FRESHMAN YEAR

12 STEPS TO BEGIN YOUR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The career development process is a journey that involves developing and refining goals over time. The earlier students begin to focus on their career development, the better prepared they will be to decide which path they will choose and to pursue the opportunities available to them. Career Services at Princeton University offers extensive career education programs, individual career counseling services, and comprehensive resources designed to help students assess their skills, interests, values, and experiences as they explore career options and develop strategies for pursuing their goals.

1. VISIT

Get an early start on your career planning by visiting Career Services to learn about potential programs and services designed specifically for freshmen! Also, visit TigerTracks, our online career management system, to set up your profile. All incoming freshmen are provided with a profile that must be completed before using the system to search for opportunities and events.

2. LOOK

Look for extracurricular opportunities and activities. The best way to make a smooth transition to college life is to get involved. Another benefit is that this can help you gain valuable experiences for inclusion on your resume for summer jobs and internships.

3. THINK

Think about the types of activities and classes you have enjoyed so far to begin to get an idea about the topics and skills you are most passionate about. Try to draw connections between those tasks you excel in and those you find yourself most interested in.

4. ASSESS

Consider scheduling an assessment through Career Services to understand how your interests, skills, values, and personality may relate to potential major and career options. We offer the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Strong Interest Inventory, and StrengthsQuest.

5. DEVELOP

Develop a positive, professional online image. When using social media or other online networking tools, it is important to realize that your online persona will shape others’ opinions and perceptions of you—both personally and professionally. Always use sound judgment and think of the long-term ramifications when sharing information online.

6. ASK

Ask for others’ advice and opinions! Talk to academic advisers, upper-class students, and faculty members about majors, classes, and potential extracurricular activities.

7. MEET

Meet Career Peer Advisors (CPAs) – These are fellow students assigned to each residential college who offer study breaks and programs to help freshmen learn how to write a resume or look for an internship as well as provide guidance on other Career Services resources.

8. REVIEW

Review the resources on the Career Services website to learn about the relationship between majors and careers and see examples of alumni careers from each major. Our comprehensive online resources and publications offer you 24/7 advice and information. Be sure to check out the Career Planning Guide!

9. EXPLORE

After you have identified a few potential career options of interest to you, explore those further by talking to professionals in the field. Gather information and advice via research and conversations with alumni and/or others. For a first-hand look at a career field or profession, apply for a Princeternship to visit the workplace of an alumni host during an academic break.

10. ATTEND

Attend workshops, panels, information sessions, and career fairs to learn more about industry-specific internship opportunities and to begin to explore the wide-range of employer organizations and graduate or professional schools who recruit at Princeton.

11. CREATE

Create your college resume and get feedback from a career counselor. You can also begin to create a portfolio of academic and extracurricular projects and achievements that can be shared with potential employers to showcase your college experiences.

12. APPLY

Freshmen year is NOT too early to begin applying for internships. Visit Career Services to learn where to look for internship opportunities and get advice about applying and interviewing for positions. You could potentially complete three or more internships during your college years, providing you with valuable work experience and helping you build an impressive resume.