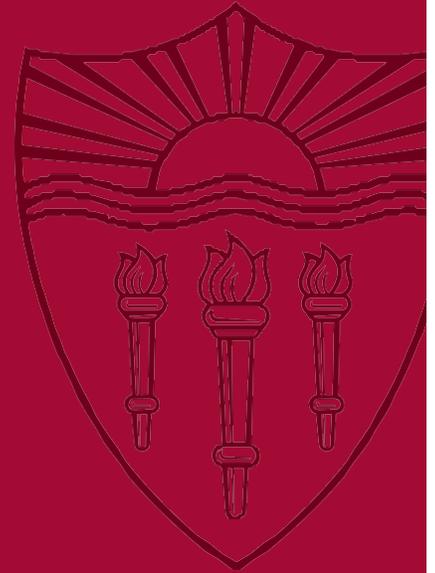


USC MARSHALL SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

MBA.PM
Guide to
Graduate
Career
Services



USC Marshall
School of Business
Graduate Career Services

MBA.PM Guide to Graduate Career Services

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Message from the Director:

Dear MBA.PM Student,

The Graduate Career Services team of advisors and Global Sector Leads look forward to partnering with you to achieve your post-MBA career goals.

As a Marshall MBA.PM, you benefit from all the career programming, recruiting events and related services, including access to invaluable online career resources that will maximize your preparation for the internship and job market.

The goals of the career services center are to guide you through the career planning process, equip you with the “go-to-market” job search skills demanded in today’s competitive labor market, and prepare you for long-term career management.

Our experience shows that MBA.PM students who develop a clear yet flexible focus on specific functions and industries during their time at Marshall are best prepared to manage the intensity and commitment required in business school, particularly during the career search.

Students considering a “career pivot” will need to plan in advance to take advantage of the events, activities, and opportunities to interact with employers in the second and third years.

To prepare you to make a good impression on recruiters and alumni, whether pursuing internship recruiting in the spring of your second year, or permanent, full-time recruiting in the fall of your third year, we recommend that you complete the action items listed in this guide.

Taking the steps outlined here will provide the foundation needed to further explore your career options. In addition, the earlier you build your network and further investigate careers prior to the job search, the more confident you will be about your choices, and the better you will be able to convey your “value proposition” as a candidate during fall recruiting activities.

We look forward to partnering with you and encourage you to think differently about yourself and how well your interests, skills and values can be positioned for the greatest reward and impact.

FIGHT ON!



Mark Brostoff

*Assistant Dean and Director
MBA Career Services*

USC Marshall School of Business
Popovich Hall 310, Los Angeles, CA 90089
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Career Planning Timeline MBA.PM Students



This is a suggested guide to plan your career exploration and job search process over the three-year MBA.PM program. Speak to an advisor to develop your own individual and unique plan.

First Year: Fall & Spring Semesters

- Focus on balancing your new life as a student with work, family, and other obligations.
- Speak with peers about their work experience to discover functions and industries of interest.
- Decide if you are a career “enhancer” or “pivoter.”
- Research functions and industries, analyze your “gaps,” and develop strategies to close them (internship, electives, certificate, etc.).
- Expand your networking to include second- and third-year MBA.PM students.
- Attend Marshall Alumni events to expand your network in the Trojan Family.
- Decide if you will “accelerate” to complete the program in two years, and complete required forms from the PM Program Office. Talk to an advisor to discuss the pros and cons of accelerating.
- Decide if you will pursue an internship for the summer after the second year.

First Year: Summer

- Prepare for fall recruiting: an internship if you are a career pivoter, or a full-time, permanent position for “accelerators.”
- Update your resume in the “Tommy Trojan” required format, and email to GCS for an early review.
- Continue researching industries, functions, and companies, as well as networking.

Second Year: Fall Semester (FT Recruiting for Accelerators, Internship Recruiting 2nd Years)

- Accelerating students apply for permanent, On-Campus Recruiting positions between August – October, and interviews take place September – November.
- Attend an August GCS-required workshop to prepare for internship or full-time recruiting.
- Set up your MCSO profile and explore the website including the Document Library.
- Sign up for an advising appointment and submit a Tommy Trojan resume for approval.
- Request to take the CareerLeader assessment if you are undecided about function or industry.
- Join Clubs related to functions and industries of interest to you. Apply for leadership roles.
- Participate in case interview training if you are interested in consulting.
- Attend company-sponsored events as much as your schedule allows.
- Attend GCS workshops for resume, cover letter, interviewing, and networking.
- Conduct informational interviews with students and alumni as part of the recruiting process.
- Practice mock interviews with career advisors. Use *InterviewStream* for additional practice.
- Intern-seekers apply for On Campus Interviews from mid-November to early January, and interviews typically begin in January. Some firms/industries have earlier deadlines and interviews.
- Consulting, Investment Banking, and some Technology recruit early for both FT and internships.
- Accelerators: Report all offers and indicate which you’ve accepted on MCSO.

Second Year: Spring Semester

- Complete the internship recruiting cycle, accept an offer, and prepare for your summer internship.
- Certain industries recruit later in a “just in time” season between February – May.
- Continue networking efforts and expanding your list of companies of interest.
- Check MCSO frequently for new opportunities in the Job Postings/Resume Drops and On Campus Interview sections.
- Report all internship offers received and indicate which offer you’ve chosen on MCSO.
- Students who plan to recruit for FT consulting roles following graduation should sign up for the summer consulting training program for PM students.

Second Year: Summer:

- Have a great internship! Or, prepare as above for fall recruiting.
- Participate in summer training for consulting if you plan to recruit for FT consulting positions.

Third Year: Fall Semester

- Third-year PM students apply for FT On-Campus Recruiting positions between August – October, and interviews take place September – November.
- Attend an August GCS-required workshop if you did not attend last year.
- Update your MCSO profile and your resume if you had an internship or change at your current position. Submit your resume for review and approval if not approved last year.
- Join function and industry clubs related to your interests. Apply for leadership roles.
- Participate in case interview training or certification if you are interested in consulting.
- Conduct informational interviews with students and alumni as part of the recruiting process.
- Attend company-sponsored events as much as your schedule allows. Avoid no-shows!

- Attend GCS workshops for resume, cover letter, interviewing and networking.
- Develop a company list of 30-60 companies for just-in-time recruiting and networking.
- Continue to build your network, conduct informational interviews, and attend alumni events.
- Plan your ROI job search before you need to - in case OCR doesn’t result in an offer.
- Report all FT offers and indicate the accepted offer, on MCSO so we can track MBA.PM success!

Third Year: Spring Semester

- Keep networking for “just in time” recruiting season. Be known to contacts and companies before jobs are posted February - May.
- Evaluate your progress, gaps and challenges. Consider alternative ROI roles to close gaps for future “dream careers.” Update and refresh resumes, cover letters, interviewing skills.
- Remember, many offers occur up to three months following graduation.

Schedule an Appointment with a Career Advisor

The most valuable element of Graduate Career Services is the opportunity to meet one-on-one with an experienced career advisor starting early in your second year. An individual advising appointment will allow you to review and discuss your assessments, résumé, interests, goals and career objectives. You will also create your personalized Career Action Plan.

Call **213-740-0156** or email crcstudent@marshall.usc.edu



Professional Development Plan

Part 1. Self-Assessment

In order to build a foundation for a successful job search strategy, Marshall MBA.PM students develop a personalized Career Action Plan (CAP) with the help of a career advisor. The CAP will serve as your personal road map to achieve your career objectives. We recommend the following steps to be better prepared for your first career advising appointment.

Assess Yourself, Skills, Interests, and Goals

The more you can define what you seek, what your skills and interests are, as well as what motivates you, the more you will be at an advantage in your internship and job search.

This insight enables you to assess your fit with certain careers, jobs and companies. It also allows you to effectively communicate your **value proposition** to potential employers.

CareerLeader™ is the premier online business career self-assessment program, used by over 500 top business schools and corporations in the United States and Europe. **CareerLeader™** includes three self-assessments – Business Career Interest Inventory (BCII), Management and Professional Reward Profile (MPRP) and Management and Professional Abilities Profile (MPAP).

It is recommended that you complete **CareerLeader™**, and analyze your results, including descriptions of business interests, passions, skills, and strengths, to gain a better understanding of the alignment of your skills and experiences with your career interest.



Note: Once you begin any specific assessment, you must complete it in order for the results to be saved. Each individual assessment requires approximately 15-30 minutes to complete. You do not need to take all three assessments during the same sitting; you may complete one and return on another day to complete the others.



Directions to access CAREERLEADER:

- *To begin, please send an email to Michelle Aitala at michelle.aitala@marshall.usc.edu to request access to this assessment tool. USC Marshall pre-pays student access to CareerLeader. You will get an email confirming your credentials have been added to the assessment tool.*
- *Go to <http://www.careerleader.com>*
 - *Click on “sign in” in the upper right hand corner of the page and follow the on-screen instructions.*
 - *Login with the **same email address** used to request access. You will also need the license registration key: **marshall-target**.*

Part 2. Market Research

Conduct online research to enhance your knowledge of different industries and companies. From this research, focus more in depth on two or three industries and companies that interest you. Utilize *CareerLeader™* to better understand how your strengths and interests align with various business careers.

Based on self-assessment and market research, start to identify how well you “fit” within each function and industry that interest you. Ask yourself the following:

- How can each organization best utilize my unique set of interests, skills and experiences?
- What are the skills required to succeed in each of the industries and/or companies?
- How can I translate my experience(s) and skill set into a meaningful pitch?

Notes:



Part 3. Business Communication Skills

Employers seek candidates who are able to demonstrate strong communication skills. A compelling résumé and cover letter will make a memorable impression that can differentiate you from the rest.

Tommy Trojan Résumé & Cover Letter

Your résumé begins with the Marshall “Tommy Trojan” format to ensure consistent quality, branding and ease of reading for the recruiter. A Word template is located in the MCSO document library, or, contact our office and request a copy to be emailed to you. Consider updating your resume during the spring semester of your first year, and submit for a review over the summer prior to the fall recruiting cycle. Start your resume early and continue to update it as necessary.

A cover letter is another important tool in your job search. Don’t make the mistake of investing significant time to develop your résumé but prepare your cover letter in haste. Plan to create a draft letter one to two months prior to applying for internships or full-time positions.

Copies of both the MBA Résumé Guidelines and the Cover Letter Guide are available in our office, or visit our website to download a PDF.



**Virtual
Resume Assistant**

[VMOCK](https://www.vmock.com/usc/video), Marshall’s virtual resume assistant, allows MBA students to receive customized suggestions for their resume based on criteria gathered from employers and USC Marshall MBA Resume Standards. View VMock Intro Video: <https://www.vmock.com/usc/video>

This tool will analyze the format and content of your resume and provide feedback to help you refine your first draft. It’s ideal for use prior to an appointment with a career advisor.

Simply create an account, upload your resume, and VMock will:

- Give you line-by-line suggestions to improve your resume content based on your level of experience.
- Tell you how well you have marketed your communication skills, leadership experiences and impact on your resume.
- Score your resume based on employer criteria and USC Marshall Graduate Career Services resume standards.

Once you complete your résumé, please forward a copy in Word to crstudent@marshall.usc.edu

The subject line should be your First and Last name – MBA.PM Résumé Review:

Subject: John Jones – MBA.PM Résumé Review

Part 4. Individual Marketing Plan

Networking. MBA.PM students have found that people in their networks (friends, former employers, colleagues, etc.) can be very influential during a career search. Networking is an important skill-set to master since a majority of MBA level jobs are found and secured through personal interactions.

With so many on-campus recruiting events and club activities, recruiters expect that today's MBA will be able to "work a room" and hold a meaningful, engaging conversation or "cocktail party" introduction. Successful networking takes patience, confidence and practice. It also requires the candidate to have a well-thought out "personal brand."

Self-introduction (elevator pitch). Think of it as your personal advertisement. It is the best chance to make a positive first impression for "brand you."

A good elevator pitch is conversational in tone, quickly gets to the point and provides the answer to "tell me about yourself." Meet with an advisor to develop your elevator pitch, practice your introduction, and receive useful feedback.

Leverage LinkedIn. It is a good idea to make sure you have current contact information for each person in your network in order for you to maintain a relationship with them. If you have not already done so, be sure to connect with them on LinkedIn. It is important that all your communication activities work together to increase your visibility and credibility with your target audience.

The more comfortable you are with networking, the greater your chances of success.

Informational Interviews. You should plan to conduct informational interviews with people in your network as well as Trojan alumni who currently work in professions that interest you. Networking and informational interview guides are available in our office, as downloads from our website, and on MCSO.

Taking time to network will help you in your internship and job search. Remember, recruiters expect all MBA candidates to be active networkers at many different events throughout the year.





Review and update your LinkedIn profile and send invitations to friends, former co-workers, etc. to strengthen your

network.

Practice networking skills, self-introductions, and conduct several informational interviews prior to starting a job or internship search.

Notes:

Part 5. Transferable Skills

In addition to career exploration through online research and networking, *CareerLeader* will help you to understand what you like to do and to identify which careers offer the most opportunities to spend time performing activities you enjoy *and* in which you excel.

If you are considering a career switch, a main ingredient to your success will be your ability to translate your past experiences and accomplishments into a strong pitch.

Effectively communicating your potential for your future career will require knowledge about the career. It is essential that you are able to identify and convey your relevant transferable skill sets.

Complete the transferable skills assessment on the following pages to identify your “value proposition”.



Notes:

Part 6. Professional Profile

From your completed transferable skills assessment and the market research completed in Part 2, identify 6 – 8 skills that are highly desirable in the function and/or industry you are seeking and list these skills in the table below.

Use these statements to demonstrate your potential for your careers of interest during orientation and during fall recruiting events.

Note: If you do not have the skill required by the function and/or industry, make this skill a developmental goal for the first semester.

SKILLS INVENTORY

Review the list below. Make a check next to each skill you have developed through work, volunteer experiences, outside interests and activities. Based on your networking and career search, highlight the top 12 skills that you have that are relevant to your career goals.

Communications Skills

- Exchange ideas
- Use probing questions to determine needs of others
- Sell products/services/ideas
- Persuade others to do what you want
- Effectively tailor message to audience
- Tell Stories
- Translate numerous data into concise recommendations
- Write messages that clearly get across your meaning
- Teach or train
- Use charts/graphs to make points
- Edit comprehensive reports/proposals
- Express creativity
- Use vocabulary/grammar/language skills effectively
- Edit reports/publications
- Make speeches/presentations
- Correspond with others
- Negotiate better deals
- Speak in public
- Concisely present recommendations

Leadership skills

- Oversee a program/department/staff
- Motivate others
- Deliver constructive feed back
- Make decision
- Be a visionary
- Set goals
- Troubleshoot
- Praise others
- Direct projects and individuals
- Mentor people
- Confront people
- Delegate responsibility
- Investigate problems from different angles
- Listen to others
- Mediate between people to facilitate consensus building
- Keep the big picture in mind
- Build awareness about team successes across company/organization
- Persuade others
- Anticipate challenges and take appropriate actions to address them

Analytical Skills

- Analyze and validate accuracy of data
- Evaluate value of activity/individual/product
- Classify information into effective categories
- Can plan and create budgets
- Design data systems
- Translate numerous data into concise recommendations
- Develop effective data models
- Predict outcome from past trends

Teamwork Skills

- Listen to others
- Coordinate efforts across team members
- Solve problems
- Handle details
- Plan projects
- Analyze situations
- Find resources
- Work well with others
- Gain cooperation
- Obtain maximum productivity from others
- Implement changes
- Pay attention to details
- Imagine new solutions
- Run meetings

Customer-Services Skills

- Meet client/customer needs
- Troubleshooting
- Resourcefully solve problems
- Courteous manner
- Listening
- Helpful attitude
- Arrange informal events
- Distribute products
- Handle complaints
- Initiate contacts with strangers
- Negotiate contracts

Initiative/Creative/Innovation

- Propose innovative processes or structure
- Brainstorm new ideas
- Create/develop new products/procedures/tools
- Recognize/identify opportunities
- Determine priorities
- Develop alternatives
- Manage all aspects of large/multiple projects
- Organize tracking or filing systems
- Determine resources
- Solve problems
- See the big picture and all interacting components simultaneously
- Gather support and cooperation from others
- Administer project from start to finish
- Evaluate programs

Ethics/Integrity

- Act according to shared core of values
- Understand and apply company policies
- Can be trusted
- Follow through with decisions
- Treat all constituents fairly
- Recognize conflicts of interest
- Influence through external evidence or verifiable
- Data report witnessed unethical behaviors
- Implement consequences of non-compliance
- Take calculated risks
- Recognize mistakes and redirect situations
- Accordingly present sincere apology
- Display humility
- Fairly recognize contributions of others

Part 7. Resources

Marshall Graduate Career Services provides extensive online resources related to all aspects of your career development and job search. Guides and checklists are available in the MCSO *Document Library*, as well as links to external resources from the MCSO Dashboard.

Document Library

The Document Library, in the “My Profile” menu, provides an extensive database of career preparation and job search guides. Related resources are divided several folders:

Code of Conduct & MCSO Start Guide: Students are required to understand and abide by the Code of Conduct. The start guide will walk you through the menus including job searching, events, workshops, and advising appointments.

Career Planning & Preparation: The guides cover the Career Action Plan, writing resume and cover letters, Dissecting the Ad, and the Tommy Trojan resume template.

Job Search, Offers, and Negotiation: Interview preparation, lists of interview questions, LinkedIn strategy, negotiating job offers, and reporting your job or internship offer on MCSO.

Industry Guides: Each guide covers a different industry of interest to MBA students, and details important information and resources.

Networking Resources: Networking guides, informational interview questions, and lists of current students and alumni (by company and location) to help start the networking process.

Career Fairs & Conferences: MBA national conference guides, the Career Fair Checklist, and the GCS Career Fair list of participating firms.

Online Resources & Websites: Guides to navigate the online resources listed on the MCSO Dashboard.

Online Resources

Graduate Career Services offers free access to multiple websites for MBA.PM students, including premium features, directly from the MCSO Dashboard.

Beyond B-School: A full range of job search related presentations by marketplace experts, focused on LinkedIn, interviewing, networking and many other topics.

Company Interview Questions Databank: A Wikispaces website listing actual MBA interview questions by company and function.

GoinGlobal: Employment market conditions, job search techniques, job sources, and job postings by country.

InterviewStream: Prepares students for video interviews, a common method for screening and long-distance interviews.

MBA-Exchange.com: A trusted partner of top business schools to facilitate connections to MBA employers across the world.

USC Library Business Research Guide: A resource guide to company and industry databases provided by the Marshall Business Library and USC.

Vault: Provides career information for researching employers, industries, and other career subjects. Vault guides cover a variety of career topics.

Note: For further instructions on using MCSO, log in and find the *MCSO Start Guide*, found under *My Profile > Document Library*.

Marshall Clubs & Organizations

Marshall offers more than 40 graduate student clubs, many focused on functional or industry interests. MBA.PM students are encouraged to join and participate in events, including networking events, company visits, training sessions, interview and recruiting preparation.

Clubs also provide opportunities to expand leadership and team management skills, and demonstrate to recruiters your skill and commitment to a career industry or function. Club events may take place during the day, evening or weekends.

The following may not include all current clubs and organizations. For a complete list, please visit the PM Program office.

Student Government

Marshall Graduate Student Association.PM (MGSA.PM)

Career Clubs – Functional Interest

American Finance Association (AFA)
Graduate Marketing Association (GMA)
Marshall Consulting & Strategy Club (MCSC)
Marshall Data Analytics Club (MDAC)
Leadership & Organizational Club (L&O)
Operations Management Club (OMC)

Career Clubs – Industry Interest

Business of Entertainment Association (BEA)
Entrepreneur & Venture Management Association (EVMA)
Graduate Real Estate Association (GREA)
Healthcare Leadership Association (HLA)
High Tech Association (HTA)
Marshall Automotive Club (MAC)
Marshall Energy and Resources Club (MERC)
Marshall Hospitality & Gaming Club (MHGC)
Marshall Interactive Gaming Association (MIGA)
Marshall Net Impact (MNI)
Marshall Retail Management Association (MRMA)
Marshall Sports Business Organization (MSBO)

Diversity and Affinity Organizations

Black Graduate Business Leaders (BGBL)
Graduate Asian Business Society (GABS)
Graduate Women in Business (GWIB)
Jewish Association of Marshall Students (JAMS)
Latino Management & Business Association (LMBA)
Marshall Military Veterans Association (LMBA)
Marshall Pride
South Asian Business Association (SABA)

Community Outreach

Challenge for Charity (C4C)
MarshallWear
Marshall Youth Outreach (MYO)

Social and Athletic Organizations

Marshall Eatz
Marshall Golf Club (MGC)
Marshall Outdoor Club (MOC)
Marshall Soccer Club (MSC)
Marshall Wine Club (MWC)
MBA Partners
Mindful Marshall

Executive Alumni Mentoring Program

One of the longest-running mentor programs, second-year MBA.PM students have the opportunity to apply and be matched to an alumni mentor for a one-year mentorship.

Mentorship is an opportunity to gain valuable information about a career or industry, gain insight and feedback on the internship search, and through the beginning of the full-time search.

A call for applications will be sent each fall, and interested students submit a resume and essay describing their career and industry interests as well as define their commitment to the program.

Contact GCS for more information about the program.

Part 8. Policy Statement

The following is an *abbreviated* version of the Student Code of Conduct. You are responsible for reviewing and understanding the complete guide, located in the Document Library:

Advance Preparation for Recruiting Events.

A student will be well-prepared and appropriately dressed for every contact with an employer. This includes company information sessions, mock interviews, informational interviews, job interviews and follow-up activities.

Accuracy and Personal Information. A student will always represent him/herself accurately to the employer with factual data about his/her academics, skills and all other information.

Application Deadline Policies. The resume submission deadline for an on-campus interview is 11:59 pm. Please note that employers can and may stop accepting resumes prior to the posted deadline submission date.

Event Pre-Registration and Attendance. Once registered, students 1) are expected to arrive on time wearing appropriate attire, 2) are **required** to turn off cell phones and computers, and 3) are **required** to check-in prior to the start of the event or presentation (swipe or sign-in).

If student is unable to attend an event due to an emergency, the student must immediately contact the appropriate GCS staff or career advisor. Multiple unexcused absences from pre-registered presentations or events may result in a temporary suspension of MCSO privileges.

Interviewing. Plan to arrive at least 10-15 minutes prior a scheduled on-campus interview. Allow time for traffic and any other unforeseen circumstances that could cause a late arrival.

Do **not** treat on-campus recruiting as practice interviews. It is unfair to other students who want the position, and to the company expending

considerable resources to recruit qualified, interested candidates. Give at least two business days' notice before cancelling or changing an interview, to allow a "waitlisted" student to be accommodated. Unexcused absences from interviews and information sessions, are subject to the "No-Show" Policy.

No-Show Policy. When a student secures an interview, or registers for a company event, he/she is committing to attend. Failure to do so is called a "no-show" and damages both the student's and the school's reputation with employers. If a student misses an interview, he/she risks suspension from further interviewing and access to MCSO. On-Campus Recruiting privileges may be revoked at the discretion of the Director, until appropriate follow up actions have occurred.

Anti-Renege Policy. Once a verbal or written offer has been accepted, it is both ethically and professionally responsible to discontinue recruiting with other employers (i.e. interviewing should cease). If an offer is renege upon by the student, GCS reserves the right to take appropriate action, which may include suspension of MCSO access or GCS services. Renegeing an offer could potentially harm the professional reputation of USC Marshall as well as the student, resulting in limited opportunities for fellow Trojans.

Academic/Class Conflicts. Academics come first. Students will avoid missing classes to interview, attend company information sessions or participate in any event sponsored by Graduate Career Services and should coordinate with their professor(s) if any absences are unavoidable.

Employment Offer Reporting. Once a student receives or accepts an internship or full-time job offer, it is important to report the job offer/acceptance status via MCSO. This data contributes to the school's overall ranking and is reported in an aggregate format only. Information is collected on an ongoing basis throughout the school year.

Being well prepared is very important in order to capture the attention of employers early in the recruiting process. It's never too soon to refine your career tool kit.

Building or refining a career plan, crafting or updating your résumé, and polishing your self-introduction and interviewing skills now will give you a competitive edge.

We look forward to working with you during your time at Marshall.



USC Marshall Graduate Career Services Center
630 Childs Way – JKP 310
Los Angeles, CA 90089
Phone: (213) 740-0156
Email: mba.crc@marshall.usc.edu

Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:30 am to 6:00 pm