

## **Turning your Interests into your Dream Job**

Finding your first job can seem daunting. Where do you start? Thanks to the Internet, job searches are far easier today than they were 10 years ago, let alone when your parents were hunting for their first jobs.

The downfall, though, is that with so much information, the search can quickly become overwhelming. And it is easy to get distracted by the abundance of data.

## **Narrowing you Search**

Narrowing your search is the first step to successfully landing your first job. But how do you narrow your search? For some graduates, this is easy. They went into school knowing what they wanted to be. They took all the right courses, and maybe even held an internship or two. But what about the graduates who, despite four or more years in school, still have no idea what they want to be when they grow up?

## **Listing your interests**

If you are in this boat, don't worry. You are not alone, and establishing a career path is easier than you think. Start by making a list. Write down the things you want to do in your dream job. It doesn't matter if you don't know what that job is, or if your wish list is even possible. Think about the things you enjoy doing. Do you like researching? Maybe you enjoy talking to people. Or perhaps you are an artist or love playing video games. The more you can add to this list, the better your chances will be of finding a job you enjoy.

Once your list is complete, set it aside. On a new piece of paper, write down every job you think you might be interested in. Don't be afraid to dream big and think of the end goal. Your first job may not be a CFO, but if you think you want to be a CFO someday, looking at finance jobs at large corporations may be your first step.

After completing this list, head to the Internet. Research each job. What happens in a typical day? What skills are needed? What is the standard entry-level job? Check out groups on LinkedIn and ask questions on the group discussion boards. People like sharing information about their jobs. Or ask your university's career counselor for a list of alumni working in a specific field. Most colleges and universities have lists of alumni who have offered to share this information with upcoming or recent graduates.

## **Compare your Dreams to Real Life**

You are now ready to return to the first list, the one with your interests. Compare your interests with the information you discovered about each job. It may turn out that some of the jobs you thought you would like are different than you thought. If

you always wanted to go into marketing but do not enjoy talking to people, you may need to reevaluate your career path. If you are having difficulties finding jobs that match your interests, speak to a career counselor. There are many jobs out there. It is easy to overlook one, or to be unaware that one even exists.

Now that you have narrowed your search, you are ready to go the job boards. Don't limit yourself to full-time jobs. Consider interning or taking a temp job. These positions can often open doors for you, either at the company where you are employed, or by adding practical experience to your resume.

And remember, the job you take today is not the job you will have forever. Being open to opportunities will set you on the path to your ultimate dream job.