

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO START YOUR JOB SEARCH

Summary: What can you do to start your job search even before you graduate from school? Find out in this article.



Question: I'm a 19-year-old sophomore majoring in Psychology at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, LA. What can I do with a degree in this field? What are my chances of landing a high-paying job?

Answer: Here's the good news and the bad news: your long-term prospects are excellent for moving ahead in a career and holding positions that pay well, but getting your foot in the door will be a challenge.

As a sophomore, you're in a great position to begin laying a foundation that will make your first job search easier. Assess your interests and talents to discover the types of careers that you're drawn to. These may be psychology-related careers, but if earning potential is a key consideration, you may decide to head toward sales or information systems.

Research job possibilities in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' "Occupational Outlook Handbook." This guide provides a comprehensive overview of a multitude of jobs with information on salary, work environment, and necessary qualifications. Check the classified section of your local newspaper, and search online job postings to increase your exposure to potential opportunities. Also, review CounselingCrossing.com for articles relevant to the field.

Decide what type of environment you'd like to work in. Are you interested in business, social services or higher education? Would you prefer to work with adults, troubled teenagers or children? Do you prefer a structured environment or an unstructured one, a large organization or a small one? This type of questioning should help you narrow your focus, but don't force yourself to narrow too quickly. Gain as much experience as possible while you are still in school. Seek out co-ops, internships and work-study opportunities in the areas that you are leaning toward. You can also use these experiences to build a network that you can tap after graduation.

Use your university's career center and alumni office to assist in your research. Talking to alumni about their career decisions, and exploring possible internships should help now as you define your interests and later when you begin to network for job opportunities.

See [Stop Making Excuses for Yourself and Start Your Job Search](#) for more information.