



DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

**Career
Services**

DISCOVERY · OPTIONS · STRATEGIES

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I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE!

I love Dartmouth students, I really do. What's not to love? You're bright, you're polite, you're passionate, you're personable. Most of you have achieved more in 18 to 22 years than many of us will accomplish in a lifetime. You are so darn near perfect that somebody should extol your virtues in a song...something along the lines of the aptly named musical, "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change!"

Yes, change!! Starting with the world of work:

CHANGE your absolute conviction that unless employers physically come to campus or post jobs on popular web sites, they aren't interested in you. They *ARE* interested but most of their positions are filled through other means, the most popular being direct human-to-human contact, a.k.a. networking, not on-line postings.

DON'T change your major just to accommodate employers but **DO** change your attitude about your major. It is meant to be liberating and empowering, not a vocational straitjacket. Employers seek skills! If they can't find the skills they are seeking in your major or minor, they will look elsewhere: at your internships, your extracurricular activities, your leadership roles and community service. Your major at Dartmouth is not meant to constrain or totally define your career choices. It is meant to offer you a satisfying intellectual experience and a solid foundation for future endeavors.

When employers **DON'T** come on campus- which, if truth be told, is most always, you must go to them, literally and virtually. This leap of faith requires that you change your notion that everything important in life can be accomplished by blitz. Most employers don't stare at their computer screens all day. You will need to use your phone to follow up on electronic submissions. Or, better yet, engage them in person through informational interviews or job shadowing or mentoring relationships.

Dilbert had it right when he instructed a young relative to: "*Click 'submit' to post your resume on the jobs web site. Now sit back and enjoy the misguided optimism that someday a human being will see it. Be sure to tell your parents that you looked for a job today.*" His young relative's reply? "*I'll e-mail them*".

When employers **DO** come on campus, in addition to changing out of your street clothes, by all means **CHANGE** your approach to interviews! While obtaining an interview may signify mutual attraction, the romance can fade quickly when you fail to research an employer's organization or field, fail to articulate your skills, fail to sound enthusiastic or focused, fail to ask any questions or fail to show up. Interviewing takes practice; it is not the time to "wing it".

And, finally, please oh please, *CHANGE* your unshakeable belief that you are being forced to conduct an *independent* job search when you engage a career advisor:

***who introduces you to extensive electronic or paper resources such as alumni(ae) networks or internship directories**

***who recommends concrete action steps for you to take**

***who organizes employer fairs for you**

I'm sorry, we truly love you, you're nearly perfect but this is called "life". Relatively few employers will beat a path to your door; you must learn-with our help- how to sleuth them out and convince them that you would make an ideal employee.

Oh, one last thing. *CHANGE* your blitzmail nicknames: "Varsity flaky party girl" or "Suck it up and deal" just doesn't cut it with prospective employers. And don't even get me started about automatic replies, facebook entries, and voicemail messages.

Okay, now you can go back to being perfect and I will direct my attention elsewhere. Heaven knows we administrators don't lack for imperfections to address!

**Submitted by Skip Sturman
Director, Career Services**