



## Career Services Graduation Guide

### Employer and Career Services

April 2022

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## A Note to Graduates

Congratulations! Graduation is an exciting time in a student's life—one adventure is ending while another is about to begin. One important and influential part of that next adventure is your career, whatever that may be. Here at Employer and Career Services, we know that new NOVA grads may be a bit overwhelmed by the next big step. (And by the way, that feeling is *completely* normal!) To guide you on this next part of your career journey, our team has pulled together some helpful tips and resources. While this isn't an extensive list, it's a great starting point for students getting ready to graduate. Again, congratulations and good luck in your future!

## Career Tips for Graduates

As you prepare to graduate and move into your next chapter, we want to share **8 Career Tips for Recent Graduates**.

### (Always) Continue Learning

Just because you've graduated doesn't mean your education is over! Always look for ways to continue learning. Read and research daily. Become an expert in your chosen field. Pursue a career that fascinates you. After all, you'll devote a significant portion of your life to your career.

### Research Your Industry & Expand Your Network

As you begin your career journey, make sure to set realistic expectations about your specific industry and the workforce in general. Paying attention to the latest research on your industry is the best way to ensure that you're prepared to join the job market and launch your career. Nothing is guaranteed in the professional world, but reading about others' experiences can help point you in the right direction. Utilize social media, especially professional networking sites such as LinkedIn. Make connections with new colleagues, supervisors, and anyone else you feel you can learn from along your career journey.

### Have Realistic Expectations

Your first job out of college doesn't have to be (and probably won't be) your dream job or career, and that's okay! It's important to gain experience and skills.

### Find a Mentor

For recent grads, remember that it's normal to feel confused about what's next. Continue learning about various career paths and considering which options you might like to pursue. Identify mentors in your desired field (and even outside your field) to gain a broader perspective and seek advice from. Read about others' experiences and what they're doing as recent college graduates. There's so much you can learn from other people and their experiences, so don't be afraid to ask.

### Refine Your Online Presence

Now more than ever, employers rely on social media to give them information about a candidate. Take control of what information is available about you. Create industry-related blog or social media posts. Join relevant online communities, create a profile on networking

websites, and generally stay active online. Your online presence not only makes it easier for hiring personnel to get to know you, it also could make them feel more comfortable hiring you.

### Utilize Resources

While at NOVA, you enjoyed access to a wide range of resources to help get you started on your career journey. But guess what? Access to those resources doesn't end when you graduate! Continue to take advantage of [Career Connection](#), which is where the Career Services team posts jobs, internships, events, and more to support your career development. NOVA students enjoy access to Career Connection as alumni, so this can be a great job search and networking tool. You can also build a resume and complete a mock interview in Career Connection, which can be a huge help to recent graduates who are searching for jobs. Along with Career Connection, don't forget to check out our [Career Services YouTube Playlist](#) and [Career Services Website](#) for even more resources.

### Be Flexible in Your Career Plans

The best thing for recent grads to do is remain open and flexible. No one knows what the world will look like in one year or five. Everything is changing constantly, so if an opportunity of any kind comes your way, make the most of it. You don't know when the next one will come around, and if something bigger and better does come around, you will figure it out. If opportunities aren't landing on your plate, create them yourself.

### Give Yourself a Break

These have been some of the most challenging years of your lives...but you made it! The pressure to attain early success has never been higher, and failing to measure up to unrealistic expectations can leave you feeling crushed and insecure. Abandon the assumption that your identity is wrapped up in what you accomplish. Can't find a job in your chosen field? Instead of letting this paralyze you, use it as an opportunity to diversify your skill set. Be happy with whatever job you find, knowing that it can be a stepping-stone to something bigger and better in the future. Don't be afraid to make mistakes!