

# BUILD WORK EXPERIENCE



**I need relevant experience to get the job I want, but how do I get that experience?**

There are plenty of ways to build the experience you need for the job you want. If you're still in school, it can come from a part-time job, internships, job shadowing or other activities. If you're a recent grad or currently employed, you can broaden or bolster your experience by volunteering, freelancing and more.



## Part-Time Employment

A part-time job is a great way to build your skillset and gain resume-worthy experience without committing to one 40+ hour-per-week role. When looking to build relevant experience in your part-time job, start by identifying the skills you would like to acquire and then seek opportunities that will allow you to gain and practice those skills on the job.

## Internships

Internships are a defined-term position, usually in an academic quarter or summer, that provides professional experience for a student or trainee. You may be assigned to a specific project, work in a specific job role, or complete tasks as assigned day to day. Internships can be paid or unpaid, full- or part-time. Students can sometimes earn academic credit for the experience.

*Doing an unpaid internship?*

Check out university funding opportunities like **InternshipPlu\$**, a program that awards up to \$2,500 for any 100-hour-or-more unpaid internship.

## On-Campus Employment

An on-campus job allows you to gain career-relevant skills in a flexible environment. DePaul offers a wide variety of on-campus jobs, from help desk positions to office assistants and many more. You can enhance the career benefit of your on-campus job by taking the initiative to ask for specific projects, help solve problems, network with faculty and staff—all while building your personal brand. Find open positions at [studentemployment.depaul.edu](http://studentemployment.depaul.edu).

## 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 are rarely posted on job/internship boards. Instead, they're usually arranged by networking with employers.

## Academic Research or Field Study

Academic research or field studies broaden your experience and knowledge through research or hands-on work experience in a subject of interest. Often conducted working one-on-one with a faculty member or through a sponsor organization outside of the university.

## Volunteering

A great way to gain both practical experience and personal fulfillment—you can volunteer as an individual or as part of a group or organization. Whether directly related to your major or not, volunteer experience impresses employers.

## Leadership Development and Rotational Programs

These programs are typically created by companies to use as a talent pipeline. They hire interns or post-graduates and train them through rotational programs (i.e. rotating through different parts of a company) or specific, structured training programs. The goal is to recruit and develop leaders for their organization.

## Co-ops

Co-ops are traditionally full-time, temporary, paid positions open to recent graduates. Many employers use these programs to seek talent for full-time roles and they can range from 2–6 months or even a year.

## Job Shadowing

Job shadowing is defined as following a professional as they go through their workday to observe and learn—this can be a one-time/one-day experience or multiple days over a period of time.

## Freelancing/Contract/Gig roles

This is short-term, project-based or contract-based work. Freelancers are essentially self-employed, which offers a lot of flexibility in terms of where, how and whom to work with and for. Succeeding as a freelancer requires a smart approach to managing your time and money, especially as a student. Knowing how much your time is worth is KEY to being successful in this space.

## Student Involvement

Becoming involved on campus—in a student organization or other student-led group—is a great way to dive into campus culture and to gain career experiences and transferable skills—like event planning, fundraising, social media, collaboration, or leadership.

## Class Projects

Did you know that class projects can be customized to help you build and demonstrate job skills? When you get a new assignment, think about ways to make the task relevant to your career interests.