College to Career

Steps you can take to smooth your transition!

In College:

✓ Form Good Habits
  o Creating good habits while in college will help you in the long run when it comes time to
    enter the work force. Be punctual to your classes and other commitments and complete
    assignments on time. As you inch closer to getting a full-time job, it will also help to get used to
    getting up earlier.

✓ Gain Professional Experience
  o Through jobs, internships and volunteering you can gain valuable experience and professional
    development at the same time. Entering the work force with this knowledge will not only help
    you to transition from college easier but will also help you stand out as a job applicant.

✓ Create a Professional Network
  o While you’re gaining professional experience, take advantage of the professional relationships
    you’re fostering and create your professional network. You can also expand your network
    outside of this by going to Career Fairs, utilizing LinkedIn, informational interviews and by
    talking to WWU alumni through Ask!

✓ Meet With a Career Counselor
  o Utilize the Career Services Center! You can meet with a Career Counselor at beginning of your
    time here at Western and up for 6 months after your graduate for free!

✓ Invest in a Planner
  o Time management is key in college, and doing this now will teach you how to effectively
    manage your time for the rest of your life. The bookstore has a wide selection for a small price.
    Head there and get yourself one!

✓ Learn to Manage Your Finances
  o Finances may seem scary at first, but learning to manage them in college will give you a
    jumpstart in learning how to manage your money once you have a job. View “The Dollars and
    “Sense” of Your College Degree” on the CSC’s website for helpful tips and forms.

✓ Take Care of Yourself
  o Manage your stress levels and always remember to take care of yourself in a positive manner.
    Whether that be hanging out with friends, going on a run, or reading a book, always remember to
    take time for yourself and do things that fill you up.

✓ Begin Your Job Search Early
  o It’s never too early start looking for a job, especially if graduation is right around the corner, and
    you can always meet with a Career Counselor to get started. Utilize the CSC website by looking
    at Job Search Tips from Alumni, the Employment Survey, Viking Career Link, and the job
    search engines for specific careers. Remember to also take advantage of your network and to
    attend Career Fairs.

✓ Have Realistic Expectations
  o Don’t be discouraged when you don’t get your dream job right after graduation. Oftentimes
    college grads will start in entry-level positions and work their way up.
In Your Career:

✓ Start From the Bottom
  o As stated above, you will more than likely start at an entry-level job after graduation. But with more experience will come higher positions. Choosing to continue your education will also help you to climb up the work ladder.

✓ Go to Work Each Day as if it’s Your First Day
  o Go to your job each day with a positive attitude, a strong work ethic, and a willingness to contribute and be a part of a team. This will not only make work more enjoyable, but will also gain you some attention from your superiors.

✓ Dress to Impress
  o Always dress up to your company’s standards, which can vary depending upon where you work. Ensure this by asking about the company dress code and by observing other employees’ attire. Be prepared to possibly expand your wardrobe!

✓ Learn to Manage Your Time Differently
  o You will more than likely work 5 days a week from 8AM-5PM, although this can vary depending upon your place of work. This will be a big change from a school schedule and may take some time to adjust to it. Just remember that you will have free time outside of work and no more homework!

✓ Ask Questions
  o If you are faced with a challenge or a problem at work and don’t know how to handle it, don’t guess. Ask another coworker or your boss what the right or typical way to go about it would be. This not only shows your willingness to learn but also your ability to be vulnerable.

✓ Always be Professional
  o Who were once your peers and classmates are now your colleagues and who were once your professors are now your bosses. Recognize that these are different kinds of relationships and should be fostered in a professional manner.

✓ Continue Learning Outside of Work
  o Although there is no more homework, continue to expand your mind with knowledge, whether it is work related or not. Now is the time to indulge is something you’ve always wanted to learn more about!

✓ Master the Art of Money
  o Life outside of college comes with a lot more financial pressures. Stay on top of your expenses, your income, your savings and any financial plans you may now have that comes with a job to stay out of money troubles.

✓ Focus on Teamwork
  o Having a career is much more team-based as compared to the individual emphasis you had while in school. Embrace teamwork and always contribute!

✓ Engage in Self-Care
  o Never forget to take care of yourself!