

OPCD Podcast: Episode 4 - “Career Weeks ” (9/18/2014)

Overview of Career Week, *Harbert College of Business*

Voiceover: Sit back and tune in - career weeks have started here at the Harbert College of Business and I'm taking you along for the ride.

(soft sound of lecture in progress behind voiceover)

Voiceover: Career weeks are designed to take you all the way from informational seminars to interviews - in a span of just five days. So it makes sense that the Office of Professional and Career Development kicks off the week with prep sessions on how to dress, what to say and how to best present yourself to employers. That's actually what you're hearing behind me now. I'm here in the OPCD with a group of students of various years and majors. Some are preparing to look for jobs, others internships. Dr. Jimmy Lawrence is going over the various events that will be offered this week and answering any questions that the students may have. From there he'll be covering things like resume and cover letter prep, elevator speeches, professional dress and thank you notes. The atmosphere is very comfortable and informal and attending one of these seminars is extremely beneficial if you're fine-tuning your job or internship search. Subject matter and speakers vary so stop by the OPCD for a list of times and topics. And don't worry about schedule conflicts. Most of these sessions are offered twice a week so that even the busiest students have the chance to attend.

Sound clip of lecture: “You've got on-campus interviews, which expos are highly connected to. You got job postings that come in that may or may not be coming to recruit here. They want to get your resume, perhaps have a phone interview and perhaps invite you to their office. Lastly, you have to think about your own individual job search.”

Voiceover: By Wednesday you're ready for mock interviews and you've also got the chance to get resume feedback from potential employers. This all takes place in the OPCD and is a chance for you to put what you learned in the seminars to the test. For all questions that go above and beyond the resume, there's a panel discussion right down the hall.

Sound clip of panel discussion: “The biggest thing that that I see day in and day out is not getting stagnant and complacent. Continue to evolve in your craft as technology and things change you have to change with it. Because if you don't then you'll be left behind the eight ball.”

Voiceover: You can really see a lot of what has been talked about earlier in the week begin to come together now. Students are in business dress and questions revolve around life in the professional world as these representatives offer their insight and advice. The companies represented will change from week to week, and that information is available from the OPCD as well. Although they come from very different backgrounds, and hold a wide array of positions,

the panelists seem to have one common goal: to educate and empower the students who will soon be joining the workforce.

Sound clip of panel discussion: “All these companies are using mentoring as a way to learn. We're gonna get you through it as an employee. You've just got to be willing to stick with us because there is a learning curve that, I don't know of a school in the country can get you past. It's the difference between sitting in there and hearing the definition of what something is: what consulting is, what a router is or whatever you're dealing with is, and then getting out in the real world and using that.”

Voiceover: And now for the chance to bring together everything you've learned. It's time to talk with those panelists one-on-one and practice your pitch. You've only got a few moments to sell yourself to recruiters on expo days and this is a great opportunity get comfortable with that elevator speech. The event is designed to give you feedback as well. What worked, what didn't and what's recommended in terms of content, style and presentation. The pace may be fast but the practice will get you prepped for Thursday, and make talking about yourself much less overwhelming.

Sound clip of Practice Your Pitch: “First off, you have a great presence, great personality and great energy. We work with clients all the times so you've got to be able to work with people, we work in teams. So I thought your personality was great. You had some good experience and you started off strong saying what you wanted to do in Capgemini, how you want to do it and which department so that was great. The fact that you look it up in new about what you wanted to do.”

Voiceover: And of course Thursday of each career week is your chance to go from student to sought-after employee. We'll be talking more specifically next week about everything that goes into the career expos but, needless to say, it is something you don't want to miss. Come prepared to present your resume, discuss your work experience, outline your career plans and network with those who are some of the most successful in their respective fields. Everything you've learned earlier in the week comes into play here and hopefully segues into an opportunity to interview on Friday.

So there you have it - five days in five minutes. As I mentioned, we'll be talking more about expo days and first-round interviews next week. In the meantime, stop by the OPCD or check out their calendar of events online, and start getting involved in the events that will shape your success story. Good luck and see ya back here next week!