

# College Transition TIMES

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The benefits of staying connected with your college after graduation are enormous. Are you taking full advantage of your benefits? *See article on page 2*

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### TAKE CONTROL ... Of Your Job Interview

Job interview season is quickly approaching. Be sure to follow these 5 steps to help you defeat employer objections? *See article on page 3*

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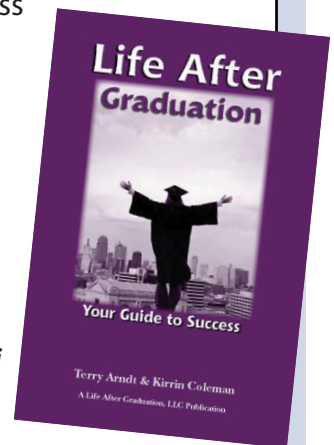
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## Staying Connected (Part 1 of 2)

As a recently graduated college alum, your attitude may be one of go forth and conquer. And if this is so, then may the wind be at your back, the ground rise to meet your feet, and all that good stuff. Just be sure to keep one thing in mind – it pays to stay connected to your school. **By Justine Simon**

Graduates who remain connected with their schools get to enjoy all sorts of advantages. Alumni organizations exist to offer graduates the opportunity to meet other alums, in order to create a rich and diverse professional community with deep links to its alma mater. Recent graduates can explore these networks for a variety of reasons like:

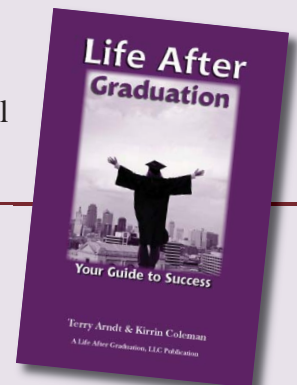
- Meeting people in their particular industry
- Getting advice from experienced peer professionals
- Discovering job leads
- Exchanging ideas with other energetic and creative people

Young alums are also eligible for a variety of services through their alumni organization – yet another reason to stay involved! Common perks of staying connected to your alumni community include:

- **Career Planning Services.** Whether job boards and resume tutorials are what you need, or if an informational interview with an alum in your field would really help, look no further. Most colleges have extremely resourceful career planning centers that help you find jobs and prepare yourself for your developing career.
- **Relocation Support.** When you move to a new city, it really helps having a way to connect with your new community. Alumni organizations have many resources to help with this transition in your life. It can put you in contact with other alums in your area, and some national alumni associations have programs to help spouses and children with their move.
- **Business Development.** If you're looking for a loan for your company or employees for your business, alumni associations are great places to check out. Keep in mind that people starting new companies can get a lot of free press and advice simply by connecting with other alums.
- **Discounts.** Everything from pizza to life insurance to carpet cleaning to travel, alumni organizations offer it all. Stay connected to find out how you can save money.

So get involved! Check out your alumni association's webpage, and find out where your region's alumni club meets. You can join a shared interest group, take advantage of its mentor programs, or find love at a college single's meeting. You'll find that once you're connected, the possibilities become endless.

Part 2 of the "Staying Connected" article will be available in the next issue of College Transition Times. For more information about maximizing the benefits available from your college after graduation, read *Life After Graduation: Your Guide to Success*.



**JUSTIN SIMON** is an intern for Life After Graduation, LLC and a graduate of Western Washington University.



## Take Control... Of Your Job Interview

Job interview season is quickly approaching! If you've been to your campus career center lately, you'll probably have noticed upcoming job fairs and on-campus interviews. Throughout the next several months, you will no doubt encounter some job search adversity while speaking with employers. One of the major stumbling blocks students have is handling employer objections. From "You don't have experience" to "Your grades are too low," objections tend to defeat students and send their job search in a different direction. However, you can defeat employer objections by using the five step process below and reinforce why you are the ideal candidate. **By John Swartz**

### Step 1: Empathy

Don't take it personally. Just because an employer thinks you don't have experience or your grades are too low doesn't mean they are on a personal attack. Employers are simply looking for the best fit in their organization. Communicate empathy by saying something like "You're right – I understand why you want someone who is experienced or has good grades. It's important to have an employee who will learn quickly on the job."

### Step 2: Dissect

Objections tend to be very broad statements while employers may be concerned about something very specific. It's important for you to politely ask questions to uncover the real issue. "Are you looking for previous work experience in a particular field?" or "Is there a specific area of my studies that concerns you?" or simply "Why is that?"

### Step 3: Position

Positioning is the process where you tap into your mental hard drive of past experiences and figure out how you're going to respond. To do this effectively, you'll need to "know thy yourself." Work with your campus career counselor ahead of time to help discover all of your skills and strengths. You may just have more experience than you think when you consider extracurricular activities and volunteer work. As for grades, perhaps there is an improvement story or success in a particular class that will override an employer's initial concern.

### Step 4: Respond

Once you've scanned your mental hard drive and figured out how to respond, it's time to do it. Once again, it will be important to have a non-defensive tone. Being positive will also demonstrate confidence. It's not always what you say, but how you say it.

### Step 5: Silence

Once you've responded in a courteous and thoughtful way, it's time to sit back and be quiet. Babbling on or conversing back and forth too long with an employer may hurt your likeability. You don't necessarily want to be right, you want to be hired. Plus, you'll have more opportunities to tackle an employer's concern. A follow-up letter after the interview is a perfect opportunity.

Remember, objections from employers aren't to be taken personally. Using these five steps, you'll be able to stay in charge and politely re-emphasize why YOU are the ideal candidate.

Make it happen!

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Excerpt from *JobQuest – Take Control Of The Job Search And Win The Attention Of Employers* - written by **John Swartz**. Additional information available at [www.LifeAfterGraduation.com](http://www.LifeAfterGraduation.com).

