

CHAPTER 11

Careers and Service Learning

Philip Gardner of Michigan State University, Linda Salane of Columbia College, and Edward Zlotkowski of Bentley College contributed their valuable and considerable expertise to the writing of this chapter.

Students planning for careers frequently encounter bumps along the way. Choosing a career is a process of discovery, involving a willingness to remain open to new ideas and experiences. Many of the decisions you make during your first year in college will have an impact on where you end up in the workplace.

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL LEARN

- How majors and careers are linked—but not always
- Surprising things about careers and liberal arts majors
- How to prepare a résumé and cover letter
- How your academic advisor and college catalog can be helpful references
- How service learning, internships, and co-op programs can pave the way to employment

Careers and the New Economy

Since the 1990s, major changes have taken place in how we work, where we work, and the ways we prepare for work while in college. In the early 21st century, organizations have become increasingly:

- **Global.** National economies have gone multinational, not only moving into overseas markets but seeking cheaper labor, capital, and resources abroad. Your career is bound to be affected by the global economy, even if you never leave the United States.
- **Boundaryless.** U.S. companies have partners throughout the world. DaimlerChrysler, the result of a merger of the U.S. Chrysler organization with the German Mercedes-Benz group, is a recent example. You may be an accountant and find yourself working with the public relations division of your company, or you may be a human resources manager who trains a number of different divisions in a number of different countries. You might even find yourself moved to a unit with a different function, as opposed to climbing up the proverbial—and often narrow—career ladder.

- **Customized.** More and more, consumers are demanding products and services tailored to their specific needs. One example is the health food supermarket. Another is the seemingly endless varieties of a single brand of shampoo or soup crowding your grocer's shelves. Such market segmentation requires constant adaptation of ideas to identify new products and services as new consumer demands emerge.
- **Fast.** When computers became popular, people rejoiced because they believed the computer would reduce their workloads. Actually, the reverse happened. Now executives are designing their own PowerPoint presentations because, as one article put it, "It's more fun to work with a slide show than to write reports." For better or worse, "We want it now" is the cry in the workplace, with product and service delivery time cut to a minimum.
- **Unstable.** Terrorist attacks, the war in Iraq, soaring gasoline prices, and the scandals within the highest echelons of major companies put the stock market into a spin and caused massive layoffs. The travel industry experienced a slump after 9/11 that is still felt today. Drops in state and federal funding have negatively affected shopping. Although, as history has taught us things will get better, it's important to know about the economy because it changes so quickly.

Surviving in a Changing Economy

As you prepare over the next few years to begin your career, remember that:

- **You are, more or less, solely responsible for your career.** Companies may assist you with assessments and information on available positions in the industry, but the ultimate task of engineering a career path is yours.
- **To advance your career, you must accept the risks that accompany employment and plan for the future.** Organizations will continually restructure, merge, and either grow or downsize in response to economic conditions. Because you can be unexpectedly unemployed, it will be wise to keep other options in mind and to invest and save what you can on a regular basis.
- **A college degree does not guarantee employment.** Of course, you'll be able to hunt through opportunities that are more rewarding, financially and otherwise, than if you did not have a degree. But just because you want to work at a certain organization doesn't mean there's a job for you there. And as the economy rises and falls, you may find yourself laid off from a job that fits you to a tee.

- **A commitment to lifelong learning helps to keep you employable.** In college you have been learning a vital skill: how to learn. *Gradus*, the Latin root of *graduation*, means moving to a higher level of responsibility. Your learning has just begun when you receive your diploma.

Now the good news. Thousands of graduates find jobs every year. Some may have to work longer to get where they want to be, but persistence pays off. If you start now, you'll have time to build a portfolio of academic and co-curricular experiences that will begin to add substance to your career profile. This Rudyard Kipling couplet from *The Just So Stories* (1902) is an easy way to remember how to navigate for career success:

*I keep six honest serving men (They taught me all I knew)
Their names are what and why and when and how and where and
who.*

- **Why.** Why do you want to be a _____? Knowing your goals and values will help you pursue your career with passion and an understanding of what motivates you. Never say “because I’m a people person” or “because I like to work with people.” Sooner or later, most people have to work with people. And your interviewer has heard this much too often.
- **Who.** Network with people who can help you find out what you want to be. Someone will always know someone else for you to talk to.
- **How.** Have the technical and communications skills required to work effectively. Become a computer whiz. Learn how to do PowerPoint presentations or improve your PowerPoint skills. Take a speech course. Work on improving your writing. More than likely, your future job will require many or all of these skills.
- **What.** Be aware of the opportunities an employer presents, as well as such unforeseen occurrences as relocation overseas. Know what training you will need to remain in your chosen profession.
- **Where.** Know the points of entry into the field. For example, you can obtain on-the-job experiences through internships, co-ops, service learning, or part-time jobs.
- **When.** Know how early you need to start looking. Find out if certain professions hire at certain times of the year.

Connecting Careers and Majors

Once you have explored your interests, you can begin to connect them to academic majors. If you're still not sure, take the advice of Patrick Combs, author

of *Major in Success*, who recommends that you major in a subject that you are really passionate about. Most advisors or counselors would agree.

The reality is that most occupational fields do not require a specific major, and graduates have found a number of ways to use their majors.

Today English majors are designing Web pages, philosophy majors are developing logic codes for operating systems, and history majors are sales representatives and business managers. You do not have to major in science to gain admittance to medical school. Of course, you do have to take the required science and math courses, but medical schools seek applicants with diverse backgrounds.

Some fields do require specific degrees, such as nursing, accounting, engineering, and pharmacy, because certification in these fields is directly tied to a degree.

Exploring Your Interests

Dr. John Holland, a psychologist at Johns Hopkins University, has developed a number of tools and concepts that can help you organize your various interests, skills, and so forth, so that you can identify potential career choices.

Holland separates people into six general categories based on differences in their interests, skills, values, and personality characteristics—in short, their preferred approaches to life:¹

Realistic These practical doers exhibit competitive/assertive behavior, prefer situations involving action solutions rather than tasks involving verbal or interpersonal skills, and like to take a concrete approach to problem solving rather than rely on abstract theory.

Investigative These people value intellectual stimulation and intellectual achievement and prefer to think rather than to act, to organize and understand rather than to persuade.

Artistic These people value self-expression and relations with others through artistic expression and are also emotionally expressive. They dislike structure, preferring tasks involving personal or physical skills.

Social These people value helping others and making a contribution to society. They satisfy their needs in one-to-one or small group interaction using strong speaking skills to teach, counsel, or advise.

¹ Adapted from John L. Holland, *Self-Directed Search Manual* (Psychological Assessment Resources: 1985). Copyright 1985 by PAR, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

Enterprising These people value prestige, power, and status and are more inclined than other types to pursue it. They use verbal skills to supervise, lead, direct, and persuade rather than to support or guide.

Conventional These people value order, structure, prestige, and status and possess a high degree of self-control. They are not opposed to rules and regulations. They are skilled in organizing, planning, and scheduling.

Holland's system organizes career fields into the same six categories. Here are a few examples:

Realistic Agricultural engineer, electrical contractor, industrial arts teacher, navy officer, fitness director, package engineer, electronics technician, computer graphics technician

Investigative Urban planner, chemical engineer, bacteriologist, flight engineer, genealogist, laboratory technician, marine scientist, nuclear medical technologist, obstetrician, quality control technician, computer programmer, environmentalist, physician, college professor

Artistic Architect, film editor/director, actor, cartoonist, interior decorator, fashion model, graphic communications specialist, journalist, editor, orchestra leader, public relations specialist, sculptor, media specialist, librarian, reporter

Social Nurse, teacher, social worker, genetic counselor, marriage counselor, rehabilitation counselor, school superintendent, geriatric specialist, insurance claims specialist, minister, travel agent, guidance counselor, convention planner

Enterprising Banker, city manager, FBI agent, health administrator, judge, labor arbitrator, salary and wage administrator, insurance salesperson, sales engineer, lawyer, sales representative, marketing specialist

Conventional Accountant, statistician, census enumerator, data processor, hospital administrator, insurance administrator, office manager, underwriter, auditor, personnel specialist, database manager, abstractor/indexer.

Holland's model can help you address the problem of career choice in two ways. First, you can begin to identify many career fields that are consistent with what you know about yourself. Once you've identified potential fields, you can use the career library at your college to get more information about those fields, such as daily activities for specific jobs, interests and abilities required, preparation required for entry, working conditions, salary and benefits, and employment outlook.

Second, you can begin to identify the harmony or conflicts in your career choices. Never feel you have to make a decision simply on the results of one assessment. Take time to talk your interests over with a career counselor.

Another helpful approach is to shadow an individual in the occupation that interests you. Ask your career center for help.

Starting Your Career-Planning Program

The process of making a career choice begins with:

- Understanding your values and motivations
- Identifying your interests
- Linking your personality and learning styles to those interests
- Using this information to decide on an appropriate academic major
- Researching possible occupations that match your skills, your interests, and your academic major
- Building on your strengths and developing your weaker skills
- Preparing a marketing strategy that sells you as a valued member of a professional team
- Writing a convincing résumé and cover letter.

Steps in the Job Hunt

Your search for a career should begin early in college. Here are some things you can do:

- Get a job. Even a part-time job will develop your skills and may help you make decisions about what you like—and what you don't—in a work environment.
- Register with your college's online job listing system to find listings for part- and full-time, internship, co-op, and seasonal employment.
- Find on-campus interviewing opportunities for internships in your early years and for full-time employment as a senior.
- Network with family, friends, instructors, friends of family, and acquaintances to find contacts in your field(s) of interest so that you can learn more about those areas.
- Volunteer! This can help you explore careers and get some experience in an area that interests you as you help others.
- Conduct occupational and industrial research for your field or area of geographic interest. Explore career options through informational interviews (interviewing to find out about a career), job shadowing (arranging to observe someone as he or she works), and service learning (see pages 194–195).
- Prepare a draft of your résumé and have it critiqued by your career counselor and perhaps by a professional in your chosen field.

- Get involved in clubs and organizations; work toward leadership positions.
- Explore overseas study possibilities to gain a global perspective and learn a foreign language.
- Attend career fairs to connect with employers for internships and other career-related opportunities as well as to develop a professional network.
- Attend your campus's annual job fair to see what is being offered.
- Talk to a career counselor about your skills, aptitudes, and interests. Find out what the career center offers.²

Some Career Do's and Don'ts

As you start examining your aspirations and interests, keep in mind these simple do's and don'ts:

Do's

1. Do explore a number of career possibilities and academic majors.
2. Do get involved through volunteer work, study abroad, and student organizations—especially those linked to your major.
3. Do follow your passion. Learn what you love to do, and go for it.

Don'ts

1. Don't just focus on a major and blindly hope to get a career out of it. That's backward.
2. Don't be motivated primarily by external stimuli, such as salary, prestige, and perks. All the money in the world won't make you happy if you hate what you're doing every day.
3. Don't select a major just because it seems "cool."
4. Don't choose courses simply because your friend said they were easy.

Getting Experience

Your campus has a variety of activities and programs in which you can participate to confirm those interests, check your values, and gain valuable skills. Here are some examples.

² Used by permission of Career Passport, Michigan State University.

- **Volunteer.** Volunteering outside of class is a valuable way to encounter different life situations and to gain work knowledge in areas such as teaching, health services, counseling, and tax preparation.
- **Study abroad.** Take a course or spend an entire term taking classes in another country and learn about a different culture at the same time. Learn to adapt to new traditions and a different pace of life.
- **Internships and co-ops.** Many employers now expect these work experiences. They want to see that you have experience in the professional workplace and have gained an understanding of the skills and competencies necessary to succeed. Check with your academic department and career center on internships available in your major.
- **On-campus employment.** On-campus jobs may not provide as much income, yet this type of employment gives you a chance to practice good work habits. Some jobs have direct connections to employment. More important, on-campus employment brings you into contact with faculty and other academic professionals whom you can later consult as mentors or ask for references.
- **Student projects/competitions.** In many fields, students engage in competitions based on what they have learned in the classroom. In the process, they learn teamwork, communication, and applied problem-solving skills.
- **Research.** Work with a faculty member on a research project. Research extends your critical thinking skills and provides insight on a subject above and beyond your books and class notes.
- **Informational interviewing.** One way to learn more about a career is to talk directly with the people in it. By arranging to meet with people who could be your peers, as well as those who are doing the hiring, you'll learn more about job requirements.

Service Learning³

One of the most effective ways to explore careers is through a program called “service learning.” Service learning is a teaching method that combines meaningful service to the community with related classroom learning, all for academic credit.³

Serving. The service itself should address a genuine community need, as determined by existing or student-led community assessments.

³ For more information on service learning, go to the Web site of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation: <http://learningindeed.org/about/index.html>. Courtesy of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. Reprinted with permission.

Linking. The service project is designed to meet not only a real community need, but also classroom goals. Through service learning, students demonstrate to teachers what they are learning and how they are meeting specific academic standards.

Reflection and analysis. The teacher structures time and methods for students to reflect on and analyze their service experience. Through this process, students learn and understand the complexity of community issues. In addition, students understand how to view such issues in their broader social, political, and economic contexts.

Although a student may learn a lot through traditional community service, service learning does not leave such learning to chance. Instead, it surrounds the service experience with carefully designed reflection activities to help students prepare for, process, and pull together different aspects of their experience.

For many students, service learning means knowing not just about things but how to do them. It juxtaposes theories and ideas with concrete personal experience and, in doing so, helps students learn how to act on their knowledge and put theory to the test.

When you step outside the traditional role of knowledge “consumer” and become a knowledge “producer” in your own right, you will be taking a huge step toward becoming a “lifelong” learner—one who knows how to learn outside the bounds of a formal classroom.

YOUR PERSONAL JOURNAL

Here are a number of topics to write about. Choose one or more, or choose another topic related to this chapter.

1. What internal (feelings, emotions) and external (parents, peers) influences have affected your thoughts about majors and careers? How do you feel about those choices?
2. What other majors and/or careers have you been thinking about? Why do these appeal to you? If you're not considering other careers and majors, why are you dead set on the one you've chosen?
3. What factors are important to you in deciding on a major and a career?
4. What sort of service learning course would appeal to you? Why?
5. What behaviors are you willing to change after reading this chapter? How might you go about changing them?
6. What else is on your mind this week? If you wish to share it with your instructor, add it to this journal entry.

READINGS

The University of Social Justice*

Beyond community service, colleges educate for social change.

By Melissa Snarr

To borrow a term from social movement theory, universities can be “movement halfway houses” that educate leaders for social justice. Higher education institutions have trained and nurtured numerous social movements and activists that have changed our world. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which played a key role in the civil rights movement, came from a coalition of college students. Northern college students infused Freedom Summer’s voter registration drives. More recently, student networks have rapidly expanded protests of corporate globalization and the U.S. Army’s School of the Americas. Anti-sweatshop and living wage movements also are building momentum because of students.

These movements emerge, in part, because university faculty and staff are part of the conscientizing process of young people. Universities emphasize systemic analysis of social problems. They prize critical thinking skills. They encourage creative use of language and symbols. Combine these skills with higher education’s focus on developing leaders, and we can see the potential of the universities to produce multiple generations of justice seekers.

We find the summons in our institutions’ mission statements, the statements that no student, faculty, or staff ever really reads. But it’s there, the call to moral learning and social justice. At some schools, the commitment is explicit: “Loyola Marymount understands and declares its purpose to be: the encouragement of learning, the education of the whole person, the service of faith, and the promotion of justice.” At others, the call is embedded in an understanding of the proper use of knowledge: “Emory’s mission lies in two essential, interwoven purposes: through teaching, to help men and women fully develop their intellectual, aesthetic, and moral capacities; and, through the quest for new knowledge and public service, to improve human well-being.”

Universities experience enormous pressure to deliver a marketable product. But higher education is called to be more than a conduit for career-making. Our students are more than clients. Classically, education was meant for the

**Sojourners*, May-June 2003, v32, i3, p. 28(6). Reprinted with permission from Sojourners. 1-800-714-7474. www.sojournal.net.

whole person—for “full human flourishing.” As University of Chicago professor Martha Nussbaum notes, U.S. higher education has been devoted particularly to the “cultivation of the whole human being for the functions of citizenship and life generally.” At the core, universities are more than service providers with privileged clients. We are moral actors shaping the character and justice of society.

But educating change agents for social justice is not the same as encouraging increased volunteerism on campus, which is embraced much more easily by institutions and a broad political spectrum. As community service hours are required by many high schools for graduation, students arrive at college open to giving time to “those less fortunate.” In fact, the Higher Education Research Center’s most recent freshmen survey reported that 84 percent of students had volunteered in the last year.

At the same time, only 4 percent of college students have ever given time or money to a political organization. Less than 15 percent of voters under the age of 25 voted in the last election. The civic engagement of many young adults today is decidedly local, short-term, and apolitical (although the recent burst of antiwar organizing seems an important exception).

These statistics introduce a contrast between the approaches to “service” and “moral learning” that are embedded in our universities. As Keith Morton, director of the Feinstein Institute for Public Service at Providence College has noted, most of the service programs in our universities focus on “understanding the ‘other’ and, in so doing, reshaping one’s self-identity.” In order to sensitize students to difference and the need for social cooperation, short-term service programs often focus on what service means for the student and his or her character formation. Volunteer activities thus center on charitable activities and/or temporary relationships that ameliorate immediate needs. The goal for student development is to realize the necessity and richness of a character based on giving and caring for the other.

While this “personal development” approach to service is worthwhile, the model also misses things. Big things. Absent are historical, economic, and political analyses that help students understand how social issues are structured in a specific community, in a specific place, at a specific time. Absent are social justice lenses that challenge students to understand social arrangements and how social change occurs. Absent is an emphasis on political engagement as a key activity for those who care about people and communities.

Making the connection between personal development and social justice models is not easy for many universities and students. College students are in a developmental stage that focuses on interpersonal relationships and learning. Thus tracking how bank loans affect economic development in southwest Atlanta is not always seen as meaningful service. Students flock in droves to

reading and tutoring programs in local elementary schools. But few of those students can articulate how property taxes impact school resources—and even fewer will ever vote in a local school board election.

Negotiating the threshold from interpersonal learning to structural analysis is one of the core challenges for moral learning in the university. The “service learning” movement within higher education has offered several avenues for making these connections.

First, the teaching process of many courses is shifting in higher education. Service learning models encourage many professors to pair in-class time with hands-on fieldwork. A student might work in a local addiction clinic while she studies, in class, the social and economic influences on drug use. Deep reflection on the practice in the clinic helps both student and professor change the way classes are taught and texts are read.

Second, service learning approaches to education also change the content of academic courses. Several universities are now creating programs focused on community building and social change. Here the focus is on reading across multiple disciplines to understand the strengths and needs of communities. Community development literature is read next to economic and social theory, ethics, and environmental studies. The collaborative nature of intellectual development in the classroom, matched with the hands-on nature of group projects, forces students beyond individualized models of social change.

Universities that nurture change agents are those that bring together the personal and the political. They break through cycles of remedial charity and systematically address preventative justice. Or as my college mentor often bellowed, they call us to be “poverty warriors,” not just poverty companions.

RELATED ARTICLE: THE COMMON GOOD

Exploring Social Change on the Stage, Street, and Classroom

The University of San Francisco, whose motto is “Educating Minds and Hearts to Change the World,” challenges students to put both intellect and motivations to work for the common good. For example, in USF’s year-long, residential Erasmus Project, sophomores devote five hours a week to community action. Projects range from the library (researching fair trade coffee for Global Exchange) to the street (serving breakfast to day laborers and collecting their stories). The day laborers’ stories will be passed on, as the basis of a possible play, to students in USF’s Performing Arts and Social Justice major.

Guadalupe Chavez, an Erasmus alumna earning a master’s degree at USF’s Center for Teaching Excellence and Social Justice, finds in her alma mater the kind of education she wants to give her future students: “I think politics and education go well together—I don’t think it can be any other way.” Nor is she waiting for graduation to start educating others. Her Peace and Justice Studies minor requires fieldwork; hers was to help eighth graders in San

Francisco's Mission District form a social justice club, in which students talk about everything from local gangs and sweatshops to the prospect of war in Iraq.

Combating College-Grad Stress Syndrome*

Despite the dismal job outlook . . . these tips could make the search less daunting.

By Susannah Chen

For college seniors, the next two semesters should be the best part of college—a well-deserved chance for some R&R before going out into the real world. But it's that foray into the real world that has prospective graduates viewing the next nine months as a countdown to doomsday, as many of them could graduate without a job.

Unemployment has been on the rise since 2001, and experts can't agree when the picture will brighten. [In spring 2003] U.S. companies said they wouldn't be hiring any more grads than they did in 2002, according to data from the National Association of Colleges & Employers.

The shrinking job market has affected parents, too, who may be hard pressed to support their unemployed college grads. "Before, students had a safety net called mom and dad," says Patricia Rose, director of Career Services at the University of Pennsylvania. "Now, that net isn't as broad and deep."

BEYOND PEP TALKS

More than ever, soon-to-be graduates are relying on their universities to help them find jobs. While many schools are sticking to tried-and-true job-search techniques like résumé workshops and on-campus recruiting, others are supplementing these methods.

Like most schools, Claremont McKenna College has long counted on alumni and trustees to help new grads, but lately it has also been exploring an underused network of parents with students still in school. "Parents of other current students have an affinity for the college and might find interest in [those] who are graduating from the college," says Jefferson Huang, dean of students at Claremont McKenna.

Another way schools are helping students is by offering counseling that goes beyond the standard pep talk. Jerry Houser of Caltech's Career Development Center says students who are anxious about the job search might

**BusinessWeek Online*, September 8, 2003. Copyright 2003 The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

procrastinate, which can then make their anxiety worse. He tells them to start looking early and stick with it, likening his role to being more like a parent than a counselor. “You’d think students would get more active because of the fear and the uncertainty,” he says. “They actually hide or get less active.”

Here are several specific tips to help get students started.

Talk to companies, whether or not they’re hiring:

Says Claremont McKenna’s Huang: “Even if they’re not recruiting today, we want to keep the relationship there so when they do pick up—which they will—they’ll come back to us shortly. We’re cultivating relationships.” It’s just as important for individuals to nurture relationships. It will give you a leg up when there are job openings.

Professional associations—like the National Society of Accountants or the National Social Science Assn.—provide newcomers with a wealth of resources to explore uncharted territory. These groups also offer discounted memberships to students and hold special events dedicated to industry newbies. “It gives students an automatic network,” says Micael Kemp at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

And students looking to develop a relationship beyond the superficial will find help in a number of organizations that offer mentoring programs pairing neophytes with seasoned pros. “Mentors can help guide [students] into entry-level positions,” Kemp points out.

Add Mom and Dad to your networking list:

Yes, you thought you would be savoring your imminent independence, not looking to your parents for more help. But even if they aren’t in a position to float you through a prolonged bout of unemployment, they can help you in other ways. Fred Pollack, author of *The College Senior’s Survival Guide to Corporate America*, advises parents to assist their kids in building networks by asking around at work or having graduating seniors come into their workplace and observe, even if no jobs are available.

Your folks could also pitch in by taking over some of the administrative duties that come with the job search. “You only have a window of time [during the day] when you can call companies,” Pollack says. “You can utilize time by talking to people while someone else is helping with email or running to the post office [for you].”

Keep an open mind:

University of Pennsylvania’s Rose encourages her students to “look a little more broadly in the field or find similar opportunities in other fields.” Students looking into Wall Street–type jobs should consider investment management in addition to investment banking.

Be willing to work for free:

With entry-level positions scarce and companies working with reduced staff, many organizations need help. They just can't pay much for it. "Develop an internship proposal," says Shonool Malik, the assistant director at the MIT Careers Office. By studying up on the company's needs and industry trends, you'll be well prepared to sell yourself, and they'll be pleasantly surprised by your initiative.

Be honest about what you're looking for:

If you talk to someone about doing an internship, don't confuse the issue by asking for a job. Same with an informational interview. Advises Caltech's Houser: "Ask them who they know. Tell them you're interested in their career." That interest often leads to secondary referrals and invites to get-togethers.

Don't use grad school as a fallback:

An internship, a temp job, or even a position in retail will help pay off student loans while buying you time to plan your next move. Don't incur more debt for a degree you're not sure you want—or need for your professional pursuits. "Use that period to start making decisions about what field attracts you and what you want to stay away from," says Kemp. "You're better off getting someone to pay you to work it out."

If you start at the bottom, there's no place else to go but up:

If you do get an offer, don't automatically reject it if it isn't quite as high-paying or glamorous as you would have hoped. After all, even famed Hewlett-Packard (HPQ) CEO Carly Fiorina started her career as a secretary one summer at the company she now runs. [Update: Fiorina stepped down as HP's CEO in early February 2005.]

DISCUSSION

1. When students are asked what they most want out of a college education, the most commonly reported answer is "to get a good job." Engage a group of fellow students in a discussion about what this statement means to each of you. How is your decision to attend college related to your career goals? What thoughts has this chapter stimulated in you about college and careers?
2. Share with fellow students what kinds of knowledge and skills you want to bring to the new knowledge-based economy. As you listen to your fellow students do the same, reflect upon the knowledge and skills you possess

- now versus those you want to acquire during college. Contrast yours with those reported by your fellow students and let them inspire you!
3. The article “The University of Social Justice” contrasts the idea of the college experience as vocational preparation versus one that prepares students to go forth and invest their energies, at least in part, in creating some greater order of social justice. Do you see any connections between your personal development and the more idealistic notion of achieving social justice? How might some college activities help develop your career skills as well as your obligation to society? Compare your thoughts with those of other students.
 4. Much can and will change by the time you finish college and begin looking for employment. Nevertheless, consider whether you might adopt any of the suggestions offered in the article “Combating College-Grad Stress Syndrome” now, even though you are still in your first year. Given the importance of “getting a good job” to most college students, it’s never too early to start thinking about how to apply what you are learning and doing now to that eventual goal.