Exploring Career Ideas

Not sure what jobs would suit you? Try using Career Planners

Career planners aim to help you identify what your interests, strengths and motivations are:

- **Target Jobs** – Matches you to jobs using simple tests and questionnaires that assess your career strengths, personality and abilities: [http://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-report](http://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-report)
- **Prospects Planner** – Identifies jobs based on your skills, motivations and desires: [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/myprospects_planner_login.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/myprospects_planner_login.htm)

Gain an understanding of occupational areas, job sectors and specific graduate employers

**Where to look for it:**

**Prospects:**  
www.prospects.ac.uk/types_of_jobs.htm  
www.prospects.ac.uk/sectors.htm

**Target Jobs:**  
http://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions  
http://targetjobs.co.uk/career-sectors

**Inside Careers:**  
www.insidecareers.co.uk/professions/

**All About Careers:**  
www.allaboutcareers.com/careers

**Professional Bodies/Associations/Societies:**

Some careers have active professional bodies, associations and societies. They work to serve the interests of the profession and the public. Professional bodies give you access to salary information, diverse training routes and reliable insight including where vacancies are advertised.

In some professions it is compulsory to be a member of the professional body, in others it is not.

**Where to find them:**  
www.totalprofessions.com/profession-finder

**How to use them:**
1. Subscribe as a student member (N.B. some employers will sponsor your membership)
2. Obtain a list of member companies
3. Visit website for details of events and vacancies
4. Talk to regional representatives
5. Attend seminars and conferences
6. Participate on subcommittees and working groups
7. Contribute to newsletter or magazine

**What to look for:**
1. Nature of the work
2. Salary, benefits and working conditions
3. Entry requirements, training/education
4. Career progression
5. Employers and vacancy sources
6. Related jobs

**Listen to:**

After you have learned about an occupation, hear about it from people who are currently working, or have worked, in the field.

10 minutes with:  
www.10minuteswith.com/interviews
Short video-interviews with influential business and technology leaders, discussing different jobs, sectors and geographies.

**Icould career videos:**  
http://icould.com/watch-career-videos/  
Watch/listen to people telling their personal career stories. First hand accounts of what it’s like to work in a wide variety of jobs and sectors, and share their real-life routes to their current roles.

**Careers box:**  
www.careersbox.co.uk/  
Free online library of careers related film, news and information. Case study films show real people doing real jobs, providing insights into careers across all sectors.
Using LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professional business forum for social networking where professionals can network with each other. It also acts as an on-line CV and is a way to recruit and search for a job.

Build and complete a LinkedIn profile to supplement your CV as part of your job searching strategy.

When employers search for you on-line it's no longer enough to have a solid CV; students now need a professional on-line presence.

Building a Strong Personal Profile

**Use a professional photo** – consider what you are wearing, a plain background, an excellent first impression. Do not post photos with friends, at social events or cartoons.

**Experience** – use wider experiences as well as paid periods of employment; any voluntary work, part-time work or experience where you have contributed, worked as a team or organised events add value.

**Add a headline** – a statement of what you are currently doing or looking for and possibly your career goals. If you do not have a current position do not just put ‘student’ and don't leave it blank. A good example is “History Student/Student ambassador seeking work in HR”. If you apply for jobs be aware that you need to customise this to the job you are applying for, to highlight the most relevant skills you have for that position.

**Create a summary that markets your skills to employers** – similar to a personal statement on a CV, the difference is ‘keywords’. Keywords are words that are picked up by the LinkedIn search engine when employers are searching for candidates. Do not put skills on here that you do not have. Consider what skills are required for the positions you are applying for.

**Get recommendations** – recommendations are a great way to show potential employers what others think of you. Don't be afraid to ask your lecturer, part-time work boss, volunteering colleagues or freelance associates for recommendations. When asking for recommendations try and personalise your message and always be polite and personable.

Research Careers and Jobs

**Research Jobs/Sectors/Industries of interest** – search a word of interest using LinkedIn's search facility. e.g. ‘Journalist' or ‘Marketing’. The search results will show profiles containing these keywords. When you have found individuals that show a career path of interest, look at their previous experience, how they got to where they are now and research the groups they are members of.

**Join groups** – get an insight into key influencers and decision makers’ opinions, find news items, event announcements and discussions.

**Target companies** – find companies in your sector by using LinkedIn's company search facility. Use the filter to select location, company size and industry.

**Search for Vacancies** – look for internships and graduate jobs.

**Research companies and individuals inside organisations** – identify and follow key decision makers and influencers inside companies who may also have corporate blogs or Twitter accounts to follow.
Using LinkedIn

**Connecting with People**

**Who you know** – friends, family, lecturers, fellow students and any people you have contacts with through employment. Upload your contacts by adding connections, and select the people who you think may be worth connecting with.

**Groups** – if you are just about to graduate, connect with the University Alumni LinkedIn group and any other relevant industry groups.

**Face to face** – follow up encounters and meetings with employers and professionals with an invite to connect on LinkedIn.

**Be polite and courteous** – do not just add people, a personalised message is always the best way to connect. Be honest, personable and polite about why you would like to connect.

**Preparing for Interviews**

**Company culture** – research company ethos, mission statements and business trends. Also use external sites such as Twitter, Google and blogs to research further.

**Industry news in the company you are applying to** – join relevant groups, outline current trends, issues and up to date company information. This should not replace research on the company website.

**CV vs LinkedIn**

A CV is a record of achievement, and as such it’s a static reflective document. A LinkedIn profile is different, it’s an active document that can be regularly revised as we add status updates, receive and provide recommendations and interact with others.

- Your online profile provides a platform for recommendations. Recommendations display your professional endorsements and enhance your reputation. The people who recommend you can be powerful advocates for you and your strengths providing a much higher level of trust.

- You still need a CV as a career overview and introduction to employers, recruiters, network contacts and to signpost employers to your LinkedIn profile. But it’s not always CV first, LinkedIn second. Many times you can be found on LinkedIn first and your CV will only be read if the reader likes what they see online.

**Top Tips**

- Write in the first person, not the third; include insight into your personality and character, not just what you have done; emphasise key words and accomplishments.

- Include key words throughout your profile. For example, ‘copy writing’ or ‘social media’.

- Take account of your company’s confidentiality policy, and do not include any confidential details. If currently in work don’t tick the looking for job opportunities box, you will still be found, don’t make it obvious you are looking.

- Aim for five to eight recommendations but get as many as you can; it’s far more effective to have other people write a recommendation than you talk about how good you are.

- Improve your visibility by asking questions, providing answers and joining relevant groups.

- Join groups related to your background and desired goal so you can identify relevant jobs.

- Include a link to your LinkedIn profile on your CV and email signature to encourage people to find out more about you.

- Make sure your online footprint is consistent across different social media platforms.