

# Researching Careers and Employers

Research is an essential component in the career development, decision making and job search process. Knowing how to research and where to find accurate sources of information is important.

## OCCUPATIONAL RESEARCH

It is imperative to obtain accurate career related information in order to make sensible decisions about possible occupations. When researching careers, you should understand options available in your area of interest, typical tasks of the occupation, job outlook, educational and skill requirements, industries you may work in and average salaries.

### Online and Print Resources

There are a variety of resources available to help you explore career options related to various majors. They provide listings of job titles and have links to helpful information such as professional associations. You can conduct an online search by utilizing a search engine such as Google and searching for "what to do with a major in." There are also print resources available that are similar to the information that you can obtain online. Most of the print materials begin with the following titles:

- Careers in...
- Great Jobs for...
- Opportunities in

They are specific to major or industry. You can find these resources in a local library or can purchase them at bookstores.

### Government-Related Resources

Once you have an idea of possible options, you can then obtain more information about specific careers. The sites listed below provide you with information (job tasks, educational requirements, salary ranges, projected growth rates, etc.) about a variety of occupations and industries. This information can help you to evaluate whether or not the occupation and/or industry may be a viable option:

United States Department of Labor

<http://www.dol.gov/>

- This is the primary source for obtaining accurate, comprehensive information about the labor market.

Bureau of Labor Statistics

<http://www.bls.gov>

- This site is part of the Department of Labor and is one of the best sources for obtaining occupational information. In the "Publications" section you can link to the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH) and obtain information about different occupations.
- You can also search for detailed industry information and occupational trends by state.

O'Net:

<http://online.onetcenter.org/>

- This site is linked to the Bureau of Labor Statistics and provides information that is similar to the Occupational Outlook Handbook.

Career One Stop

<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

- In the "More Resources" drop down menu, you can link to America's Career InfoNet (<http://www.acinet.org/acinet/>).
- This site is also linked to the Department of Labor. You can obtain detailed information about occupational trends by state and link to job opening databases.

### Professional Associations

Professional associations provide extensive information about specific occupational fields. There is no need to join the association in order to utilize the valuable information available from their websites. You can typically find a "Student" or "Career" section on most professional association websites and obtain information about career options in the field.

You can identify professional associations for your field by conducting an online search utilizing a search engine such as Google and searching for professional association and the name of your field. For example, you may search for "professional association accounting." You may also utilize the directory, National Trade and Professional Associations of the United States, which is available at the reference desks of libraries.

## EMPLOYER RESEARCH

There are two primary components to employer research. One is identifying employers and the second is identifying additional sources of information about the employers.

### Identifying Employers

There are many resources available to identify potential employers. Industry/Employer directories can be found in university or public libraries. Ask a reference librarian for available resources in the city of interest. Examples of these directories include:

- Plunkett's
- O'Dwyer's
- Sorkins
- Hoover's
- Dunn and Bradstreet
- Book of Lists (available through Business Journals)
- Chamber of commerce (Google the city and chamber, member directory)

### Additional Resources

You can obtain more information about specific employers by utilizing some of the following methods:

- Employer website
- Research business and industry journals for information (This can usually be done free through a library).
- Conduct informational interviews with people working for the company.