



Now is the time to begin your job or internship search and career exploration activities for the semester break. This extended period is an excellent time to investigate career opportunities, build your network, and line up interviews. The following are general suggestions for constructively using the semester break for job searching. **Please work with Career Services staff to develop a personalized job search plan.**

- ◇ Identify the geographic area(s) you would like to investigate for job possibilities.
- ◇ Networking is the most effective job search strategy. Be sure to tap our Skidmore *Career Network* [www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/network.htm](http://www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/network.htm). This password protected database provides access to Skidmore alumni and parents who have volunteered to respond to your career development and job search questions. It may be searched by name, employer, career field, and geographic area. Meet with advisors over the break.
- ◇ If you rushed the writing of your resume because you were busy during the semester or you've changed your career focus, take the time to perfect it and/or develop specialized versions of your resume for different career targets. If you're just getting started, use our **Resume & Cover Letter Writing Guide** [www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/Resume&CoverLetterGuide.pdf](http://www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/Resume&CoverLetterGuide.pdf) or our online resume building wizard, **Optimal Resume** [skidmore.optimalresume.com/index.php](http://skidmore.optimalresume.com/index.php).
- ◇ Check to see if a career/job fair will be running in your area during the semester break. Programs like the **Career and Internship Connections (CIC)** [www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/cic.htm](http://www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/cic.htm) will take place in cities across the country during winter break, allowing you to network with employers from lots of industries and submit your resume for internship and job leads. Some college/university sponsored career fairs, like the early January New Jersey Collegiate Career Day (the largest recruitment program in NJ), are open to all interested college students. This can be a great way to tap a large number of employers at once. For a list of fairs throughout the year, "real" and virtual, visit our **Job Fairs** link at [www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/jobfair.htm](http://www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/jobfair.htm).
- ◇ Identify job leads and apply now to arrange job interviews or informational interviews during the break. Start with resources such as **Entry Level Jobs** <http://www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/entry.htm>, **Jobs by Field** [www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/field.htm](http://www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/field.htm) and **Job Resources by Region** [www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/region.htm](http://www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/region.htm).
- ◇ Use holiday socializing as a time to add to your network of contacts for advice and leads. Talk about your career interests when you attend family gatherings. Include a note with holiday greeting cards indicating that you're looking for some help with your job hunt. Be specific about the kind of assistance you would like.
- ◇ Use the break to initiate a prospecting campaign. Identify organizations to contact by using criteria such as geographic location, product specialties, occupations available, financial status, and size of firm as screening factors. Write prospecting letters that highlight your skills, interests, and experiences that are most relevant to your target organizations and jobs. Address letters to specific people in these organizations (find names and titles with resources such as **CareerSearch** [www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/careersearch.htm](http://www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/careersearch.htm)). People who supervise departments of interest are usually best to contact (i.e., vice presidents, department managers, and area supervisors). Use college recruiters and human resources/personnel offices if you are unable to utilize these direct contacts.
- ◇ Do detailed research on priority job targets. Researching these organizations will make it easier to write specially tailored cover letters, and to handle interviews more effectively. Visit their web pages, review articles in journals and trade publications, and speak to Career Advisors. Utilize our online research tools at [www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/comp.htm](http://www.skidmore.edu/administration/career/comp.htm), and ask public and university reference librarians for more tips.
- ◇ You may be welcomed to visit your local college's career services library to research career fields of interest and possibly even review local area job listings.
- ◇ Arrange a job shadowing experience. Typically this involves observing the work done by someone working in a field of interest. A job shadowing experience can last anywhere from one afternoon to four weeks. It is a great way to test out a career field or learn what its requirements are in order to market yourself more effectively. Utilize volunteers from the Skidmore *Career Network*, family contacts, and local employers as targets for this experience.