

Episode 82 - Jason Vallozzi

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SPEAKERS

Moira McCullough, Jason Vallozzi

M Moira McCullough 00:00

Welcome to the College Scoops podcast. I'm your host, Moira McCullough and today we are talking with Jason Vallozzi on how to position yourself to land a full time job from your current internship.

J Jason Vallozzi 00:11

Recruiters want to talk to people, students forget about that. When I'm excited about a resume going back to what I did, I wanted to pick up the phone when I saw something that was really exciting for a role, or I got a resume or got that connection or somebody sent in a resume of interest. I wouldn't speak to that person.

M Moira McCullough 00:34

This is the College Scoops podcast and I'm your host Moira McCullough, we focus on everything college related from the admissions process to where to eat, stay and explore on and round campuses. Our guests include founders, educators, authors and experts in the college space. Join us as these experts share their knowledge, experiences and lessons learned to help you have stress free and formative and tasty college journeys. Whether it's your first or last child going to college, or you're just interested in going to a college town

for a game or meal we've got you covered. If you haven't already, please subscribe to the College Scoops podcast to get the inside scoop, send everything college related, and leave us a review. Thanks to all of our sponsors partners in the entire College Scoops Ambassador team for helping us bring valuable content to our community. If you would like to support College Scoops as a sponsor, please head over to patreon@patreon.com/collegescoops and sign up as a sustaining listener, insider or Deluxe sponsor. We have exclusive benefits for our members free ebooks and even a College Scoops care package. Jason Vallozzi is the founder of Campus2CareerCrossroads, which is established on the premise of helping to bridge the gap in today's confusing and competitive college admissions to career market. The mission at Campus2CareerCrossroads is to develop a supportive and individualized partnership with clients in order to help them successfully navigate the transitional and complex stages from high school to career. Jason is a magna cum laude graduate of the University of Pittsburgh with a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications. He possesses over 15 years of progressive experiences in post secondary admissions and over four years of high level talent acquisition in the retained executive search world. Jason continuously works on professional development, whether it be enrolled in courses at the UCLA extension College Counseling Program, or as an active member of numerous professional associations. Welcome to the College Scoops podcast. Jason, thank you so much for joining us today.



Jason Vallozzi 02:37

No, thank you so much. Very excited to be here. Super exciting to have a chance to speak to the college scoops community.



Moira McCullough 02:44

Well, I love it - you and I connected when we first talked about Pittsburgh because I'm a foodie and you're from Pittsburgh. I just wanted to sit and talk restaurants with you. So that will be for another day.



Jason Vallozzi 02:53

I'm sure we can do our own podcast on that. We might have a series of podcasts because I love food and Pittsburgh isn't an overated food seem to say the least.



Moira McCullough 03:02

I know. So I think we'll need a planning session one of these days and I'll come out and we'll just you know, meander around Pittsburgh, from breakfast all the way to dinner, trying different places.



Jason Vallozzi 03:14

Hard research we as professionals must do on a daily basis.



Moira McCullough 03:18

I think so as well. Thank you so much for joining us. I'm excited for you to share your expertise and talk about helping the students as they get ready for launching from college to career and you have such a vast background of experience in college admissions and executive recruiter. Can you just share a little bit about how you made that transition?



Jason Vallozzi 03:39

Yes, it's really unique, in a sense, a total happy accident, if you will. I spent over 14 years in admissions, it was my first job out of college. And then after 14 years, like a lot of people I aspire to do something different. I started at the earliest ranks of admissions going out visiting high schools, meeting teachers and counselors all throughout the region in the state, building relationships and worked my way up to leadership roles overseeing the entire admissions operation. And then executive recruiting was an opportunity that I sought out as I was looking for sort of what was next potentially, I was always very impressed with executive recruiters, we had the opportunity to hire them and admissions. And I was very impressed with the skill set similar to admissions executive recruiters guide people through an unknown intangible process. And that's really what admissions is. When you think about the college journey. There's so much unknown what are the right fit schools? How do we do these things? How do we sequence it, the universities that come up along the way so you really have to get comfortable with guiding people through an unknown process, and giving them comfort and recognizing their strengths and goals. And along the way. Along with that I found executive recruiters when we did have the opportunity to hire them. It's select times and admissions capacities did extremely well. They were very good on the phone. They were very good at building relationships. with families, very good at understanding needs very good at setting expectations, both positive and when they had to maybe give bad news as well. So all those skill sets really intrigued me about the field of executive recruiting. And I was very fortunate when I did make the transition to work for a company that did solely retain searches. So they were hired by companies to do specific roles that those companies were very large, but could

not find on their own. So we had specific if you will, contracts, for roles that were very specialized, that were very critical for these companies, and organizations to really lead and grow, as you just said that in terms of looking at individuals who have specific skill sets for that particular role.

M Moira McCullough 05:45

That's actually when you look at college admissions, you were looking at specific students, right, and it would fill a need for that particular college as well.

J Jason Vallozzi 05:54

Exactly one of the things that I find that I feel I do very, very well for clients, and we do overall at Campus2CareerCrossroads is really messaging, understanding a person's strengths and goals very uniquely. Working and seeing thousands of students over the years, you understand pretty quickly, what are their strengths? What are their goals, what are their unique abilities that they don't even realize, and that's very helpful to bring out in a college application process. And then I can continue that ultimately, when we're working together in the career process, when you write a resume, so many people default to a template. But a template really limits those unique points and accomplishments. And many young people are going to college still don't have a strong understanding of their strengths and what makes them unique to employer. So that messaging again, which I've been exposed to for over 20 years, but 18 years, and those two admissions and executive recruiting capacities, really helped me how people have a better understanding of their strengths, their goals, and then we can really identify the right fit.

M Moira McCullough 06:53

What did you love about the executive recruiting in terms of helping students and helping professionals kind of find a place that they can call home and grow and learn for their next adventure, whether it's college related or or career related?

J Jason Vallozzi 07:12

Sure, I think it's finding the right fit. So many people don't understand what the right fit is for them. And when they find an institute that they can be excited to come to everyday, much like a workplace where they're excited to come to work, and they can contribute. And they can be proud of what they're doing. And they can be excited about the results. And it almost adds another layer of confidence that people don't realize that sometimes

the subtlety of even I think a great college planning and Career Service, what they can offer their clients is really a stronger understanding their messaging and their strengths, which they didn't anticipate coming out of the process. So I think it's really about coming back to your question is really about finding that right fit, where people just have the opportunity. They know why they're at that school, they know why they're working at that employer, they understand to the amenities around them to even thrive more just watching people grow their excitement, and seeing them really do well in the years ahead is really motivating to help that next client reach that success, either of those forms.

M

Moira McCullough 08:10

Well, before we jump into what we want to focus on today, which is about helping students who are getting ready to launch from campus to their career as we talked about, do you have any advice for students who are getting ready to fine tune their college list, given what we've just gone through in the past year? Do you have any quick tidbits for students work on this summer as they get ready to visit colleges?

J

Jason Vallozzi 08:37

Absolutely. I think building a balanced college list is more important than ever. This year, our application cycle last year had the most extreme volume, which says a lot in college admissions. So I think the need to really understand schools beyond their name, but what are the admissions requirements? How well does that student fit so they have a good mix of target, safety reach colleges so they can enjoy the process. And I think visiting the right amount of schools to make sure they just don't visit all reach colleges. They really look at a broad cross section. So I think it comes back to building a great college list. Visiting colleges, colleges are now starting to open. It seems pretty much throughout the country, some form or fashion, some have more visitors, some have less but being on campuses will allow students to really understand if the fit is going to be there and what the amenities are. And my last thought would be a quick tidbit would be please try to get those college application items started over the summer. It's so tough when students get back to school in the fall, AP classes are coming up them sports activities. The days go by super quick and November 1 deadlines don't change. I always joke about those. Those deadlines come extremely quick and it's really tough to put it together at the end.

M

Moira McCullough 09:50

No, it's so true. And as a parent who has been through it three times. I always say you know the beginning of the summer you're so tired from the year and you just want to

unwind a little bit, but putting in some targeted focused work to kind of have a good foundation or framework to start the senior year is so important. And to your point, you don't have much time in the beginning of the school year, you kind of are just jump right in and start working hard to make sure that you end high school with a really good academic year. It ramps up pretty quickly.



Jason Vallozzi 10:25

Nowadays, I'm amazed with the AP classes and homework and the test that students have to navigate in the fall and then when they have to put essays and sometimes students don't realize the supplemental essays associated with applying to a college that do more essays here, two more essays there and AP assignments over here, it can be very intense. And one of my favorite things I've learned from admissions people all throughout the country is they can read rushed an application so they can tell when that essay is very, very rushed and, and not thoughtfully put together. And it's really tough to do when when the October month hits, and the November 1 deadlines are there and an AP still coming up so to speak. So.



Moira McCullough 11:04

So read rushed that's the admissions lingo for he did this over over Columbus Day weekend. Not a good thought.



Jason Vallozzi 11:14

They can pick that up. Admissions colleagues have joked a little bit how young people have tried to recycle prompts from one school to another school and put those in for supplemental essays. And that doesn't read effectively in the application too. So really getting an understanding of the right college is building that list. And even something as simple as tracking how many supplemental essays a student might be required to do before November 1 can be a great way to start helping to set small goals to end is that process again, all supplementals will generally be released August first. So students have a great opportunity to know that number officially August 1, and, and sort of balanced that in before, I'm always amazed the sports schedules, the activity schedules, the academic schedules, and in college then can be its own AP class, too.



Moira McCullough 12:02

So absolutely. It's amazing, because we've had over a year of where extracurricular

activities have been reduced. Now we're going to go back to full force right in, you know, driving from one event to another extracurricular volunteers, community service schools. So your point in advice is very helpful. Especially the tips from admissions. That's what I love to hear. And I know students are always like, well, what is admissions looking for? Or how do I know what to write or what to say, that will resonate with an admissions person, but you're constantly going back to the fit and making sure that you've done your research?



Jason Vallozzi 12:41

I think when you understand the fit, you can also write supplemental essays better. I did think it was a struggle this past year, students couldn't visit college campuses. So it was very difficult to really write sort of the why do you want to go to this type of college. The supplemental prompt, it was very difficult because students were certainly at a distance, they can only look at things virtually, but seeing the campuses and being able to explain that. And I think if students know the fit that comes out in a very authentic way in their essays, and that's something I think admissions officials share frequently, too, is they can read authenticity very well. People forget their reading, sometimes 30 4050 applications a day. And that's a lot of essays. But ultimately, you can start to read and see when people really know and Institute are passionate about it, versus somebody that's very casual about it doesn't know and tries to speak in generalities. So, again, coming back to that fit. When students know it's so exciting when they start to find colleges, they excite them. And they can really explain that in their overall college application as supplemental essays. And I think essays now more important than ever, right? But the whole test optional and test optional, I think so very real choice. I think, again, that's where I find so important in my college planning process with clients that really understand the school beyond the name, and what are potential test score ranges. How does that fit for a student? Would they be able to improve their scores to be in a middle 50% or greater range? Or is test optional, a better route? I did have clients last year that successfully applied to various selective colleges utilizing test optional. So I think we can do that. Well, I think in that case, we have to realize if we're taking test scores out of the application evaluation, we certainly have to make sure essays, other information is looking extremely strong, because that's going to be looked at even closer, even letters of recommendation potentially in that case, may have to be enhanced or potentially written in a very dynamic way and hopefully providing those people with great information to write a letter. So there's a lot of other things to consider. But ultimately, I think students need to understand those score ranges and each college is going to be different on their lists, whether it's test optional, or they apply with test scores.

M**Moira McCullough 14:51**

Okay, thank you for that. That's always a question that I hear and then as a parent going through it, I was always asking so it's good to hear what people recommend and get some advice. So in terms of the transition to executive recruiter, and then how you have basically, you know, now transition that into helping students pursue higher education and or pursue a career, and how do you help students who try to get internships and we talked a little bit earlier about like branding and marketing yourself because as an executive recruiter, I love it that one little blurb about executive recruiting was like your part salesman, career counselor, consultant, advisor, a fact finder and shrink.

J**Jason Vallozzi 15:39**

It's a little bit of everything. And you really have to manage expectations on both sides is what people don't realize there's a client's, their expectations, when they work with a search firm are obviously much higher in a routine capacity, they have extremely high expectations, to find a really high level person that's going to impact and grow the company. And then also on the client side, you have to manage those expectations as well, making sure the fit again, is there somebody who's not taking something because it seems interesting, or they want a new challenge after being at the same company for 12 years. So there's a lot of things that you do have to vet and a lot of pieces that do have to fit together for both sides that you have to look at objectively. Right.

M**Moira McCullough 16:17**

So then how do you when you're helping students, let's say you have a lot of students right now, and some are looking to crush it so they can get that formal offer at the end of the summer. Others are in the process of continuing to pursue an internship for the summer or for the school year. And you talked about personal branding? Where should we start? what's what's the natural starting point to help those students, families or all three of those?

J**Jason Vallozzi 16:45**

Those are exciting questions. Actually, I'd say start with a branding. That's the biggest thing that I see college students that don't have in place, I think of it myself going back, when we applied to positions, I feel bad for those employers now they got probably about 30 resumes that were all the same font format. Look, they could pretty much cover the name at the top third, and everything else was probably the same. So how do you stand

out branding for one in a resume form really helps you stand out. And I think that's the part of it. When you look at a college campus, you're competing with a lot of other people in your major. Most people again, this comes back to one of the things I'm very passionate about messaging with clients, what are your strengths, what makes you unique? What can we market to employers, that's going to resonate with them. And so I think branding, to me is a perfect opportunity and a campus trigger crossroads. We even work with a professional designer. While I'm very confident in the messaging we're going to do for a client, I think one of the things that we do uniquely, in a Career Service capacity is then work with somebody who's extremely creative in taking our our early thoughts, early messaging, sometimes collaborated handset, and really put colors and design that really makes again, somebody stand out. One of the things I think I can do very uniquely for clients from being at the executive level, when I realized college students are coming to entry level roles. But if you can take what makes a person look dynamic to land a very high level, let's say VP role, and incorporate those type of attributes into a college student, they're going to look completely different. It's game changing. So thinking about branding, one thing that people don't realize the fonts on your resume can separate you. But you also have to be mindful of that to being a part of the National Resume Writers Association. We're constantly being mindful of applicant tracking systems, and there's hundreds, you can't master them, you can't figure them out. Even as much as we believe in networking, there's still times that college clients have to apply for internships or jobs through applicant tracking systems. But there are eight major fonts. So it's pretty easy for somebody to Google that you want to work and utilize those type of funds. In a resume I've seen sometimes people get very exotic with their fonts, and those are not able to be read. So your phone number, your name might not be read even as a bonus I've seen sometimes people come to us before and they've tried to jam so much into the resume, which is another No no. And they actually put their name and so forth in the header and information in the footer and ATM systems on a whole cannot read that. So they're automatically disqualified because they can't be read. So there's a lot to resumes more so than what people think of fonts are a great way to separate yourself. Again, going back to my college experience that I think of not the best of probably just having that resume was a very generic font that looked the same as everybody else. But there is a way to make that more creative and you have to utilize that effectively.



Moira McCullough 19:38

Absolutely. And then don't be too creative because that's another detractor you'll be separated on a negative aspect.



Jason Vallozzi 19:46

Exactly. Even little things you know something we see more commonly at the executive level or people have a lot of graphics and things in resumes and sometimes college clients want to maybe incorporate those but those sometimes are not read. And that information again is unclear to ATMs until it gets to a hiring manager. But the biggest thing that I see is when people start to use really exotic fonts that aren't read, it can be simple. The application system disqualifies them because it's incomplete, can't read their information. So there are about a fonts that are pretty well respected amongst applicant tracking systems that we encourage clients to utilize. And we kind of talked to them about that, as we're building it. Because our process is very collaborative. With resume writing, we want a client to feel very excited, we do a two step revision process involving them in each step, showing them what the fonts would look like showing them making sure they're finding that font comfortable, and so forth. But those are things again, people aren't aware of and, and that's probably another great practice that we bring into it. So for those clients that that get the gold star for going the extra mile and utilizing different fonts, we also want to make sure that font is going to be readable at the end of the day, and get through applicant tracking systems at times. So I think when you start with branding, and you start key areas with branding, you start with messaging, you start even with, let's say an email signature that's designed and appropriate and just stands out. In one area, let's say of branding that most people neglect and never think of those are little things you can sometimes we've done things where we've incorporated school colors into that to help people then have messaging their school colors coming forward. And even some of the branding we do, they can carry forward beyond college as a young professional. So those colors and design schemes and what have you, I try to be very mindful that those could be taken when they're a graduate and into their early roles as well. So that's some of the branding, I think sets the forefront because it gives people another opportunity to understand their strengths and messaging better. And then I think when they're approaching internships, they have a higher level of confidence. One of the things that I'm very big in and imparting with clients is to target the right opportunities not be dependent on job boards. So really, who might their professors know? Where are the alumni connections? What are companies, these students potentially want to work with? Most students, I find, honestly, we sort of have to backstep before it, let's get this great internship. But ultimately, what internships are right, most students have to start to identify what jobs potentially might interest them. And it's a big, sometimes a little nervous point for them. Like I don't know what I want to do, I'm in college, but I don't know what I want to do. But we might have to start to figure out, let's say in a marketing and a communications major, what roles might be appropriate. So we can start to identify the right internships. And even if that doesn't land on the final job, or the final area, that's going to be really relevant experience that again, we can tailor into the resume and other professional messaging. So I like to do that and then start to find appropriate companies.

I'm a fan. And I learned this with executive recruiting, we had to target the right people in certain roles, the right organizations, the right professional association, so I feel that I can impart that knowledge very, very well to clients. But we usually have to figure out a little bit more of what they want to do, what roles are there, and then we can start building out and starting to target and source the right companies through networking and research.

M

Moira McCullough 23:01

This is like all coming back when I was graduating. I was an American Studies major or look at an English major who doesn't want to go into teaching or something like that, or journalism. You look at something like that. And you think, what about the fit. And you mentioned that. So I love the fact that you could be looking at a certain title, role description. But fit is important in terms of the culture as well, which you mentioned. Because you may find out that that culture doesn't really resonate with you, that's not something where you will thrive.

J

Jason Vallozzi 23:34

There's a lot of students, we probably know in common that want to work at Google, let's say, right, computer science. But Google and other let's say very large corporations, as we probably know, have a lot of bureaucracy red tape at times. Some students like they might be better to start up, they might be better at a company where they have a lot more creativity, a smaller company, a midsize company, but those are things that we try to help our clients think of, again, coming back to the fit, that we could certainly look at large corporations, but sometimes they just haven't thought about what the possibilities are. I think the biggest piece that we find is students, there's such a big knowledge, let's say gap between going from part time jobs to even competitive internships of what's expected. What the demands are, what the fit might be. Even interviewing is radically different going from a part time job at a at the mall to what a top employers expecting you to do, even over a summer internship that pays well. So I think kind of getting students up to speed with the demand the expectations of what that all might look like. And then again, identifying the right mix of companies would probably be really helpful for them.

M

Moira McCullough 24:42

Definitely. And then I mean, who would have thought about branding from the level that you take it in terms of email signature font, you know how to stand out as well, because as you said, just like in college admissions, you're reading 1000s and 1000s of applications,

hiring managers. Also reading 1000s and 1000s of resumes and cover letters, and how do you make yourself stand out to the point where they want to read and continue reading past that, dear john? intro?

J Jason Vallozzi 25:14

Sure, there's other ways of branding too. I mean, we incorporate a lot, branding can certainly weave over to LinkedIn, for that matter, that should be part of that messaging. So like, almost like a company branding standards, those branding aspects we do for clients, they can move into other areas, business cards, thank you cards, a lot of different things that really make a client look completely different than other students on campus in a good way. Again, employers want to hire, you need to stand out in a distinctive manner. And again, I kind of bring that experience as a recruiter, and I have a Director of Career Services, and she has over 20 years of experience on the human resource hiring side. So again, when we both look at things in a collaborative sense, we really feel that we give our clients a really big edge, I look at it quite simply, would this resume get me excited? recruiters want to talk to people, if students forget about that, when I'm excited about a resume going back to I did, I wanted to pick up the phone, when I saw something that was really exciting for a role, or I got a resume or got that connection or somebody sent in a resume of interest, I wouldn't speak to that person. So again, not having your phone number, even something simple in your email, it's a little thing, if I've got to dig around for that phone number, when I want to speak to somebody having a little thing like that can just again, make it look just in that best possible light. So again, I think those little things that we try to impart with clients to really make them look different, and stand out in a very positive way.

M Moira McCullough 26:38

So as you said, in terms of with students who, for instance, have that current internship right now, you know, network set up those networking calls, reach out to different industry experts, kind of talk to them and learn more about what they're doing. Continue to fine tune the resume and update it based upon the current job that you have or your internship.

J Jason Vallozzi 27:05

No great question, I think that's probably one thing, I might even take this down a different road. I'm really passionate about coaching clients when they started an internship. That's one of the biggest things that I seen when clients do we get connected,

you can appreciate with clients that might talk to us their freshman year, some continue from our college planning services into our career services. And then of course, we get calls we've worked recently with to great success stories, but those clients are connected to us a year, respectively outside of college, and then two years outside of college. So the biggest thing that I see with clients we don't work with internships, is they let the opportunity I really didn't get along with my supervisor as well. All right, it's three months, let's make this a great experience. Let's just find a way to make some commonalities. Let's you know, get along with this person make it a great experience. But also building relationships coming away, let's say with a manager that could write you a letter of recommendation, if you don't get the job, you might not want the job to so many so many people who I didn't I had the internship, I think at a job, that's not a failure, you might have learned important skills and realized, Hey, I'm glad I did that marketing internship over the summer, I don't want to do digital marketing, I do public relations marketing. So those are important takeaways. So it's not always about that internship, leading good offer letter. But building the relationships, in my opinion, a manager if you go in strategically, and you know what you're looking to do in this internship and build relationships. Hopefully, that manager could write you a letter of recommendation, hopefully appear, could speak well on your behalf and maybe even write a LinkedIn recommendation for you. So those are things that I see are huge misses respectfully, when clients come to us by not utilizing our services along the way. Those are little things, I think coaching people. Again, this internship is like your mini professional job, the stakes are so much higher than a part time job that if you don't do a little steps, even come away with Project wins. I've talked to clients after the fact of what were your successes on this internship. What were you working on? What were you interested to do a little bit I realized as an internship, but there's no specificity. There's no details. There's no metrics. So I really prefer before clients start these internships, I've just touched on a few areas, but really helping clients maximize those three months, because it's so much more can be a resume component. It can leave the LinkedIn recommendations, it can lead to other referrals. I mean, you're working with managers that know other people or their companies and industry sectors. So it's so important almost have that sort of game plan going into it that will allow students to maximize when they do have an internship at hand.



Moira McCullough 29:35

Absolutely. And then for the ones that are fortunate enough to get that offer. It's almost like now what what do I do with that?



Jason Vallozzi 29:47

I can this year, it's interesting because a lot of clients we're seeing that we're working with, they're doing virtual internships. So that's another skill set that we have to sort of try to help navigate and again, we want us to come out with A lot of successful outcomes, but it's very tough. Sometimes I think for a young professional to build those meaningful relationships via zoom when they aren't in the office. So how do you



Moira McCullough 30:10

do that? So how do you do that? Because that is so hard. I mean, it is so hard, you know, everyone's been doing zoom, everyone's a little tired of zoom. So, you know, for those students who are in that virtual internship role, what are some key tips that you would say, like top three tips in order to stand out?



Jason Vallozzi 30:27

Sure. So I think number one is sure the work setting you're in displays professionalism, I know some of these are fundamentals, but they are so missed. I mean, maybe college students have a apartment that works well, for zoom classes that might not convey the right message, you're communicating your professionalism to your managers, co workers. So in your zoom calls, if there's a background, or you're taking calls from the Starbucks, and it's loud, and it's noisy, that doesn't set the right tone, they're not going to be too excited to probably continue on and trust you with a lot of projects. So I think number one is making sure your professionalism is the same as if you're in the office. And I think secondly, one of the things that goes underrated just as if people were in the office, you would make time to ask for maybe late let's grab coffee on Friday, let's grab lunch, something like that, I still think it's incredibly meaningful for students to be asking for those one on one type of sessions where you would say, hey, let's grab lunch on Friday, something like that. And it gives you a chance to build and bond. So as people are working virtually, we probably have more time to sort of have those 15 minute one on one conversations, get to know your coworkers have the people skills, understand what they like about their job, their company, other companies they worked out. So building those relationships, and sort of seeking out I think a lot of college clients, sometimes without our guidance, wait for those invitations to come to them. Or we ask our clients to be strategic and say, you know, maybe start easy was a peer that might be able to give you a 15 minute coffee meeting, things like that. So I think that professionalism, building the relationships, and tracking the successes in the work that you're doing, whether maybe it will lead to successes, but you should be noting the projects we've been asked to do. If we're looking to fill two or three bullet points, we if we have a little bit of foresight going

into this internship, we can probably come away with some really dynamic talking points. But again, that's some of the coaching that we like to do prior to be able to maximize those results.

M

Moira McCullough 32:23

It's all such helpful information. I think the one thing that I would say in terms of with the professionalism and everything I feel for so many students, and so many individuals, professionals who are in a situation where their home environment was not conducive to working from home for the last year. Plus, so it's like how do you and recognizing that and understanding that not everyone is in a position to have that. office space, shall we say that set up correctly. So But to your point is creating an environment to make it as professional as possible, whether it's changing that setting, putting yourself in a in a situation where you can hear and conduct yourself in a manner that's not distracting to the person that you're talking with as well.

J

Jason Vallozzi 33:15

Exactly, I think professional backgrounds unless you're in a super, maybe creative design studio, you want to keep a little bit more neutral, but they can be great. And sometimes we've seen where students have had a lot of freedom on college campuses to run a coffee shops and do things outside they aren't sometimes recognizing how those can be very distracting on a on a work call. And I think if always in a quiet professional space, when appropriate. It just communicates a different level of professionalism, because I think so many employers speaking to them and being a part of this over the years, want to be able to entrust people and they're sort of looking on these calls, can I trust this person? Can I give them work? And I give them these things? And if they're showing up late to meetings or not conveying that right impression, where they're at and what they're doing that leads to less trust and probably a less meaningful internship experience?

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Moira McCullough 34:06

Absolutely. What advice do you have for students who do get an offer, shall we say, in terms of is this a good offer? Like and does it consist of everything that one might need? For instance, my son just got a great offer. And it's to move across the country, you know, so we were saying, Okay, so what's in that offer? Do you have any type of allowances to help you with the move? There's so many different components to have an offer that to your point is different than your part time or summer job that you had?



Jason Vallozzi 34:39

Right? And that's something that I really find is completely new and almost another stress point to I think the career launch piece overall is stressful to clients. So what do I say what does a resume look like? Do I need a cover letter? Yes, you need a cover letter. Here's why it's so each phase but I think when they get to the offer and again to your point, coming into professional roles, short term Benefits health insurance, paid time off. Potential relocation, maybe stipends. I know full Reloads are not so much the thing anymore. But all these really important benefits, which sometimes can be negotiated, within reason are very important to look at. So that's probably something I had another great value point as well as Lynn, we've been in this hiring side a really outline all the different benefits beyond the salary structure, and how that matches up and how that really fits a person, and where they might have an opportunity to negotiate more or less within reason. Like everything, I think we try to explain salaries that within a range at all companies, no matter what school you graduate from, so regardless of the college, if you're an engineer, there's a there's a desired salary range. And that's something many times with executive recruiting is we actually did some engineering positions and things too. But there's a desired salary range. But I think when you set out and you can show a client how to outline, every benefit they would be eligible for that would be part of their offer letter. So they understand where they might be able to ask for something that would resonate with them. That's where it becomes helpful to make that evaluation, I think, should I take this job? Is this the right fit, or it's extremely flattering, I got this opportunity as a junior going into my senior year. But I need to respectfully turn us down in a re creationist way. And there is a right way to do that, too. And that's something that we help our clients with. So they again, don't burn a bridge, that might not be the right fit right now. But that employer might have another role or another opportunity in the future. So it's very important to handle that situation really effectively.



Moira McCullough 36:39

Absolutely. And I think you just, that's a great point that as a parent, I always try to impress upon my kids that you may not have had the response that you wanted in terms of getting that particular position. But that doesn't mean that that's not the right company. That's not the right role for you right now. But as you said, that could couple years down the line, they could find your resume, that hiring manager can move on to a different company, and all of a sudden call you and say guess what I've held on for this for a while you weren't right for that one. But I've got the perfect role for you now. So it's always, as you said, important to look at every single interaction as a long term kind of building relationships.



Jason Vallozzi 37:20

Exactly. And I think that's even a value to being connected with people on LinkedIn, you make a great point, a hiring manager, there's a lot of ability in our workplace for hiring managers, mid level senior level people as well, and they can move to another company and you might connect with them years down the line. So I think a lot of times something that we find working with younger clients is they don't realize that you can respectfully turn on a job offer they feel bad like they don't when it does happen, as we both realize, with adults and people turned down job offers some do it better than others from being on that hiring side of life. Lynn can also attest to that too. But there is a right way to do it. There's a gracious way to do it, there's an appropriate way to do it. That keeps you think in a very good regard of that company, as well as the hiring manager.



Moira McCullough 38:05

Absolutely. So much great advice, Jason, that we could have separate conversations based upon every different aspect. So last two questions. I always love to ask our guests, what do you wish you knew before you attended college?



Jason Vallozzi 38:21

I think to be a lot more strategic. And I think every year of your college matters to career launch, you need to be building relationships, you need to be building your resume every year. Your resume again, I feel for those employers that we applied as communications grads to they probably had 30 or 40 resumes, we still use the bulletin board going back 20 years ago in a joking way. That's so envious of college clients now because if they utilize LinkedIn, they have a whole different access to people where I had Manila envelopes, which wasn't too exciting.



Moira McCullough 38:54

And how about the typewriter, the typewriter when you're trying to get you know, a mistake? Do you know how long it took to get that fixed?



Jason Vallozzi 39:02

Totally, totally different. But I think really being strategic, you can build a really great resume. I feel very confident with what our company does well for clients. We build resumes that really are game changing for college students, I'm really basing my knowledge and experiences off of what professional resume should look like. Again, we're

not going to overdo it or overflow somebody. But when people start to make each semester count, you can have that resume looks so much different than somebody that's just never thought about a resume for the past three and a half years and realizes they're graduating. And that's probably one thing we didn't talk about. Just briefly. I'm a member of the National resume Writers Association as well. So there's a professional association for people that do write resumes and work with other colleagues. And it really is game changing. We're actually even working with college career centers right now to try to help support them and bring knowledge to college career professionals. They will like additional assistance in this area but I think looking different in a Hiring capacity is very important. So I think we help bring that to clients would be one way to answer your question was something I wish I did completely different. I wish my resume looked different. I wish I looked at every semester as an opportunity to grow my resume, and really grow simplistically two or three connections, two or three Professor relationships, two or three campus speakers. And if you start to do that, you can have over 2030 contacts that could be an advocate for you, by your senior year, aside from not even getting the alumni office,

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Moira McCullough 40:29

I'll make a plug for that as well, just because I got my jobs through sending out and contacting alumni from my college, for my first job. And it was, it was probably, you know, it's sending it to somebody that you may not know, but as part of alumni organization, and I made that reference to my son. And sure enough, my son, after all this interviewing and reaching out to people, send it out to a spider alumni and who immediately, you know, wanted to help one of his fellow, you know, alumni from that college. So I think those are two points, you're absolutely right, that we hadn't touched on, you know, the Career Centers go in and make use of them and, and talk to them and get all the information, they're there to help. And they're there as a resource. And even if you don't think that that is helpful at that time, I always say they're there, they want to help and get your money's worth, you pay for it.

J

Jason Vallozzi 41:27

With the cost of college, as we see, both of us are aware, I mean, it's so significant to get a return on investment. Even though we do this separately. for clients. We're very collaborative. I always say no one ever had too much career launching help, or too much going college admissions, planning help. So let's utilize resources, let's utilize handshake. I know, so many college campuses have handshake has their software for jobs and internships. But when we sit down with clients, they aren't utilizing that software, which is

a little bit on their side of the play. So ultimately, again, we're all for all the resources, it takes a lot of efforts to career launch. But definitely checking out those resources, building a network, I think one of the advantages of going to college anymore, especially let's say if you would think of a prestigious or elite University, is the networking relationships on that campus, with the professors with the alumni. So if you are coming away with those type of contacts I just mentioned, it's really, you're missing out on a huge piece of the education value.

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Moira McCullough 42:26

Not only that, but you know, it's it's fun to talk to people and learn about what they do. And you learn so much. Whether you like it or you don't like it, but that's information that you didn't have before, as I always say and, and growing that network when you don't quote unquote, need them. And you're not going for the ask, make it easier for down the line when you do have a question or you would like some help, that you've already had that relationship established beforehand. So I always say it's, it's nice to keep in touch with people in that always have an ask when you're calling them. It's nice to just keep in touch and grow that relationship as organically and authentically as you can so that you have that opportunity if you need one to call and say, Hey, Jason, I need some help. Can you help me out with my resume? Or, you know, you're an executive recruiter? I want to do that. Tell me a little bit about that. Do you have five minutes for a cup of coffee? Absolutely.

J

Jason Vallozzi 43:21

I think to your point, there's no one more, I think willing to take those calls in good faith and try to help them alumni, especially the names that the alumni office would provide. Because those are Top of Mind people that want to help graduates that want to help students in certain majors. So if we're neglecting that or not utilizing that alumni office and the resources in there, even reading the alumni newsletter, something as simple as that can be really telling on how active the alumni network is who the people are, what successes are and that can be another reason to reach out but I agree so many great points.

M

Moira McCullough 43:58

We are foodies we started off the conversation as food is there any type of dessert place that you would recommend? And if you're not dessert, feel free to share another food destination on a college campus that you would recommend.



Jason Vallozzi 44:12

Oh, we can make a dessert. One great place was called a Milkshake Factory. They have many locations here in Pittsburgh, but they're milkshakes. And it says a lot because a lot of places do milkshakes extremely well, right. But the milkshake factory and there's one there's multiple locations. There's one located on the University of Pittsburgh's campus on Forbes Avenue is just one of my favorite places. It has some Andy Warhol art decor, so it kind of gives you the Andy Warhol Pittsburgh vibe a little bit so you feel a little cultural as well as getting a milkshakes.



Moira McCullough 44:41

So then you can walk and then you could walk around and visit from them working off.



Jason Vallozzi 44:45

Exactly. So you get a little art you get a little milkshake, it offsets the calories and it's a fun spot of the city for sure. So a lot of choices, but that that would be one that comes top of mind but dessert and only one but that's a tough, tough one. Okay, good.



Moira McCullough 45:01

So I'm going to change it when we end up meeting eventually in Pittsburgh, we're not going for coffee, we're going for a milkshake at the Milkshake Factory. That'll be a good starting point. And then we'll figure out the rest of the eating itinerary. So I'm all for it. That's the date. Thank you so much, Jason, for coming on today.



Jason Vallozzi 45:19

My pleasure. Thank you so much for having me. It was a great time. Thank you so much, and I'm so excited to have a chance to speak to the College Scoops community.



Moira McCullough 45:29

Thank you, Jason, for joining us today as you provided so many helpful tips for students as they are navigating the Job and Internship process, trying to secure a full time job, learning how to update and polish their LinkedIn profile and resume and establishing their brand. College is the time to connect with your peers, professors and others in the professional arena. And don't forget to utilize the career centers and alumni

organizations. You can find all of our show notes and links to the helpful resources mentioned throughout our conversation on our website at collegescoops.com/podcast. You can learn more about Jason and Campus2CareerCrossroads on their website. Please take a couple of minutes to rate review and subscribe to College Scoops. Thank you for listening to our College Scoops podcast. Our entire College Scoops team strives to make the college journey a little bit easier, less stressful, fun and tasty by sharing all the inside scoops we have curated along the way. We would love to hear from you about topics to cover your ideas and everything college related. Reach out to us at collegescoops.com or follow us on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.