

Beverly Brewer Stark
Career Center

Spring 2009
NEWSLETTER

Career Center Info:

Location

Thomas D. Coats
Technology Complex Building 1
(Tech 1)

662-562-3954

Hours

M-F 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Appointments may be made for Career
Counseling, Assessments, Resume
Critiques, Mock Interviews, etc...

Staff

Kristin Watson
Career Counselor
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On your way to success...

Emily Post suggests that if you do the next 5 things with EVERYONE you meet, you will be on your way to success!

1. Look them in the eye.
2. Give a firm handshake.
3. Greet them, "How do you do?"
4. When saying your name, say it slowly and clearly.
5. Smile!

Northwest Mississippi Community College

The Career Connection

10 Essential Skills for New Grads

One of the most challenging periods in life is the transition from school to work. As one recent college grad put it: "For 21 years, I was supported by my parents, encouraged by my teachers and able to choose how I spent my free time. It's hard to get used to waking up at 6:30 a.m. every day to work for a boss who is obsessed with the bottom line and cares little about my self-esteem."

Mel Levine, M.D. and author of "Ready or Not, Here Life Comes," calls this transition period the "start-up years," and says it claims its share of unsuspecting victims.

"Many individuals in and around their 20s come to feel abandoned and anguished," he writes. "They start to question their own self-worth and are prone to make some awful mistakes in their choice of career or in the ways they perform as novices on the job."

It's an affliction Levine has named "work-life unreadiness." And he says it's quite normal for young people to feel ambushed by adulthood, because they lack practical skills, habits, behaviors, real-world insights and frames of mind pivotal to launching a career.

How can you avoid falling victim to work-life unreadiness? Start by examining your proficiency in 10 areas that Levine says are essential for successfully taking on the demands of a career:

Inside Insight

Do you know your strengths and weaknesses? Your interests,

passions and values? Be sure you are pursuing work for which you're suited.

Foresight

Do you know what your chosen career requires and entails? You must be able to anticipate, plan and prepare for a particular career or project within that career.

Self-Launching

Do you have the ambition, energy and optimism to start your career? You need to be able to motivate yourself, work independently and know how and when to take rational risks.

Comprehension

Are you able to decipher explicit and implicit job survival requirements? Don't expect your manager to spell everything out for you; you'll have to figure out much of what the job requires on your own.

Pattern Recognition

Are you able to discern recurring themes, precedents, rules and irregularities? Proficiency on the job depends on your ability to derive guidance from hindsight and use experience to predict the future.

Evaluative Thinking

Can you evaluate issues, opportunities, products and people? You need to know what and whom to believe.

Skill Building and Adaptation

Can you acquire, access and apply "hard" and "soft" skills in a versatile manner? Many of the skills you need on the job are not those you would have acquired in school -- be alert to

what capabilities you need to develop to succeed in your chosen occupation.

Work Efficiency

Are you able to harness and allocate mental energy, delay gratification, persevere and deploy efficient work and organizational habits? Employers value those who are dependable and generate a high level of efficient output.

Productive Thinking

Can you organize, prioritize and solve problems? Are you able to resolve conflicts and cope with stress? The workplace is often unpredictable. You need to be able to think and work in a constructive and creative manner.

Communication

Are you able to express yourself well both orally and in writing? To acquire credibility, you must be able to sell yourself and your ideas.

No one is perfect in all areas, but if you have a massive deficit in one or are sub-par in three or more, it could cause you problems. Developing yourself in these areas will help you achieve on the job; remembering there is light at the end of the tunnel will give you strength to persevere.

"Inevitably you will encounter ego bruises," Levine advises. "Look at these wounds as temporary setbacks; don't allow them to discourage your long-range plans."

Adapted from Careerbulder.com

Salaries You Thought Would Be Higher

Income isn't considered polite conversation for most Americans. We'll talk about our jobs, our families, the weather, the couple down the street who is obviously hiding something in that garage -- but not how much we earn.

In our culture, the more off-limits a topic is, the more it intrigues us. Unlike other taboo subjects, your neighbor's income isn't likely to keep you up at night with burning questions you must hear answered before you die.

Still, curiosity gets the best of us. Sometimes you hear somebody's occupation and wonder, "How in the world can you survive on that salary?" Or you hear another job title and day-dream about running through fields of money.

To keep you from breaking into your neighbor's home to take a peek at his or her checkbook, we've put together a list of occupations and the salaries that just might surprise you because they don't earn as much as you'd expect. It's not that these salaries are low; it's that when you take into account what these people go through, you'd probably expect to see bigger numbers on their pay stubs.

Fishers

What they do: The seafood we eat has to get on our plates somehow, and chances are you're not skilled enough to catch a swordfish or lobster. Fishers work to catch fish and various sea

life, which we not only eat but also use as bait.

What they earn: \$28,280/year

Why it's surprising: Being a fisher is tough, dangerous work. Not only are you subject to the whims of the day's weather, but you're also battling the mood of the water and the unpredictability of the fish -- all while avoiding collision with other boats.

Construction and maintenance painters

What they do: The fresh coat of paint you see on the walls of a home, in a store, on a bridge or on a building were applied by painters in the construction and maintenance industry.

What they earn: \$35,230/year

Why it's surprising: Painting often falls into one of two categories: bothersome or dangerous. Homeowners hire painters because they don't want to go through the trouble of taping down plastic to cover the floor, applying coat after coat until the walls are covered or having to balance on a ladder to get that hard-to-reach spot. Businesses and agencies hire painters because not just anyone can -- or is willing to -- paint a bridge or a building, which is way more involved than painting the four walls of your living room. For a task that many people loathe and that puts you in harm's way, more money sounds like a reasonable idea.

Court reporters

What they do: Court reporters transcribe what is said during trials, mediations and other legal proceedings.

What they earn: \$48,380/year

Why it's surprising: When you think about all the activity taking place during a trial, you probably think more about the excitement of a John Grisham novel than of the quiet observer meticulously writing down every word that's spoken aloud. Yet, court reporters play a vital role in several stages and types of legal proceedings. It's hard to imagine legal proceedings without the ability to refer to an accurate, detailed transcript. The salary isn't as high as you might expect for a job that requires extreme attention to detail in such important situations.

*Salary figures based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook.

Is Nursing Your Calling?

Overview

Nursing is the largest healthcare occupation today, with 2.3 million jobs. A passion for healthcare and a compassionate nature are crucial for this field. Registered nurses work to promote health, prevent disease and care for ill or injured patients. Many nurses work directly with patients, observing and recording symptoms, assisting physicians, administering medicine and assisting in rehabilitation. RNs also put together nursing care plans and instruct patients and their families in proper care.

Training and Education

All nursing students must graduate from an approved nursing program and pass a national licensing exam. Though diploma and two-year associate's degree programs exist for nurses, many employers prefer candidates with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Opportunities

Sixty percent of the 2.3 million RNs in America work in hospitals, though opportunities for nursing are as diverse as the patients being treated. The following are just a sampling of the areas nurses serve: *Hospitals* - The largest group of RNs are hospital nurses, who provide bedside care and carry out medical regimens. Hospital nurses usually specialize in one department - pediatrics, surgery, etc. - though some nurses rotate departments. *Offices/Clinics* - These high-profile nurses serve in doctors' offices, clinics, emergency medical centers and ambulatory centers.

Their duties include giving injections, dressing wounds, aiding examinations, assisting with minor surgery and maintaining records. *Nursing Care Facilities* - RNs in nursing care facilities monitor residents' health, supervise practical nurses/aids, perform invasive procedures (like administering IVs) and develop treatment plans. Some work in specialty departments, such as long-term rehabilitation centers for patients recovering from strokes. *Home Care* - Home health nurses work independently to provide care in patients' homes, assess the patients' home environments and provide instructions to patients and their families. *Public Health* - These nurses work in settings ranging from public clinics to schools. They help plan health programs, provide information and arrange for immunizations, testings and other health screenings. *Nurse Practitioners* - After undergoing additional training, nurse practitioners can diagnose, treat and prescribe medicine for common illnesses and injuries.

Pros and Cons of Nursing

The looming shortage of qualified nurses is expected to result in higher salaries for RNs. Some employers are already offering sign-on bonuses as high as \$14,000 to entice qualified candidates. Nurses can also enjoy increased job security and less fear of layoffs. The 24-hour nature of many hospitals and residential care facilities lends itself to flexibility in scheduling and the ability to work part-time, and many employers offer childcare, educational benefits and bonuses. The scarcity of nurses, however, can

lead to RNs being overworked and quickly becoming burned-out. Nurses must also be prepared to be on their feet most of the time, and take strict precautions against disease, radiation and accidental needle sticks.

Salary

Median earnings for nurses were \$48,090 in 2002. The middle 50 percent earned between \$40,140 and \$57,490. Nurses in employment services enjoyed the highest earnings, with a median of \$55,980. General medical and surgical hospital nurses earned \$49,190; home care nurses made \$45,890 and physicians' office nurses earned \$43,850.

Industry/Job Growth

Employment of registered nurses is expected to grow more than 27 percent -- faster than average for all occupations through 2012, with 623,000 new jobs added. Growth will be driven by technological advances in patient care, an increasing emphasis on preventative care and the aging of the baby boomer generation.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Making a Good First Impression
Monday, March 9 -3p.m.

Resumes
Wednesday, March 11 -3p.m.
Thursday, April 16 -3p.m.

Successful Interviewing
Thursday, March 12 -3p.m.
Thursday, April 23 -3p.m.

Please sign up for the workshops
by Emailing

dfreeze@northwestms.edu, calling
662-562-3402 or stopping
by the Career Center.

**Check out the job board
where employers have
postings for student
opportunities.**

Visit the NWCC Career Center! We want to help you in your academic and career decision-making process. We encourage students to take advantage of our computerized center where you can learn about careers and occupational environments that will be compatible with your interest, personality, values, and skills.

- We offer several career assessments to assist you in the exploration process. These include: the CHOICES Interest Profiler, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the Strong Interest Inventory, and the Self-Directed Search.
- You can research occupations and expand your awareness of emerging careers, job titles, salaries, and employment outlook.
- Find answers to your questions about building a resume, writing a cover letter, handling an upcoming interview, or informational interviewing.

Make an appointment with one of our career counselors for one-on-one assistance with choosing a major or career, or to figure out your next step in the career decision-making process.

4 Secrets to Career Fortune

How do some people fall into the job of their dreams even when they aren't looking for it? Why does it seem like everyone you know is gaining momentum in their career, while yours is stuck at a standstill? And why are you combing through job openings online when everyone else claims to be getting jobs based on the help of "someone they know"? You've asked yourself these questions a thousand times and found no answer. Like most people, you hope for the best in your career, but have no idea what it takes to succeed. The secret to having a rewarding career, however, isn't as mysterious as many may think. The truth is, all a person may need to do to get ahead in the world of work is become a better planner.

"It's easy to sit back and wait for a recruiter to knock down your door and welcome you to your dream job, but this will definitely not happen. The fact is, you have to roll up your sleeves and get to work to develop the specific career goals that will make up your career

plan," says John Liptak, Ed.D., author of "Career Quizzes."

He adds that many people are reluctant to set goals or develop plans, because they're afraid of not following through or - worse -- failing.

"That's why it's important to remember that your goals should provide you with direction and motivation and that you can, and will, make changes as you encounter new situations and meet new people," Liptak says.

In his book, Liptak identifies four ways people can be more effective career planners. His advice includes:

Be active

- Do not rely on other people to make plans for you.
- Identify the career choices right for you, rather than accept others' suggestions or whatever job is available at the moment.

Get involved

- Discuss your career with family, friends and knowledgeable people as they relate

to your career interests.

- Learn more through career research, job shadows and informational interviews.

Make compromises

- Look for new opportunities and realistically appraise your career options.
- Understand that you will have to make some sacrifices, such as accepting a job that pays a hundred grand a year, but may come with only two weeks of paid vacation.

Set goals

- Use short-term goals as benchmarks to stay motivated toward reaching long-term goals.
- Review and revise goals to meet your current needs.

In today's fast-paced, competitive job market, possessing one or two of these qualities won't cut it. People must develop the entire package to stay ahead of their competition and prepare for sudden career changes -- good and bad.

Source: Selena Dehne, JIST Publishing featured on Career-builder.com