

Job-seekers say — Let the hunt begin

Graduating students have many resources to help them find employment

BY SUZANNE BRAEBECK
The Battalion

Although graduation looms near for some seniors and is around the corner for thousands of other undergraduates anxious to be former students, the prospect of pounding the pavement for a job sounds less inviting than college life.

Finding a career is intimidating for some people, but there are many campus resources available to aid exiting students.

Mary Ann Raatz, assistant to the dean in the Dwight E. Look College of Engineering and director of the Engineer-

ing Scholars program, said there are three tips to obtaining a good job.

"One — make as good of grades as possible; two — participate in a co-op or internship program; and three — your resumé should show good leadership skills; such as officer positions in one or two clubs," she said.

Karen Rupp, a career-services coordinator in the Lowry-Mays College of Business, said companies now expect students to have co-op or internship experience. "[Interning] is a good way to test-drive your career and obtain work experience," she said.

Rupp said for some students who approach graduation with a less-than-desirable grade-point ratio, emergency tactics may be needed.

Rupp said students should not take just one approach to their job search.

"Students should use the career service, which is an excellent resource, but they should also use their personal and Aggie networks," Rupp said. "We also have directories available that have all of the companies listed that are registered with the Career Center."

Raatz interviewing well is very important, especially for students with grades on either end of the spectrum. For those students with low grades, it can take attention away from a poor academic record; for students with extremely high grades, it shows they can work well with people.

"You need to have a very good interview," Raatz said. "You need to know a lot about the company you are interviewing with. You should know the statistics of the company, the number of offices they have and where they are, how the company is set up and the hierarchy system the company uses."

Raatz said once a student locates a job, he or she should then research the company to determine how compatible employer and employee.

"If you have a lot of job offers, then do your homework on how the company treats its employees five to

10 years down the road," Raatz said. "You should look at not just your initial salary, but how often and how much raises are and if you get new assignments or stuck in a position."

Nancy Alvarez, a senior sociology major, said while there are many networking and educational opportunities for students, some seniors find time a critical element lacking in their schedules.

"The hardest thing about looking for a job is that it is a very time-consuming process," Alvarez said. "I don't have a large amount of time to conduct a job search."

Rupp said students should plan on spending 10 hours a week job-searching, although there will be peak times.

"Students will need to spend extra time before their interviews to research their prospective companies," Rupp said.

Alvarez said balancing academics, social lives and job searches can prove to be a challenge but are all integral to having a good senior year.

"I have registered at the Career Center and have started telling friends back home that I am graduating soon," Alvarez said. "It's expected that you will have a job when you graduate to prove that your time at A&M was worth something."

Students who are low on time can use the comfort of their home to jump start their search.

Rupp said the Career Center Website (<http://aggienet.tamu.edu/cctr/>) has links to Websites that have job postings from former students. Club Websites are based out of cities, such as the Dallas Club or Houston Clubs.

For those students who act late and need to conduct their own job searches, the Career Center hosts independent job-search workshops.

"However, registering with the Career Center every semester during the first week of classes can be very beneficial," Rupp said. "Last year close to 31,000 interviews were conducted on campus."

Rupp said the Career Center also has started a new program called the Career Service Coordinators, which provides specific services to students in academic colleges. Each college has its own coordinator with a bachelor's degree or experience in that particular college's job market.

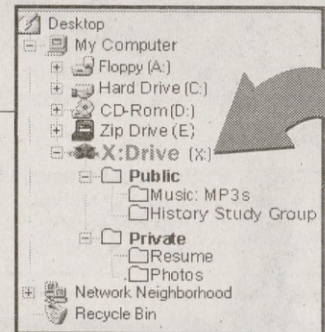
Rupp said this gives students more individualized and firsthand knowledge from people familiar with their fields.



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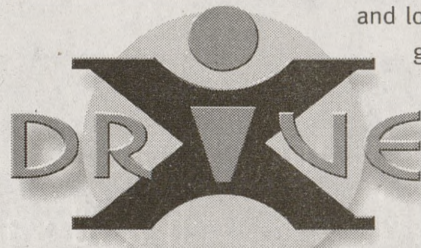
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