



Vetting for Quality Experiences and Growth Opportunities

As you are considering your professional and personal development, it's important to take time to think about what you are hoping to gain from each experience you spend your time on and what priorities you are seeking for an experience to feel worthwhile. Whether you're evaluating potential volunteer, research, internship, or job opportunities, choosing an experience has short-term and long-term benefits, though some may also come with consequences if they don't align with your expectations.

For each experience, think about the goals and needs you have for your next experience: Are your priorities to gain skill-building, income, exposure to the field, or something else? What skills or resources will the experience provide you? Are there trade-offs to consider in your choice (location, time commitment, etc.)? After you have thoroughly vetted the experience, do you think it will fulfill your expectations? [Career Services](#) is here and eager to support you through this decision-making process!

There are a few ways that you can vet an opportunity to ensure it will be a quality experience based on your needs and wants. You will want to try multiple of these methods before you get to an interview (if this experience will require an interview). Below are some to consider:

- Use reliable search engines to find job postings. While it's impossible to perfectly screen all job opportunities, employers on [Handshake](#), Loyola's job portal, undergo a greater degree of scrutiny than jobs on some other search engines.
- Check out resources like Glassdoor for reviews of companies and organizations.
- Connect with students who have been in that role before or alumni who work for that organization for informational interviews. Ask them what their experience was/is like in that role/with that company. LinkedIn is a great resource to connect with alumni, and you can also find alumni mentors on [LUConnect](#) and [Quinlan's Loyola Mentors](#).
- Connect with your career development advisor/pre-health advisor/business career coach to discuss the opportunity and your priorities and concerns. Your advisor can also support you in searching for opportunities, strategies for informational interviews, and interview prep. Schedule an appointment with Career Services on [Handshake](#) (under the Career Center tab).

Many opportunities will require an interview. In an interview, you are encouraged to ask follow-up questions specific to that experience. This shows you have thought in-depth about the position and your qualifications for it and helps you better understand the expectations of you



from the organization. It's important to remember that you are interviewing them as much as they're interviewing you. Take advantage of the opportunity in an interview to ask as many specific, productive questions as will help you gain insight and determine whether the experience is what you're looking for.

Below are topics to research beforehand and ask about during your interview. (For those opportunities that don't have an interview, these are still important points for you to consider as you weigh the pros/cons of this experience.) Explore Career Services resources like the [Quinlan Toolkits](#) and [Interviewing Guide](#) for more suggestions. You are welcome to ask about:

- **Supervision:** Ideally you are able to meet with your immediate supervisor during your interview (if not, is there a clear logical reason why not?) Ask about their supervision style, how they offer feedback, how they measure performance, and get a sense of their communication style. Do you feel comfortable and confident working directly with this person?
- **Training:** What skills, knowledge, and certifications are you already expected to have, and what further training will you receive in this experience? What is the onboarding process? Are there opportunities for future advancement (depending on the role)? Do you feel you will be supported to the extent you feel you will need?
- **Clarification on the role:** Ask specific questions that relate to the details you have reviewed in the job description, especially if the job description was vague. Make sure you leave the interview feeling confident that you understand the role.
- **Evaluation:** Does the organization or the supervisor provide performance reviews or letters of recommendation upon completion of the role? If so, what are the requirements needed to receive a strong letter of recommendation?

Know that you can ultimately decline an offer if you truly feel like an opportunity won't be a quality experience for you or allow you to gain the skills and professional development you are seeking. Career Services can support you in individual appointments through your decision-making and job offer process.

Last but not least: If a position or job offer seems to be too good to be true, if you feel uncomfortable with some of the information requested, or something just doesn't seem right—either back off or proceed with extreme caution. Even if the original position description seems valid, if you receive follow-up emails, phone calls, or job offers that seem unusual, you need to proceed cautiously. View additional tips on the Career Services [website](#). And never hesitate to get in touch with us in Career Service – we're happy to help you!