



Top Ten Ways to Set Yourself Apart

If you don't, someone else will!

What will your story be? Begin planning for life beyond high school now by considering the tips listed below that will enable you to launch your future career!

LEARN ABOUT PROFESSIONS YOU'RE CURIOUS ABOUT.

1 Always be pursuing workplace learning experiences such as job shadows and internships. These opportunities provide intangible skills and grow your professional network while helping you to uncover specific career interests.

BUILD YOUR RESUME & PAY ATTENTION TO THE DETAILS.

2 Multiple grammar and punctuation mistakes in a resume can disqualify you from an interview before you even say a word. Proof-read and edit every document provided to a potential employer, revising until it is grammatically correct.

RECONNECT WITH YOUR BEST PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS.

3 Who have you met that would be a great person to have as a friend or mentor? Students often meet individuals who are in a position to help them, but fail to stay connected with those people. Whether the individual is business professional, teacher, or anyone else in a position to offer career advice, reach out and connect with them this summer by email, phone, or in person.

STRENGTHEN YOUR SOFT SKILLS.

4 Soft skills refer to qualities such as good communication, professionalism, responsibility, adaptability, problem-solving, time management, and other personality traits possessed by quality employees. Many companies hold great value in those who display these qualities as they can directly affect the job performance of an employee.

VOLUNTEER.

5 Practice your soft skills by working for nonprofit organizations or volunteering in the community. Through volunteer work you will have opportunities to gain and apply soft skills while also giving you the perfect experience to add to your resume.

CLEARLY COMMUNICATE.

6 In any professional setting, consider what you are going to say before you say it to avoid misunderstandings and ensure that your statements won't be taken the wrong way.

BE POSITIVE.

7 A positive attitude in any situation not only draws others toward you, it shows those around you that you appreciate their work and makes you more approachable.

8

BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER.

Practice actively listening to those around you. Try to put yourself in the speaker's position in order to see things from his or her point of view. It will help you to better appreciate the work your co-workers do.

9

FIND A MENTOR.

Once you have targeted the soft skills you hope to gain, find a mentor who can help you cultivate them. A mentor can be a friend, family member, co-worker, or anyone who possess these skills and makes you feel comfortable. Having a mentor will provide you with a resource for advice and someone with whom to practice your skills.

10

INTERVIEW THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PERSON YOU KNOW.

Reach out to the most successful person you know (preferably not a parent) and interview them. Ask them the following three questions (and others) in your interview:

1. What do you believe that you did different relative to people who are less successful than you
2. What was the biggest setback you had on your journey to success?
3. Do you believe that there were any trade-offs that you have made that most other people did not make that helped you be successful?

Use this interview as a way to begin a relationship with this person. Successful people typically love to mentor rising stars.

USE THIS SPACE TO MAP OUT YOUR FIRST STEPS: