

The library is a job search research center

The library. The hallowed halls of dusty old books and antiseptic study cubes. Not exactly the most invigorating place in the world, is it? Or is it? I guess it depends on your definition of invigorating. But when it comes to job search, the library is research nirvana.

Enclosed within those walls are the consistently untapped job search resources that could contain your lead into the world of work. The library has a near-virtual lock on providing one thing and one thing very well: information. And for job search, the library is your job search information center.

If you're a stranger to the library or only make visits to stock up on 20 books to build your bibliography section for your latest research paper, now is the time to bring your relationship up to the next level. The library contains information on career research, companies, industries, associations, and most of all, jobs.

You'll be gathering a large amount of information in your library expedition, so it's important to have a system in place for capturing and utilizing this information. The simple mechanics behind using this information effectively is to develop a personal storage and retrieval system that works well for you in your job search.

The most basic system involves setting up a filing system whereby you store copies of information (it's always easier to put it down on the glass and clunk your coin than to scribe the info by hand) in manila folders labeled by topic, industry or by specific company. A particularly effective use of this "pure paper" system is to have an expandable folder or plastic filing case that you can carry with you. This allows for simple organization of the information, while making it immediately accessible and centrally located.

Another storage and retrieval system that provides greater uniformity (but a



greater amount of time in developing) is a simple paper database format, such as 3 x 5 cards or a job search notebook. The job search notebook can be large enough to accommodate copied information to be cut and pasted in. The greatest virtue of this type of system is consistency of format.

If you have access to a computer, especially if you have a laptop PC, you might consider organizing your information with database or personal information manager software. My recommendation is to use a PIM such as Maximizer, ACT!, or Lotus Organizer.

In addition, there are several products developed specifically for job search. Jobhunt software, developed by Scope International is one of the best. They can be reached at 704-535-0614. It gives you a jump start by including a pre-seeded database of over 6,000 companies in the database.

You can add any additional contacts you have generated through your network or personal research. In fact, I like the software so much that I included a free coupon in my book to provide a special edition copy of the software by mail for all who purchase the book. Jobhunt can also be purchased through most computer stores and bookstores.

As you begin your company research project, keep your objective clear in mind: to capture company information for later contact and follow-up. Don't capture information just for the sake of building a database.

This is not just a "feel good" activity designed to help you feel like you're accomplishing something. It is a practical, one-at-a-

See Library, pg. 8

Career Services links students and employers

BY MIKE PROCTOR
STAFF FEATURE WRITER

Ask the average full-time student what they want to do with their degree and more than likely the responses will range from "Work, I hope," to the classic "I don't know."

UNLV's Career Services Center tries to help students who are at a loss as to where to begin.

For the past seven years the center has offered students opportunities ranging from on-campus interviewing, and resume referrals to career counseling.

"We're not just here to bring companies in that are recruiting," explains Director Eileen McGarry. "We're also here to help students with strategy to approach the job market."

And a big part of that strategy is self-marketing. For some students, this is an obvious course of action to land that first post-graduate job. For others, though, marketing oneself may take some doing.

At the Career Services Center, that process begins with a new computer program known as Resume Expert. Students can enter their resume, a list of references, and standard registration information on a computer database, which is accessed by companies recruiting at UNLV.

For education majors, the database remains active for a maximum of 10 years. For all other majors, the information is active for up to two years.

In preparation for companies doing recruiting drives on campus, the center offers a library of companies and agencies ranging from Frito Lay to the CIA. It exists to help students avoid a common pet peeve among interviewers; lack of knowledge about the company itself.

"There may be this idea that 'I'm so valuable that I really don't need to know anything about you, you just need to know about me.' It doesn't work that way," said McGarry.

Another problem that interviewers commonly note is an applicant's lack of confidence and nervousness. To help students become better prepared, the center offers the option of dummy video taped interviews, in one of the center's 14 interviewing rooms.

For those lost souls confused about a major, thinking of changing a major, or just have no idea about which career

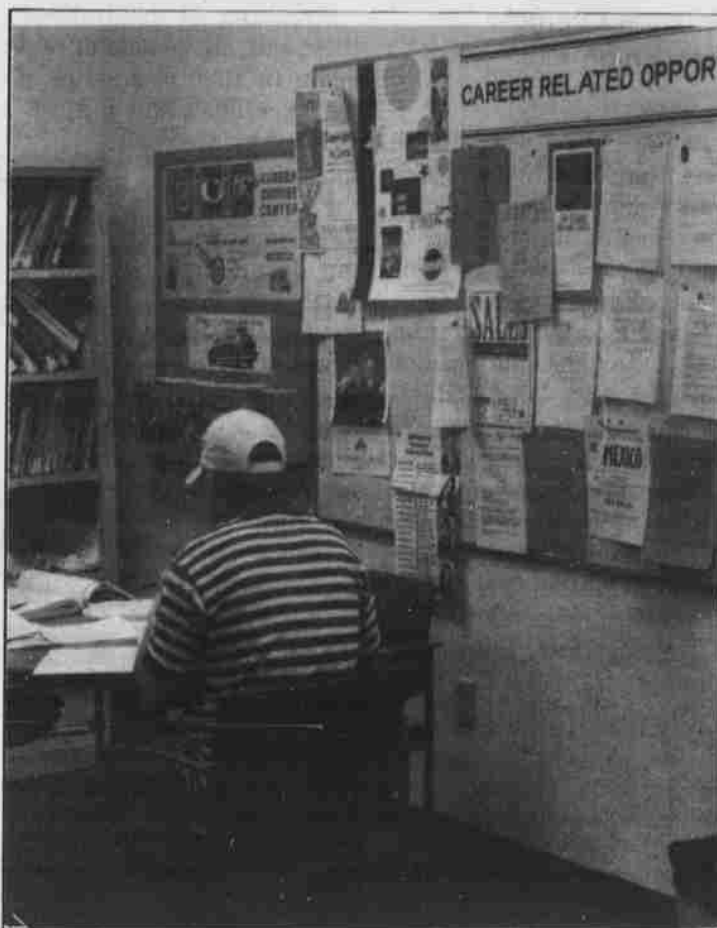


PHOTO BY VASNA WILSON

Research before submitting a resume can give you the edge.

path to pursue, counseling is available.

Counseling is offered through the traditional sit-down, one-on-one basis or by using a computer program called ZIGI. The program has 27 questions designed for self-assessment, ranging from values, to interests, to the type of activities the student would like to do during a normal work day.

McGarry said center staff act as liaisons between students and potential employers. One of the ways the center's success is measured, is how the center coordinates connecting students with the more than 300 companies it brings to the campus.

A fair amount of the jobs students find through career services are not always entry-level positions, McGarry said. Many of the jobs include a management training course, and most of the job offers include some type of training.

One of the center's aims is to target students that could benefit most from the services available. According to McGarry, liberal arts majors are the least likely student group to use the center's services as part of their job search.

Ironically, McGarry explained, employers typically perceive liberal arts majors as having good communication skills and a high level of problem-solving skills. Yet these students don't always explore the full potential of careers

available to them. McGarry adds that a degree in liberal arts does not always point towards a certain type of career. It is much broader in scope.

The other type of student that may have shortchanged themselves and could benefit from the Career Services Center, is one that McGarry describes as "under employed."

This is a student who may have dropped out, or even graduated, but took a job at a lower level than what their degree prepared them for. McGarry is sure these students would increase their career options by simply coming into the center and checking out what is available to them through the center's resources.

A shortage of staff in the Career Services Center has not helped the center to accomplish as much as it would like to. Since its opening only one additional full-time staff member has been added. There is a total of four full-time employees, three counselors, and graduate students.

McGarry notes that it is difficult to provide services the way she would like to for potentially 20,000 students when staffing is so sparse.

She intends to focus on her commitment to draw students to the center to take advantage of what it can offer, ensuring graduating students a shot at getting the kind of job they have invested four years and a lot of money into.

Fabulous Sputnik Man



BY NICK TIMINSKAS