

Junior Career Development Guide

Apply What You Know & Gain Real Experience

You've explored your interests, clarified your direction, and built some early experience—now it's time to put that foundation into action. Junior year is your practice field, where you apply skills, take meaningful risks, and develop your voice.

This is the time to connect classroom learning to real-world experience—through internships, research, leadership, service, or preparing for graduate study. The steps you take this year will not only strengthen your resume, but also shape your confidence, perspective, and sense of purpose for what comes next.

CONNECT

- ☐ **Attend career fairs, employer events, and industry panels** to connect with professionals and discover opportunities.
 - ☐ Keep an eye out for PLU events, and external opportunities posted on [Handshake](#).
- ☐ **Conduct at least one [informational interview](#)**—go deeper than a Google search.
 - ☐ That person you found on LinkedIn or LuteLink with your dream job? They might be willing to talk to you about how they got there, and give you information that will clarify what the role is really like!

REFLECT

- ☐ **Take time to reflect on your growth so far:**
 - ☐ What are your **top strengths**? How might you apply them in a career?
 - ☐ What's a **mistake or challenge** you've faced? What did you learn?
 - ☐ Which environments energize you most—team-based, independent, creative, structured?
- ☐ **Update your [PathwayU](#) assessment** to see how your insights have evolved.
- ☐ **Revisit your values.** Do your current goals still align with what matters most to you?
- ☐ **Create or refine your elevator pitch**—a 30-second intro that tells your story with confidence.
- ☐ **Request [feedback](#) on your resume and interview skills** through a mock interview or coaching session.

ENGAGE

- ☐ **Secure an internship, research project, or significant leadership role** aligned with your interests.
- ☐ **Apply for part-time or summer positions** that give you exposure to the field you're considering.
 - ☐ Look at the profiles of people working in your desired industry. What kind of experiences do they have listed before their current position?
- ☐ **Explore short-term fellowships or immersive programs** (locally or nationally).
- ☐ **Participate in a job shadow or [mentoring program](#)**—ask professionals about their path, daily work, and lessons learned.

PLAN FOR WHAT'S NEXT

- ☐ **Research graduate or professional programs** that align with your goals. Take note of course and admission requirements to ensure you have a complete plan.
- ☐ **Attend grad school info sessions** and track deadlines. Most programs require planning at least a year ahead.
- ☐ **Talk to faculty about letters of recommendation or research collaboration** if you're considering advanced study.
- ☐ **Research common programs and tools used in your industry, and explore ways to start learning or practicing them now** (e.g., WordPress, Asana, Tableau, Adobe).

KEEP YOUR TOOLKIT SHARP

- ☐ **Update your [resume](#)** with new experience and results.
- ☐ **Strengthen your LinkedIn profile**—add internships, projects, and a headline that reflects your direction.
- ☐ **Practice interviewing** through [Career Coach](#) or on [TimelyCare](#) coaching sessions.
- ☐ **Save work samples or project outcomes** in a portfolio, if relevant to your field.

REMEMBER

Junior year is about **experiencing and refining your plan in action**. You don't need to have all the answers yet—but by putting yourself in real-world contexts, you'll gather the insight and confidence to make your next move with purpose.

Take what you've learned and **try it out in the world**. Experience is the best teacher.