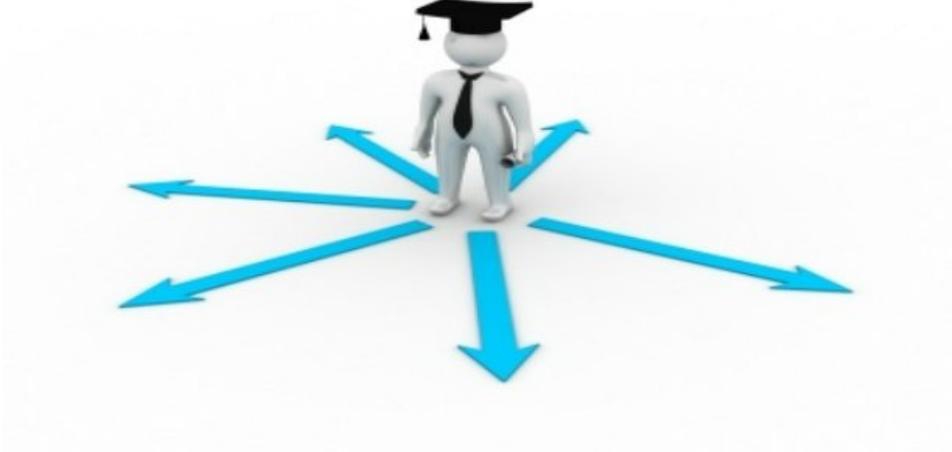


THE TRANSITION FROM COLLEGE TO THE REAL WORLD CAN BE SIMPLE



Summary: Working a full-time job is a different experience from attending classes each day but the transition can be simple by taking a few key steps.

Transitioning from college life to career life can be stressful and complicated. Graduates and employers are not ashamed to say that college courses and mentors **do not appropriately prepare** or teach students how to prepare for real jobs. The key to making the transition easier is being ready before you graduate and get thrown into the real world.

Learn to network before you graduate from college. Proper networking is more than just sending out emails and hoping for free advice back. You need to offer something in return. If you are asking for advice from professors, you can volunteer to help them with any projects they are working on. You gain experience and they gain much needed help.

Apply to smaller companies if you realize your degree isn't exactly what you want to do. Maybe you are graduating with an English degree but would rather work in the **journalism industry**. Searching out smaller newspapers instead of The New York Times will give you a much better chance to get an interview and explain your change of heart in person.

Find a realtor or other housing specialist to find your apartment especially if you are moving to a big city. They will know of any deals that apartments are offering that aren't advertised on the Internet. If you need a roommate, LinkedIn has groups just for this reason.

When you finally get a 9 to 5 job, you quickly learn that you no longer have time to get all your errands done. Everything gets bumped to the weekends and before you know it, you are back at work again on Monday and never got a chance to sit back and relax. Keep Sundays free from any scheduled events. Use the day to do what you want, when you want.

Create a look for yourself that portrays who you are working to become. If you are striving to be the mature businesswoman, then add dress suits to your closet when you can afford them. If you are a budding **graphic designer**, your look may include more artistic pieces. Just remember to keep your look professional.

Never compare your situation to someone else. Your experience and skills are different so where you start will be too. Take one step at a time and don't be afraid to retrace steps as the need arises.

Photo: www.ncwd-youth.info