

Alumni Career Services Coaching Program

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Mission

Alumni Career Services is dedicated to supporting our alumni with professional advancement opportunities at any stage of their career. Our career coaching program provides a personalized, action-oriented structure to help job seekers and professionals stay focused on achieving their goals with the intention to guide you in developing your own career. All matters discussed in our sessions will be held in adherence to Penn State's organizational policy of compliance and responsibility regarding privacy and the protection of an individual's personal information.

Program Highlights

- › Establish a partnership with a coach, form goals, and be held accountable to expectations formed during the coaching sessions.
- › Share concerns and get expert answers to most career-related questions.
- › Connect to the resources and support necessary for a job search mindful of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- › Refresh knowledge with tips on business, economic, and career trends.

Services

We offer one initial strategy session followed by four consultations during one calendar year. To effectively catalyze the job search, we may recommend weekly or biweekly consultations. Coaching services depend on the client's choice of focus in the following areas:

- › Career transition plan
- › Self-exploration
- › Market research
- › Job search strategy
- › Marketing materials
- › Personal branding
- › Networking
- › Interview preparation
- › Salary negotiation
- › Graduate school review

For additional support outside of the five annual coaching sessions, we encourage alumni to sign up for our weekly Smeal Virtual Office Hours via the Brazen Careers platform, which supports virtual 10- or 15-minute chats for real-time consultation with a career coach.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between career counseling, career advising, and career coaching?

Generally speaking, one would associate career counselors with therapy, career advisors with expert advice, and career coaches with guidance and accountability. Counselors often have counseling degrees. Career advisors and coaches may have relevant certification, but they are less likely to participate in diagnostic assessment. These roles are not mutually exclusive categories, however. As coaches, we may offer expert advice or employ counseling techniques, but our primary interest is facilitating goal attainment through actionable insights.

I haven't applied to a job in a long time. What's changed?

A lot! A job search strategy will be key here and we want to draw your attention to two trends:

Automation: Expect that your marketing materials will be virtually screened to determine 'fit' using applicant tracking systems, software that enables recruiters to streamline that early decision-making. To meet the expectation of a computer algorithm, make sure that your application contains language highly relevant to the target position.

Branding: The savvy job seeker leverages social media, networking, marketing materials, and a cohesive online presence to project ideal candidacy. The overall impression imparted becomes your "brand" (reputation), which now matters both for the job seeker and for the employer seeking broad appeal in the competition for top talent.



Alumni Career Services Virtual Programs

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Purpose

Alumni Career Services at the Penn State Smeal College of Business hosts several programs that serve the professional and career interests of our growing network of constituents. In doing so, we honor Smeal's strategic prioritization of extraordinary education, research with impact, integrity, diversity enhancement, and sustainability. Our webinars, LinkedIn presence, and online chat platforms connect alumni around the world as they gather virtually for networking, career advice, and lifelong learning opportunities.

Lifelong Learning Webinars

Our webinar program began in 2013 and has steadily risen in popularity thanks to the participation of dedicated faculty, staff, and alumni presenters as well as their savvy contacts. All webinars are delivered live with registration freely open to the public and recordings made viewable online. Topics address cutting-edge business and career trends, as shown in the titles of some of our most popular webinars:

- › A Global Market Outlook: Trends and Events for Investors
- › Career Changes and Transitions: Starting Fresh at Any Level
- › Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and New Thinking
- › A Glimpse into Popular Rules of Thumb for 401K Investing
- › Building a Sustainable Supply Chain: Practical Tools for Reducing Cost and Risk

LinkedIn

Penn State Smeal College of Business Alumni (Official):

This group of more than 8,100 verified Smeal alumni provides a platform for participants to virtually network with one another in a private online setting. Graduates have shared that their affiliation with the Smeal brand and network has benefitted both their professional development and career success.

The LinkedIn group discussion forum promotes interaction, collaboration, and idea generation among members. Job opportunities are posted in the "Jobs" section.

Smeal Career Weeks: Several times annually, Smeal Alumni Career Services hosts #SmealCareerWeek on LinkedIn. Our career coach experts write and share articles related to industry trends, job searching, career transitioning, and leadership. These featured weeks also draw attention to upcoming Smeal Alumni Career Services events and career coaching activities.

Smeal Featured Alumni: Every Friday in our #SmealWeeklyRecap, we showcase the professional accomplishments of a Smeal alumnus or alumna. Building upon our interconnections, these stories highlight career success and encouragement for a community that continually looks after one another.

Brazen Online Chat Platform

Smeal Alumni Virtual Career Office Hours: For easy access to our dedicated career coaches, we provide weekly virtual office hours in the form of rapid-fire chats through Brazen, an all-in-one chat software commonly used by recruiters. Our coaches are available on Tuesdays between Noon and 1 p.m. EST and on Thursdays between 6 and 7 p.m. EST.

To register for a Brazen chat, provide your resume and public LinkedIn profile. The best practice is to come prepared with three specific career questions to make the most out of a 10- or 15-minute session. If additional assistance is needed, Smeal alumni can sign up for our 1-to-1 career coaching program.

Smeal Career O'Rama: Also on Brazen, we hold three or four Smeal Career O'Ramas a year to connect job seekers to fellow volunteer alumni professionals representing areas such as executive recruitment, human resources, and executive career coaching. They host booths and chat with our clients to offer strategic advice on career-related needs. These sessions are held in the evening between 6 and 7:30 p.m. EST.



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