6 Strategies to Implement Before Submitting Your First Internship or Job Application

1. **Audit your resume.** Identify any gaps in your competencies that you see on your resume. How can you fill that gap before or during your job search? Are there free courses you could take via LinkedIn, etc. to earn a certificate in a gap area? Revisit any previous experience (internship, part-time or full-time) to see if you have utilized those competencies but perhaps are not reflected on your resume. Add examples now that might fill any existing gaps.

2. **Create a Spreadsheet to Track Your Progress.** It is motivating to know you are taking steps toward your goal. Be prepared to track applications by date submitted, company, position, and location, and the closing deadline for the posting. This will allow you to know when you should receive a communication from the company. It also will help track what positions are open and typical salary ranges. Make a spreadsheet now and be sure to include columns for tracking follow-up communications from both you and the employer. (This correlates to Strategy #4 below.)

3. **Think Outside of The Box.** As you prepare for your internship or job search. Remember that technology is embedded in every company and organization. Do not limit your initial job or internship search! Research a wide array of companies and organizations. Be open to positions that may not be within your focal area but offer opportunities for growth.

4. **Develop a Communication Plan.** Be prepared to follow up applications with an email, a phone call or a LinkedIn message expressing your interest and excitement for the opportunity. This allows you to confirm receipt of your documents in the application package as well. A good timeframe is between 7-10 days after applying (based on the application deadline). Additionally, prepare to send a thank you note after any conversation or following an interview. This should be completed between 24-48 hours after the interaction. Even if you don’t get hired for the original position you applied for, another opportunity might open, and your professional communication will be remembered! If you plan to send a thank you via “snail mail,” purchase thank you notes and stamps now.

5. **Know Your Worth.** Do your research. Markets (Salaries) vary by geographic area. Have a solid estimate in mind of the salary you would accept for a position given its geographic location. You have skills! Prepare to self-advocate to ensure you get top salary for your competencies. If necessary, seek out guidance from your Luddy Career Services team.

6. **Prepare for The Wait.** Securing a professional position may take time. Internships and employment are competitive so start your search early and know that the hiring process can be long. In the time between submitting applications and interviewing, think of ways you can be productive. Seek out ways to volunteer in your community or develop more competencies. Stay positive, energetic, and patient!