Career Fair than did the year before. That’s a sign of the improving job market, but also of the university’s success in demonstrating the value of its graduates. To complement employers’ view of Carolina graduates, Career Center staff cultivate relationships with employers and ensure that students are prepared for job fairs, interviews and experiential education opportunities.

**Carolina students exhibit employers’ most sought-after attributes**
In its report “Job Outlook 2012,” the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) shared the results of its annual survey of employers’ attitudes about and plans to hire new college graduates. Respondents to NACE’s survey identified the attributes they most often look for when reviewing candidates’ resumes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% respondents</th>
<th>attributes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>79.8%</td>
<td>ability to work in a team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.2%</td>
<td>leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75.6%</td>
<td>problem-solving skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.1%</td>
<td>communication skills (written)</td>
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<tr>
<td>73.1%</td>
<td>strong work ethic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>analytical/quantitative skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>communication skills (verbal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>initiative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to respondents, “ability to work in a team” and “communication skills” (both written and verbal) are the most important of these attributes. That’s good news for Carolina students, many of whom are enrolled in courses that emphasize these areas. Among USC seniors who responded to the 2011 National Survey of Student Engagement, 46% reported working often/very often with other students on in-class projects, and 64% reported working often/very often with other students outside of class to prepare assignments.
Student employee initiative to launch
A new initiative for the hundreds of students employed by the university will make sure that they earn more than just a paycheck. They'll also gain leadership and career skills, opportunities for mentoring and coaching and the ability to articulate their skills and experiences to potential employers.

Aspects of the new program will include:

- Leadership Coaching Program - individual sessions guided by emotional intelligence assessment, interpretation and feedback
- Certificate Program - online program to more formally recognize skills and abilities learned and performed in employment
- Trainings and Consultations - specialized training programs tailored to workplace needs
- Break with a Boss - funded lunch program to encourage mentoring.

For more information, email Corrine Hawes at chawes@sc.edu.

Community Internship Program connects students, employers
The Community Internship Program facilitates internship opportunities by connecting employers and students and offering paid internships to carefully selected and trained Carolina students. Students participating in the CIP have, in total:

- Worked more than 100,000 hours
- Earned more than $1 million at an average hourly rate of $9.80 - $12
- Earned full-time employment (12 full-time positions reported)
- Improved the following characteristics, as reported by their employers:
  - ability to work independently
  - ability to learn
  - teamwork skills
  - multi-tasking/time-management skills
  - flexibility/adaptability
  - verbal communication skills

“Students with an internship or co-op experience have a significant advantage in the job market over students who do not have experience,” said Career Center Director Tom Halasz. “Increasingly, employers expect students to complete their first internship before the end of their sophomore year. Multiple internships (some employers seek as many as three) reassure employers that students will successfully transition to full-time employment following graduation.”

“The multiple, early internships or co-ops and a variety of experiences, including leadership positions, are crucial.”

Tom Halasz, Career Center director

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