



# Insights

www.nwmissouri.edu/services/sss

360 Administration Building (660) 562-1862

## Studying Abroad in Greece

By: Kelsey Knowlton

Γεια σας (Hello) from Greece!

As many of you know, I am currently studying abroad in Greece this semester! I wanted to use this opportunity to share my experiences and help show how you can possibly make studying abroad a reality for your future!

Studying in a foreign country offers so much more than "just" an education. Being in Greece for the past month has given me the opportunity to learn more about the way our world works, see things through different eyes, absorb a culture, learn a foreign language, and have the time of my life. The four (or more) years you spend in college is the perfect time to immerse yourself in another culture and experience all the world has to offer.

One of the major reasons people reject the idea of studying abroad is because, well, it's so foreign! It sounds scary to go to another country where you don't know anyone. However, once you are there you realize how amazing it is. It's so far removed from your home that you are forced to grow as a person. You become more adventurous and willing to try new things. You meet new people and make friends from backgrounds you'd never imagine. I have met friends from South Africa, Italy, London, the Caribbean, and all over the United States that I would have never had the opportunity of knowing without going abroad. All the while I have been trying some amazing new foods and traveling all around Greece and Europe.

Another reason people are put off by the idea of studying abroad is because of the cost. It sounds awfully expensive to go to a university overseas. However, people often fail to take into account financial aid. There are numerous scholarships and grants for United States students who want to study abroad. Northwest does a great job of offering many scholarships for students going abroad.

Once you are in a foreign country and enrolled in school, you'll understand the depth of the experience. I still don't think it has fully set in that I am here living in Greece for four months! I was surprised with how quickly I became comfortable with the campus, making new friends, using the public transportation, and communicating with the locals. The Greek language is not an easy one to grasp but I know enough to get by. The language barrier and the difference in culture is a part of the challenge that makes this experience so enriching.

Studying abroad is a unique opportunity that only presents itself in our college years. If you are at all interested I highly suggest visiting the study abroad office on the second floor of the Student Union or emailing [studyab@nwmissouri.edu](mailto:studyab@nwmissouri.edu) to set up an appointment. I also encourage you to visit the study abroad website <http://www.nwmissouri.edu/iic/studyabroad/index.htm> for more information about what Northwest has to offer. Feel free to email or Facebook me if you have any questions or want to know more about the Missouri-Greece program.

Take every opportunity you can to grow as a person and see what the world has to offer, as scary as it may be for you. Don't be afraid to try new things...you'll never know what doors it may open and what kinds of friends and memories you'll make along the way!

Also check out this link to the Benjamin A Gilman International Scholarship <http://www.iie.org/en/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program>. You may be eligible to receive financial aid to help fund your own study abroad experience.



In This Issue...	
Studying Abroad	1
StrengthsQuest	2/3
Job Searching After College	4
Building a Powerful Resume	5
Study Groups	6
Upcoming Events	6



## USING STRENGTHS IN CAREER COUNSELING

Submitted By: Garrett Hargiss



The Career Center at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois, is using strengths in Career Counseling in three ways: For undecided students in one-on-one appointments, through a workshop and in job search assistance.

**One-on-One Appointments.** Strengths are a natural fit with the topics that typically surface in career counseling. When a student is undecided about a major or a career, one of the ways in which a counselor might try to help the student become more focused will be through the use of the StrengthsFinder and other inventories. A code for the student to take the StrengthsFinder is given at the same time that a referral is made for the student to take the Strong Interest Inventory and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. The student will then set up two or more return appointments to review the results of the inventories. Typically, once the student has received an interpretation of their Strong and Myers-Briggs results, along with lists of the careers that seem to mesh well with those results, the counselor then will ask the student to spend

some time reviewing his or her results and choosing the top three to five careers that most intrigue him or her.

Time is then spent with the student discussing his or her Signature Themes and asking about ways the student sees himself or herself using those strengths in daily life. Looking back at the careers suggested by the previous inventories, the student determines how his or her strengths might be used in those careers. Together, the counselor and student brainstorm ways in which each strength might come into play with each career. Students often feel affirmed in their strengths and the ways that their natural tendencies could be used in careers of interest. When the Career Center Surveys were collected in spring 2010, 100% of students responded positively to the statement "As a result of this visit, I have a better understanding of how I can make career/major choices."

**Group Workshops.** The Career Center uses StrengthsFinder for its undecided students in a six-hour workshop called "Major in Success!" In much the same way as an individual appointment, students take career assessments for personality and interests along with StrengthsFinder. The group facilitator helps students explore the results to create a picture for decision making. The advantage of a group workshop is that students become aware that they are not the only students who are undecided and that there are many options to explore. Participants respond especially positively to the results from StrengthsFinder. In evaluations of the program, students were asked to rate their agreement with the statement "As a result of taking the StrengthsFinder, I have a greater understanding of my unique strengths" on a scale of 1 to 5; the average rating was 4.33. Students were also asked "As a result of this activity, are you able to identify possible options for your college major and/or career?", and 100% answered *yes*.



**Job Search.** Incorporating strengths in the job search -- in resumes, cover letters, and interviewing -- is a powerful tool that can separate job candidates from other applicants.

- *Job Search.* Students are encouraged to use their strengths to analyze job descriptions and determine their fit for the position. They are also encouraged to tailor their resumes to reflect their individual strengths, experience, and skills. For the experienced candidate, unique strengths should be noted when writing the career summary portion of the resume. For example, "Responsible professional adept at dealing with problems and cultivating the potential in others." (Responsibility, Restorative, Developer)
- *Cover Letter.* Job seekers should focus on their talents and strengths to present themselves as an attractive candidate for the position by demonstrating their qualifications for the position.
- *Interviewing .* Many employers ask, "What are your strengths?" This should be an easy question to answer. It is important for job seekers to know their top five strengths and describe them in a way that an employer will understand. For instance, if one of their strengths is "Maximizer," an employer may not be familiar with that term. Rather than saying "Maximizer," the candidate can describe that they have a talent to stimulate personal and group excellence, being sure to give an example of that talent. Candidates should also weave their strengths into their other answers and be prepared for an interview by practicing their answers to sample questions out loud.

**Other Resources.** All students have access to "Strengths Central," a display rack that holds 34 sheets, one for each strength. These handouts, adapted from the StrengthsQuest book, highlight how to use a strength in academics and career.

Students are referred to the online textbook, StrengthsQuest, at <http://www.strengthsquest.com/> for the chapter on "Applying Your Talents in Careers" for additional information on how they can use their strengths in choosing a career.

Additionally, students should contact Brenda Johnson, our Student Development Specialist at the Student Support Services office to obtain a code to take the assessment or to discuss their top five strengths.

Source: <http://www.strengthsquest.com/content/143063/best-practices-harper-college.aspx>



# JOB SEARCHING AFTER COLLEGE

By [Dain Lewis](#)

Submitted By: Tia Jacobs



Finding a job after college can be a tiring process. What you worked on while in college was researching papers, reading books, and taking tests. College didn't exactly prepare you for finding a job after college. Follow these six tips and you will be on your way to getting that job in no time.

## 1. Nosce te ipsum- "Know thyself."

This is extremely important when it comes to finding a job after college. What are your dreams and goals? What would be your dream job? What have you always enjoyed doing? What are your skills? These are very important questions that you need to answer before you move forward in finding a job after college.

## 2. Build a powerful Resume.

When building a resume it's important to focus on what exactly you have to offer to the particular company you are applying for. Show how your skills will be perfect for that company. Why should they hire you as opposed to someone else? Communicate THAT point and you will get the job.

## 3. Know where to look for a job.

After building your resume its time to find your new job. One of the best places to look for jobs is online. Particularly online job boards. Google search "[type of job you're searching for] + job board. That will bring up the website that has jobs that you're looking for. These types of sites are where you will find many of the best jobs. You can try looking on sites like Monster.com or Careerbuilder.com which are the two biggest job boards. But you will have more success if you look in the smaller job boards.

## 4. Broaden your network.

Many college graduates say the best way to get a job is to look in your network. Tell everyone that you know that you are looking for a job. By expanding your network you never know what jobs may come your way.

## 5. Keep your emotions in check.

Looking for a job can be hard. Especially if it takes a while to find one. Quickly, it becomes this emotional roller coaster of getting excited because you got a call for an interview, to an extreme low when you don't get the job. How you can avoid this is by simply focusing on the process of getting a job. If you focus on the day-to-day process of searching for a job, then finding a job after college has less of an emotional impact.

## 6. The law of averages.

The law of averages states that at some point you are bound to get a job. Each time a company decides not to hire you, just think of it this way: One more 'no' got you one more 'no' closer to that 'yes' for that job you've been waiting for.

Stick to these tips and you'll get a job in no time.

Source: <http://ezinearticles.com/?6-Tips-for-Finding-a-Job-After-College&id=5353354>



# HOW TO BUILD A POWERFUL RESUME



By Nicki Howell, eHow Contributor

Submitted By: Tia Jacobs

Hiring managers may receive dozens of resumes each week. Catching a hiring manager's attention is important in securing an [interview](#). A powerful resume will help the manager understand why you're a good fit for the position and motivate her to call you. Including the necessary information, writing an effective objective statement, and clearly describing professional experience will make a lasting impression.

1. **Create a section that includes personal information, such as name, phone number, email and mailing address.** Proofread this information carefully. A wrong phone number or email could prevent the hiring manager from being able to contact you.

2. **Write an effective objective statement.** After the personal information, a [powerful](#) resume should include a short objective statement. The objective statement should focus on skills that most closely relate to the hiring manager's needs. For example, if you're ap-

plying to an event planning position, highlight relevant skills such as organization, planning and attention to detail. An effective objective statement should be three sentences or less, as recommended by Broward College.

3. **Create a section that covers work experience.** There are two approaches to this. The *first* is to list your previous three employers. Include the company name, position held and dates of employment. After the company information, write a short paragraph that describes experience with the company.

The *second* is to list experience you've had that relates to the job you're applying for, which may include jobs, education, or volunteer work. It's up to you whether you want to include dates for this experience. List out the experience you gained that will help you in the job you're applying for.

When writing descriptions of your experience, focus on attributes the employer desires the most. Use concrete examples when possible that use real numbers and statistics. For example, a salesperson might say she grew revenue in her territory by 40 percent in six months.

Also, start each point with an action verb such as collaborated, processed, oversaw, created, reviewed, organized, directed, managed, etc. Use past tense for previous experience and present tense for current experience.

4. **Write a section describing education and training.** List degrees completed in this section. For example, Bachelor of Arts in Communications, University of Colorado, 1999. If you have more than one degree, list the most recent first.

Other information you may want to include are classes you took that are relevant, your grade point average (if it was high), and scholastic honors (such as graduating top of your class, graduating with honors, or being accepting into a national honors society).

5. **Include special skills.** Brainstorm skills most attractive to potential employers. For example, list fluency in foreign languages, computer programs that you are familiar with, and special computer skills.

Source: [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_6468872\\_build-powerful-resume.html#ixzz1n8GjIQxq](http://www.ehow.com/how_6468872_build-powerful-resume.html#ixzz1n8GjIQxq)

# Study Groups

Source: <http://www.how-to-study.com/study-skills/en/study-groups.asp>

Submitted By: Kayla Etherton

A study group can be helpful when you are trying to learn information and concepts and preparing for class discussions and tests. Read to learn about the benefits of a study group. Then read on to learn about how to start a study group and the characteristics of a successful study group. Finally, be sure to read about the possible pitfalls of a study group.



## Benefits of a Study Group

A study group can be beneficial in many ways. Here are the most important benefits:

1. A support group can "pick you up" when you find that your motivation to study is slipping. The other group members can be a source of encouragement.
2. You may be reluctant to ask a question in class. You will find it easier to do so in a small study group.
3. You may become more committed to study because the group members are depending on your presentation and participation. You will not want to let them down.
4. Group members will listen and discuss information and concepts during the study sessions. These activities add a strong auditory dimension to your learning experience.
5. One or more group members are likely to understand something you do not. They may bring up ideas you never considered.
6. Teaching/explaining information and concepts to the other group members will help you reinforce your mastery of the information and concepts.

Let's face it - studying can sometimes be boring. Interacting with the other group members can make studying enjoyable.

## 1 Characteristics of a Successful Study Group

Once started, a study group should possess the following characteristics to be successful:

1. Each group member contributes to discussions.
2. Group members actively listen to each other without interrupting. Only one group member speaks at a time.
3. The other group members work collaboratively to resolve any concern raised by a group member.
4. Group members are prompt and come prepared to work.
5. The group stays on task with respect to its agenda.
6. Group members feel free to criticize each other but keep their criticisms constructive. This can encourage group members to reveal their weaknesses so that they can strengthen them.
7. Group members feel free to ask questions of each other.
8. At the end of each study session, an agenda including specific group member responsibilities is prepared for the next session.

Above all, the positive attitude that "we can do this together" is maintained.

## 1 Possible Pitfalls of a Study Group

A study group can be a very positive learning experience. However, there are pitfalls to be avoided. Here are some cautions:

1. Do not let the study group get distracted from its agenda and goals.
2. Do not let the study group become a social group. You can always socialize at other times.
3. Do not allow group members to attend unprepared. To stay in the group, members should be required to do their fair share.
4. Do not let the session become a negative forum for complaining about teachers and courses.

Do not allow one or two group members to dominate the group. It is important that all members have an equal opportunity to participate. The information you just read will help you decide when a study group is appropriate for you and will help ensure its success.

## Upcoming Events!

**April 8th** — Easter

**April 19th** — SSS Open House and Graduation Reception

(come get your final exam survival pack)

11:00 a.m.— 1:30 p.m.

**April 23th-27th**—Final Exams