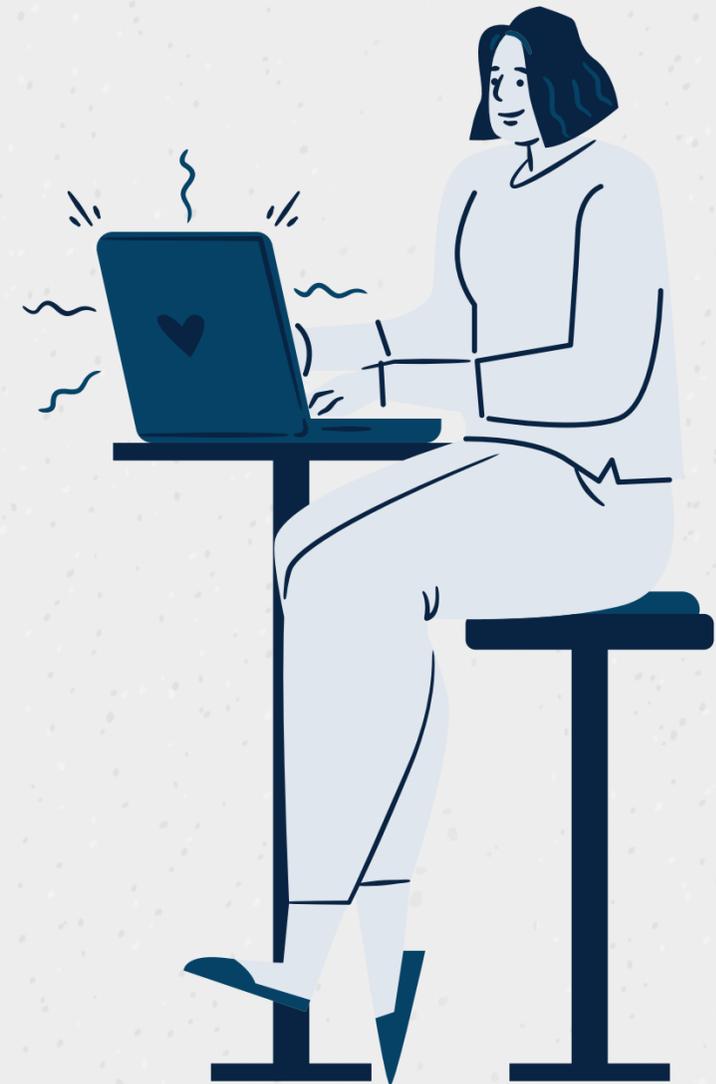


5 Ways to Use Your Summer to Upskill and Explore Careers



We're all in a time of uncertainty, but there are 5 steps you can take to move closer to figuring out and planning for your future!

Whether you're already planning on working a full or part-time job, or you're still figuring it all out, there are a lot of great ways for you to use whatever found time you have this summer to explore careers, build important skills, or create a portfolio.

Here are five actions you can take to build a bridge to your career!

1. Career Research and Upskilling

Now is the time to dig into the careers that interest you. This might start with a self-assessment, like [Career Explorer](#), or it might mean identifying the skills associated with roles that appeal to you. Once you have an idea for what kinds of skills would make you more competitive for a future internship or job, you can use your time to "upskill."



CAREER EXPLORER



CareerExplorer is an online self-assessment and career research tool made available to DePaul students and alumni by the Career Center. This unique resource allows users to explore how their values, interests, personality, and skills fit with over 700 potential career paths!

Why Do a Career Assessment?

Career assessments help you identify your personal strengths and weaknesses - as well as your interests and passions. Using these as reference points, you can map optional career paths that align with your goals and skills.

A unique part of this assessment is that CareerExplorer uses your answers to identify an “archetype,” which “represents the distilled essence of our members’ personalities....focused on the kinds of behavioral traits that affect people’s preferences for work, how they think, and how they work with one another.”

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How Do I Create an Account?

First, visit the CareerExplorer page: <https://www.careerexplorer.com/edu/depaui>

- Provide your first name, last name, and email address.
- Provide your school ID (7-Digit DePaul ID). This ID will be verify with your enrollment.
- Create a password with a minimum of 8 characters. Be sure to include numbers, symbols, uppercase and lowercase letters to make it a strong password.
- Select your major/ program and then select the Career Communities you are interested in.
- Add your graduation year.
- Click Finish to create your account!

Upskilling

How do I identify the skills I need to succeed in my intended path?

It's important to "track" the in-demand skills in your career interest areas as they evolve. One way to do that is to search recent internship and job postings and scan for skill-based keywords in the qualifications section.

Another way to track these skills is to use a new "Resume Optimizer" tool, created by a technology startup, that scans your resume, inventories your skills, and compares it to the skills found in real-time job postings!



skills.emsidata.com/resume

Once you've identified the skills you need to build there are many ways to upskill, including using free online resources like the ones on the right!

Online Resources for Upskilling!

- LinkedIn Learning*
- Professional Organizations
- Webinars
- Codecademy
- YouTube
- Coursera
- EdX
- Udemy
- Google
- Khan Academy

**DePaul students can log in to LinkedIn Learning for unlimited free access to a vast online library of instructional videos covering the latest software, creative, business, and technical skills.*

2. Leveraging Your Summer Job

If you're working this summer, keep in mind that many employers are open-minded about staff taking on new skill-based projects, shadowing other teams within the organization, or providing assistance with tasks outside of their current role's function.

Building new skills in an existing role can be a time-efficient way to get relevant experience. Plus, it builds your brand at work!

See our Build Relevant Experience in Any Job handout!

BUILD RELEVANT EXPERIENCE IN ANY JOB



Whether you're already in a full-time job in your intended career field—or you're making ends meet in a seemingly unrelated role—any job can provide resume-worthy skills and experience.



For some students who are working during their education, it can be challenging or even impossible to do a traditional internship. When this is your reality, keep in mind that almost any job can provide you with skills and responsibilities that strengthen your resume and professional capabilities. It starts with identifying the skills you would like to acquire and then seeking opportunities to practice those skills within your current job.

Why are transferable skills important?

Transferable skills are skills that you acquire in a particular experience (class project, job, volunteer role, etc.) that can "transfer" to a different role. These include skills like communication, critical thinking, multi-tasking, teamwork and others.

[See our transferable skills handout for more detail.](#)

FOR EXAMPLE...

If you have worked in retail sales, you likely have transferable skills in customer service, merchandising and teamwork! These skills stay with you as you transition into new and different roles. It's your responsibility to inventory your transferable skills and make sure you highlight or provide evidence of the relevant ones in any job or internship application.

3. Micro-Internships

Micro-internships are project-based or short term engagements designed to provide experience for a college student or recent graduate in a field of choice, sometimes remotely. These opportunities can be posted on job boards, like Parker Dewey (see callout), or they can be arranged by networking with employers or organizations.

What about a "make your own" internship?

Are you connected to any small businesses that might benefit from your skills? You can always use your contacts to offer to complete a project-based assignment for a business that needs a new website, some social media assistance, or whatever skill you might apply.



PARKER DEWEY

Parker Dewey connects students to paid project-based micro-internships that provide the opportunity to build skills and explore careers.

<http://info.parkerdewey.com/depaul>

4. Informational Interviews

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Informational interviews are a low-pressure, highly productive way to learn about a field, get career advice, build your network and hone your interviewing skills. Reach out! It's easy and fun.

Informational interviews are an opportunity for you to talk with professionals about their career path, profession, organization and industry. These conversations can take place via phone or email, but it's much more fruitful when conducted in person.

Follow these simple steps to get started:

Step 1

LOCATE THE PEOPLE YOU WANT TO MEET

Search for emerging, mid-career and established professionals in roles or organizations that interest you. Recent graduates that are emerging in their careers have first hand knowledge about existing pathways. Mid-level and advanced professionals have large networks and can share their views about how industries are changing.

- Definitely consider targeting DePaul alumni. They are often the most open to speaking with students and recent graduates of their alma mater.
- If you're still in school, DePaul faculty are an excellent place to start—ask your professors if they know of any contacts in your field of interest.
- DePaul's ASK (Alumni Sharing Knowledge) network and LinkedIn are excellent places to find professionals whose pathways align with your passions.
- Don't be afraid to be bold—is there a well-known person in your field of interest whose perspective would be helpful, interesting or inspiring? Reach out to them! You have nothing to lose and much to gain—the worst that could happen is you get a "no."

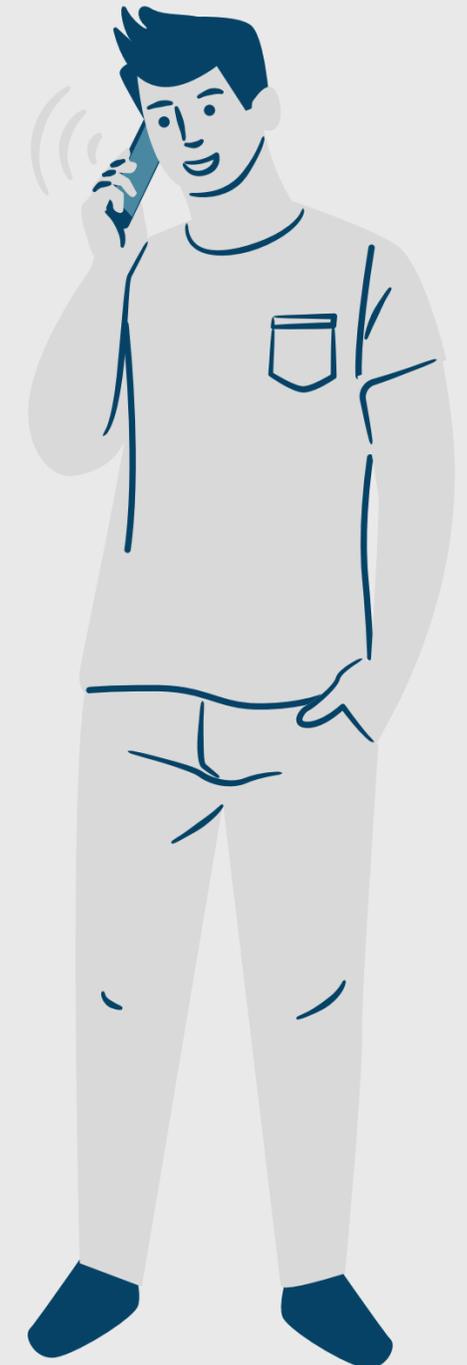
See our "Informational Interviews" handout!

Informational interviews can be an incredibly productive, no-pressure way to learn about a field, explore career paths, and build your network of contacts. They offer the opportunity for you to talk with professionals about their career path, profession, organization, and industry. These conversations can take place in-person, via phone, Zoom, or Google Hangout.

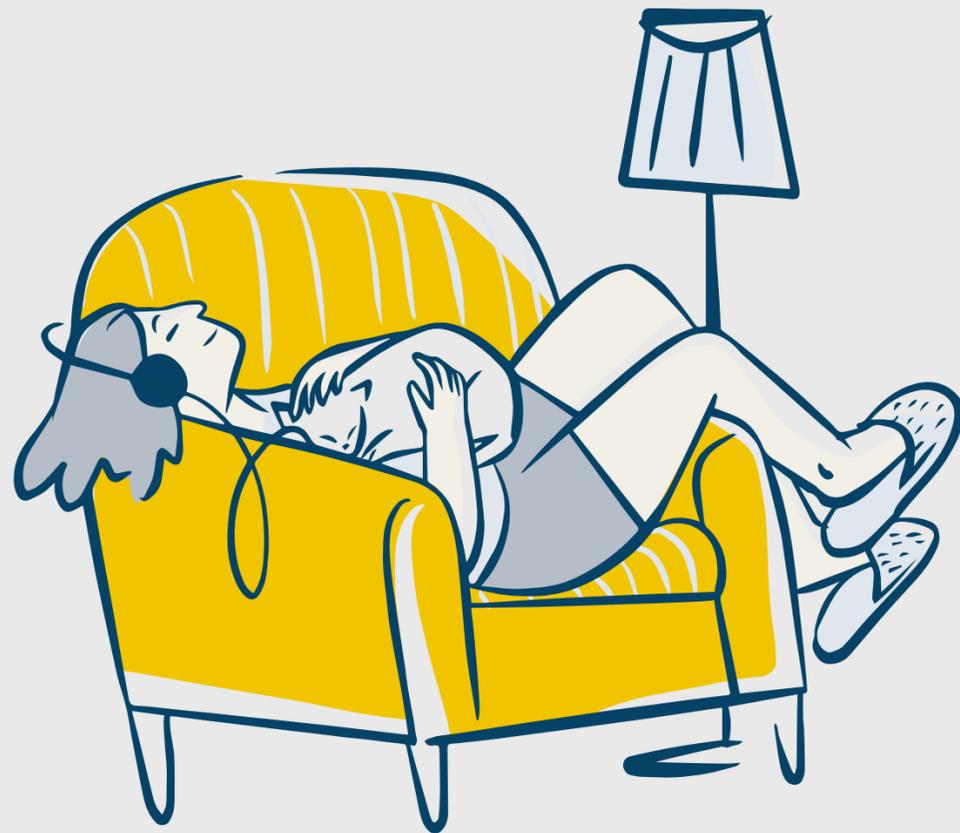
When searching for professionals to connect with, definitely consider targeting DePaul alumni. They are often the most open to speaking with students and recent graduates of their alma mater.

Places to Look

- LinkedIn
- Alumni Sharing Knowledge (ASK)
- Family/Friends
- Professional Orgs



5. Passion Projects and Volunteer Experience



Self-driven projects are a great way to build skills and add to your resume and portfolio! You might take on a creative project you've been thinking about for a while or offer a specific service to a community organization, like developing a logo for a non-profit. Tap into the things you care about or the communities you are a part of to generate project ideas. Keep yourself accountable and fuel your passions by collaborating or sharing your work on social media!

For example: *Interested in a music journalism career? Start a music blog and write album reviews!*

We are here for you!

Drop-in or schedule an appointment to meet with an advisor or coach!

Check out our 50+ handouts on career topics including resumes, networking, and career exploration.

We also just launched a page of COVID-specific career resources and tips.

