

Career Chronicles

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Are You Thinking of Applying to Graduate School?

Applying to graduate schools can be a very taxing process, yet of course, very rewarding. The following article documents Kelly Toppmeyer's journey through graduate school application.

My graduate school process began last spring as I started searching possible schools that offered my required degree. My undergraduate degree was in psychology with a business certificate. I was searching for industrial/organizational psychology and human resources programs. This was a very time consuming stage as I collected information on websites, called and talked to the faculty, staff, and graduate students about the program, and compared the program to all the others I was considering. I also compared the course curriculums to see which schools would be most compatible with my interests. After heavily researching schools, I compiled a list of ten schools that I would be interested in attending (Yes, ten!). I chose about four that I would just absolutely love to attend, three that were rated second best, and three that would be acceptable for me.

After compiling my list, I contacted the schools and asked them to send me an application packet. Some schools requested me to submit my application on-line. At this time I was already registered to take the GRE, which I took the summer before my senior year. After collecting all the applications, I made a timetable of due dates and requirements for each school. For example, DePaul University had a January 31st deadline. At this date they needed to have my application, personal statement, GRE scores, letters of recommendation, transcript, resume, and financial aid information. I did this for each school and began writing my personal statement in the fall. The personal statement is a crucial part of your appli-

cation. Therefore, it is a good idea to have several people read it before sending it to a school. Letters of recommendation are also paramount, so it is important to contact references early in the fall so they have plenty of time to write you a satisfactory recommendation (Remember that they have to write ten letters, too). I found it easiest to give my references a due date list for every school with an address of where they were to send each application. Remember to have them sign the seal of the envelope in order to ensure confidentiality.

I would also encourage students to take a lighter class load during the fall of your senior year if you are planning on applying for graduate school. I treated the application process just as if I were taking a class titled "Applying for Grad School." I worked on my graduate applications about five to seven hours each week until I successfully finished each application. It is also important to maintain contact with someone at the university while you are in the process of applying. It shows the university you are interested. I suggest having your final application packet at the school at least a week before the due date. This allowed me time to call the school and check to see if any material was missing. For example, one school had not received my GRE scores. I was able to fax them my confirmation GRE scores since I did not wait until the last minute.

This process can be long and discouraging, but if you worked hard as an undergraduate maintaining your GPA and beefing up your resume, you can expect exciting results in the spring. My only dilemma now is choosing which school I want to attend!

Graduate Survey Serves Graduates and Current Students Alike

Attention graduating Seniors!

The Graduate Follow-Up Survey assists Career Services in compiling data which will be useful for alumni as well as current students in researching employment opportunities. Your responses will also provide valuable information as we assess the current services we offer, so that we may continue to expand our services and to provide those services

which you find most beneficial. If you are graduating in May 2003, please take a few moments to fill out the survey located at the following web address:

http://www.slu.edu/services/cc/graduate_followup_survey.html. Please contact our office with any questions at 314.977.2828.

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Shedding Some **Light** on Resume Creation

It is a common disadvantage among many applicants in the various fields and disciplines of the world. Trying to best represent and market one's self with a dry or duty-heavy resume can lead to problems, or, if nothing else, a rather inefficient career search. Kevin Donlin, President of Guaranteed Resumes, offers a significant suggestion to curb some of the lack-of-excitement found in many resumes. As Donlin explains, "if your resume is like most, it is probably heavy on duties and responsibilities—the things you do every day. It is probably light on achievements and results." Results *excite* employers, while responsibilities show you are qualified. While this might be an easy task for someone out of college who has work experience, someone in college can also benefit from this suggestion. According to Donlin, "You can include reference to scholarships you've won, volunteer fundraising, in-



ternships— any good things you've done that prove you have the skills to do your next job." For example, if you volunteered at a hospital,

do not simply include those tasks you expedited while there. Include the effects you had on the position over the duration of your volunteering. If you find yourself stuck trying to augment your resume with achievements, try adding, "As a result..." to the end of your duties and see what you come up with. Donlin offers the following example that might apply to an internship you have been or will be participating:

Before: "Performed research and cost effective purchasing of fire-fighting equipment."

After: "Researched 13 vendors, negotiated pricing and purchased fire-fighting equipment. As a result, saved \$124,000 versus 2001 expenditures."

-Brent Cutro

website wonderland

Counseling Center Village

This site includes a large listing of links and online resources for school and college counselors. With opportunities to share information, network and benefit from the rich offering of resources, this site is a must-see for all career counselors. Visit the Web site:

<http://ub-counseling.buffalo.edu/ccv.html>

International Career Development Library

This site provides a comprehensive collection of resources for career professionals. There's a wide range of material available here, from the easily accessible to the highly technical. Visit the Web site:

<http://icdl.uncg.edu/>