Public relations is a competitive field and related experience is essential to break into the industry. This field requires displaying enthusiasm and energy, as well as developing excellent communication skills, both verbal and written. Creativity and good judgment are also critical skills in this field.

Students should plan on obtaining a part-time, summer job, internship, or volunteer experience within the field. Students are also encouraged to participate in co-curricular activities to develop skills such as public speaking, teamwork, leadership, event planning, and fund raising.

Join professional associations related to public relations, such as PRSSA. Make the most of public relations campaign classes to learn as much as possible and to generate items for a portfolio.

**COMMON EMPLOYERS:**
- Publishing firms: Newspapers, magazines, and books
- Wire services and syndicates
- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Literary agencies
- Internet sites/online news providers
- Television and radio stations
- Film industry
- Freelance
- Retail stores
- Hotels
- Restaurants

**AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY**
- Human resources
- Labor relations
- Management
- Insurance claims
- Training and development
- Programming
- Research
- Lobbying

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**
- Council of Public Relations Firms
- International Public Relations Association
- Public Relations Consultants Association
- Public Relations Society of America

**STRATEGIES ON ENTERING THE FIELD**
- Strengthen verbal communication skills by taking speech communication courses
- Enhance writing skills through additional coursework
- Learn to work well with teams
- Serve as public relations officer of an organization
- Get involved with related professional associations as a student member
- Acquire one or more public relations internships even if unpaid
- Be prepared to start at the bottom and work up to higher positions
- Consider a master’s degree in public relations for higher level positions, especially at the executive level
- Find a mentor in the field to guide your own career planning
- Be willing to move to locations with more job opportunities
- Be willing to take any job you can to get a foot in the door with an organization of interest
- Develop a portfolio or audition tape depending on the industry

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