

Family Guide to Career Development



Center for Career &
Professional Development
at Roger Williams University



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THE CENTER FOR CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



WHO WE ARE

The Center for Career & Professional Development provides resources and connections for students to achieve life-long success. We challenge students to ask themselves: *Who am I? What do I want to do? How will I get there?* To help students formulate answers to these questions, the CCPD offers the following services:

- ✓ Individual Career Advising
- ✓ Self-Assessments
- ✓ Resume and Cover Letter Assistance
- ✓ Guidance in the Internship Search
- ✓ Externships
- ✓ Mock Interviews
- ✓ Job Search Skills
- ✓ Job Offer Negotiation
- ✓ Graduate School Preparation
- ✓ Alumni Career Advising
- ✓ Career Planning Seminars
- ✓ Career Fairs
- ✓ Career Weeks
- ✓ Industry Focused Networking Events
- ✓ Free Business Cards
- ✓ Free Printing on Resume Paper

It is our hope that with the skills gained by using the Center for Career & Professional Development, all students who have completed a Roger Williams University undergraduate or graduate degree will possess the confidence, knowledge and skills to successfully navigate fulfilling careers.

SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENT'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Choosing a career path is a process students need to go through – and they go through the stages of this process at different rates of speed. Here are 10 ways that family members can support their student through this process:



1. Encourage your student to visit the Center for Career & Professional Development (CCPD)

Due to the competitive nature of the working world today, it is important that students begin thinking about their career development as soon as they arrive to campus. Ask your student, “Have you visited the CCPD?” If you hear, “You only go there when you are a senior and have a career in mind,” then it is time to remind your student that the CCPD is not just for upperclassmen. Meeting with a career advisor can occur at any point in their college career and should take place frequently. The sooner a student becomes familiar with the staff, resources, and programs, the better prepared they will be to make wise career decisions.

2. Advise your student to write a resume early

Writing a resume can be a reality check for some students and can help identify areas that require improvement. Suggest your student get industry specific resume building resources from the Center for Career & Professional Development for the most up-to-date ways to highlight their skills and impress employers. You may review resume drafts for grammar, spelling and content, but it is highly recommended that the final product be reviewed by a career advisor.

3. Challenge your student to become “occupationally literate”

Ask your student the question: “How do you plan to use your degree after graduation?” If your student seems unsure, you may consider talking about personal qualities you see as talents and strengths. You may also recommend:

- Taking a self-assessment
- Speaking with faculty
- Researching a variety of interesting career fields and employers using the source O*Net Online

A career decision should be a process and not a one-time, last-minute event.

4. Allow your student to make the decision

Myth: A student must major in something “practical” or marketable.

Truth: Students should leverage their skills and interests.

Myth: Picking your major means picking the career you will have forever.

Truth: “Major” does not necessarily mean “career.” It is not unusual for a student to change majors after gaining more information about specific areas of study and career fields of interest. Many students end up doing something very different than originally planned. In fact, studies show that students on average will change jobs three times in five years after graduation.

Career development can be stressful. It’s okay to make suggestions about majors and career fields, but let your student be the ultimate judge of what’s best. This may be the first really big decision that your student has had to make. Be patient, sympathetic and understanding, even if you do not agree with your student’s decisions.

5. Emphasize the importance of internships

While the CCPD will support your student in their job search, we do not “place” your student in a job at graduation. As such, having relevant experience in this competitive job market is crucial. Your student can sample career options by completing internships and experimenting with summer employment opportunities or volunteer work. Why intern?

- Employers are seeking communication, problem-solving, administrative skills, which can be developed through internships.
- Employers look for experience on a student’s resume and often hire from within their own internship programs.
- Having a high GPA is not enough.
- A strong recommendation from an internship supervisor can often tip the scale of an important interview in their favor.
- Internships can confirm the field is the best fit for the student.

6. Encourage extracurricular involvement

Part of experiencing college life is to be involved and active outside the classroom. Interpersonal, leadership and time management skills – qualities valued by future employers – are often developed in extracurricular activities.

7. Recommend that your student stay up-to-date with current events

Employers will expect students to know what is happening around them, sometimes asking students about current events and industry trends during the interview process. Consider buying your student a subscription to the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal. When your student is on break, discuss major world and business issues.

8. Expose your student to the world of work

Explain to your student what you do for a living and consider taking them to your workplace. Help expand their network by connecting them with your colleagues for informational interviews.

9. Stress the value of networking

Introduce your student to people who have the careers/jobs that are of interest to them. Suggest that your student contact people in your personal and professional networks for information on their career paths, what they could be doing now to prepare for entering the workforce, and potential summer jobs or internship opportunities. Encourage your student to “shadow” someone in the workplace to increase awareness of interesting career fields.



10. SUPPORT THE CENTER FOR CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Roger Connection

A CCPD initiative, *The Roger Connection*, is comprised of various volunteer opportunities for parents to engage students in as they explore their interests, hone their skills and navigate the world of work.

Ways to Get Involved:

- **Mentorship:**
Serve as a field/topic expert to students interested in transitioning into your industry or profession. Network with RWU alumni, parents, and students via the online *Roger Connection* portal. Volunteer to help others via skills development, career search assistance, graduate school discussion, etc.
- **Job Shadows:**
Host a student for a experience in your workplace. Offer in-depth insight into job and life demands of a career. Hosts invite student(s) to a business meeting, company tour, or session with other colleagues.
- **Externships:**
Host students for an experience in your workplace. Offer in-depth insight into job and life demands of a career. Provide a onsite workplace opportunity for the student to learn about your company, potential careers, and meet with colleagues.
- **Industry Site Visit Host:**
Host a group of students at your business site to learn about your company, career opportunities, or to gain job preparation advice. Coordinate logistics of the visit with the CCPD, including any on-site experiences; consider offering a venue for presentation, meal or both.
- **On-Campus Recruiting:**
Work with the CCPD to post jobs and/or internships via Hawks Hunt, receive student resumes, and identify recruitment days/times on campus (or virtually upon request). Participate in recruiting events such as Career Fairs.
- **On-Campus Engagement:**
Attend Networking and/or Industry Nights to engage with students and the RWU community about your company/position/field of expertise.
- **Employer Champions Program:**
Promote your business to the RWU community by sponsoring a CCPD initiative or event and receive recognition for sponsorship. Annual contribution is dependent upon the level of engagement desired.



The CCPD is the primary hub for supporting students' career and professional development during their time at Roger Williams University and beyond. Many opportunities exist for parents to take part in that process and support the success of their student.