Practical Job Advice for Students Setting Up Their Careers

When you’re in high school or college, you have more than enough things to think about. One of the more pressing matters is what you’re going to do for a career. But for most students, laying the foundation for a career requires them to work one or more jobs throughout the process. After all, college doesn’t pay for itself, and even if you’re studying on a scholarship, chances are you need money for living.

ACE Mentor Program exists to help students prepare for the workforce. That’s why we’ve provided some tips and information for high school and college students looking for a job during their studies:

High School
Most high school students who work are doing it for the paycheck. Maybe you want to save up for a car or just have more money to spend when you’re hanging out with friends. But no matter how menial or irrelevant a job may seem, it can always do much more than that. It can teach you valuable life lessons—such as how to manage money and gain financial independence—and help prepare you for the adult workforce. Here are some jobs that have proven to work well for high school students across the country:

- Grocery store worker
- Retail store worker
- Office clerk
- Barista
- Landscaping and lawn care
- Babysitter/nanny
- Dog walker/sitter
- Lifeguard

**College**

Once you have a high school diploma, you will have access to jobs above entry-level. While there’s nothing wrong with getting a job solely for saving money to pay for college and living, it’s worth looking for opportunities that will directly tie into your dream career:

- Social media evaluator
- Content writer/editor
- Circulation clerk
- Night auditor
- Front desk worker
- Market researcher
- SAT prep instructor
- Nonprofit fundraising coordinator

If you have an entrepreneurial spirit, it’s never too early to start blazing your path. Many of the world’s most successful companies were founded by college students.

Start brainstorming business ideas, conducting market research, developing branding, and refining your idea. You can even get a headstart on registering your business. For example, forming an LLC will provide tax benefits, protection from personal liability, and flexibility. Just ensure you understand your state’s LLC regulations before moving forward.

**Strategies for Getting Hired**

OK, so you have some job ideas. Let’s jump into some quick tips that are proven to help students get hired:
Build a network. You never know when you will meet your next mentor, boss, or business partner. Start reaching out to professionals in your community and desired industry to make meaningful connections for your career.

Use your school. Chances are your college or university provides resources for finding employment. Take advantage of your school's career center on campus, as well as services offered on the school’s website.

Use online resources. There’s no shortage of job websites out there that can help you find employment. And many employers prefer to find talent through such sites. Indeed, Simply Hired, and USAJobs are few to look into.

Learn how to interview. If you learn how to be an effective interviewee, you’ll be halfway there to landing a job that can boost your career. Always dress to impress, learn as much as you can about the company you’re applying to, and learn what questions to ask the interviewer.

Seek an internship. Jobs make you money, but internships can prove invaluable long-term. Look for an internship, even if it's unpaid, in your desired industry. Not only will it provide you with on-the-job experience, but it’s also a way to get your foot in the door to a job that directly ties into your dream career.

It’s never too early to begin developing skills that will help you achieve financial independence and move you toward the career you desire. Whether you’re a student in high school or college, the job ideas and strategies above can help you get started on the right path. Most importantly, remember to believe in yourself and commit 100% to whatever opportunities you take hold of.