



FOUR GOALS FOR SUMMER EMPLOYMENT

Because college is extremely expensive, finding work during the summer is a priority for students today. If the student attends a community college, the money earned from **summer employment** may go toward paying for significant portion of their tuition and books. The expense of attending a four-year college, either public or private, can be much higher. Summer earnings may only cover a small portion of the total cost. However, paying as much as possible when enrolled is always preferable to coming out of college with a larger debt than necessary. Other students are more interested in gaining experience in their chosen field of work than in earning money. They initially limit their summer job search to employers that meet their requirements. If they are successful, their summer job will give them some real-world work experience that directly relates to the work they will seek after graduation. In that case, success on the job may lead to full-time work in their field after graduation, often with the same employer. However, students should have four goals for their summer jobs:

1. Learn something new
2. Grow by accepting responsibility
3. Contribute to the goals of the organization
4. Build relationships with the people at work

Learn Something Students should view their summer job as an opportunity to learn something new. The job may provide the opportunity to operate computers and equipment, write, speak, negotiate, sell, purchase, supervise, work with job-related technology, and to generally meet the needs and expectations of a supervisor. They will begin to learn about life skills such as deadlines, quality, money, people, problem-solving, and goals. **Accept Responsibility** If a student is willing to accept responsibility, and thereby show his or her supervisor that he or she is reliable, he or she becomes more valuable to that organization. When people know that they can count on an employee to get something done, meet the deadline or prevent a problem, that employee gains respect from others, builds trust, and adds value. **Contribute** The best employees have a clear understanding of organizational goals, and do their best to see that those goals are met or exceeded. They actively look for ways to make something better, are willing to help other employees, contribute ideas, exhibit creativity in problem-solving situations; they work hard to improve productivity, quality and customer service. **Build Relationships** Building good relationships with the people who work within the company should be a goal of every employee. Summer employees who can be trusted, do a good job, help other employees, are good listeners and take the time to get to know needs and wants of other people lay the groundwork for building solid relationships. People who like and trust one another are more likely to work well as a team and find enjoyment in their work. They may someday help the students who worked in summer positions to find jobs after graduation, or serve as enthusiastic references. Summer employment should be viewed not only as a job where students can earn some money for college, but also as opportunities to demonstrate their capabilities and gain the experiences that can impress future employers and graduate schools. If students achieve these four goals, they are likely to lay the groundwork for future **employment opportunities**.

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