GET CONNECTED AND EXPLORE

ALIGN YOUR SKILLS, VALUES AND GOALS WITH THE RIGHT EMPLOYER

Research employers before you apply:
• Organizational mission, vision, values, and culture
• Size and location of employer and service area
• Employer resources and benefits offered

Evaluate employer information along with your own self-knowledge:
• Does their mission reflect my own values?
• What training and professional development opportunities are offered?
• What industries, employer size, and environment are most appealing?

Sources for Finding Information
• CSUSM Career Center website, Handshake, Cougar Connect: www.csusm.edu/careers
• Employer websites
• Professional association websites
• Networking and informational interviews
• LinkedIn and social media
• Career fairs

GAIN RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Job candidates with relevant experience are viewed more favorably by employers.

Experience can take many forms:
• Part-time or full-time employment
• Internships (contact the Office of Internships: www.csusm.edu/internships)
• Volunteer, service learning or leadership experience
• Course-based projects or personal projects
• Find a mentor on Cougar Connect: www.csusm.peoplegrove.com

Benefits to Gaining Experience:
• Apply theory to practice, and acquire new skills
• Explore and make decisions about future career options
• Build your network of connections and potential references

Strategies for Success:
• Establish clear objectives with your supervisor
• Learn the organizational culture
• Document your new skills, projects, and responsibilities in your resume and online platforms such as LinkedIn or Handshake

Professional Associations
• Membership in professional associations is typically open to students with similar professional interests and goals (such as biotechnology, social work, human resources or journalism)
• Students can often join at reduced rates or for free
• Professional association websites include information about relevant jobs, graduate programs, and networking events
• Professional groups offer a great opportunity to connect with people already working in your field