



For Those Seeking Military Contracts, Civilian Employment, or Graduate Degree Programs

The best of plans sometimes have surprise endings that are beyond our control. If you accept a military contract, what happens if the start date is not until 6 months after you graduate? What will you do to earn money in the meantime? What happens if you are not issued a contract? What happens if you only go after your first job choice and do not get an offer? What happens if the job search takes longer than you anticipate? What happens if you do not gain admission to the university and the graduate program of your first choice? What happens if you are granted admission for the program, but it is with the stipulation that you start the following spring instead of in the fall? Having a contingency plan is a good investment in your future.

Review your **FOCUS Personal Portfolio** (www.citadel.edu/career_services/FOCUS.htm) or retake **FOCUS** if you need additional ideas for your back-up plan.

Pay close attention to the email messages sent by the Career Center. Consider creating a folder on your computer to keep them for reference. Messages will be sent all year regarding presentations, interviews, career fairs, job postings, internships, tips, and other unique opportunities. You may find ideas for back up plans amongst them.

Suggestions For Those Seeking a Military Contract:

A Temporary Job Search

If your contract will not start immediately upon graduation, will you need to find a job in between? To find temporary employment for after you graduate from The Citadel and before your military service begins, review *Information for Military Contract Candidates* (www.citadel.edu/career_services/Military/MilitaryContract.pdf) and *Seasonal Job & Internship Searches* information via www.citadel.edu/career_services/JobSearch.htm.

A Back-Up Plan

At the start of your senior year / final graduate year, develop a back-up plan in case the military contract does not work out for you. You have likely heard the saying "do not place all of your eggs in one basket." The same applies to your job or graduate school search. In most cases, you will likely end up doing what you have planned to do. Yet, there are no absolutes. A number of factors could come into play that you are not aware of now and have no control over. Should something unforeseen prevent you from getting the contract you want, having an alternative plan will help you stay on track and keep you from having to start from the beginning, late in the process.

If your first career plan were not possible, what else would be of interest to you?

Military

- Consider a second and even a third option with the military. What else would you like to do if your first choice is not possible?

Graduate School

- If you were considering graduate school, but later in life, maybe it would be a good alternative for you in case your first plan is not possible? Do research on appropriate graduate programs and schools. Apply to one or two and follow the indicated deadlines. www.citadel.edu/career_services/GradStudy.htm

Full-time Job

- Consider searching for a full-time position as an alternative. Participate in the On-Campus Interview program and attend the Career Fairs. Network with potential employers and learn about your options. Have contacts established that you may reach in the event that your first choice with the military does not work out.

The next immediate step with a back-up plan is to have a resume ready. If you followed the *Career Planning Timeline* within *My Career*, then you likely have at least started one. If not, refer to the *Resume Packet* at www.citadel.edu/career_services/ResumeSamples.htm for constructions tips, samples, common errors to avoid, etc. Include internships, seasonal jobs, leadership roles, etc. from your four years at The Citadel and, in some cases, you may refer to high school activities and achievements.

Suggestions For Those Seeking Full-time Civilian Employment:

A Temporary Job Search

If you will need to find a job in between graduation and the start of your first job, review the *Seasonal Job & Internship Searches* information via www.citadel.edu/career_services/JobSearch.htm.

A Back-Up Plan

At the start of your senior year / final graduate year, develop a back-up plan in case your ideal job does not work out. Your job search should automatically entail a back up anyway. It would not be wise to only apply for the one job you really want. If it did not work out, you would likely not find out until well into the company's selection process. By that time, you will be behind in your search and miss out on other opportunities of good fit. Having an alternative plan will help you stay on track and keep you from having to start from the beginning, late in the process.

If *your* first career plan were not possible, what else would be of interest to you? Pursue those options while pursuing the job of your first choice. You may find that after further research and initial interviews that your other choices are better suited with your goals. You may also have to make a decision later in the process to decline an offer for your second or third choice, in order to see if an offer will be extended regarding your first choice. This is a risk that you have to be willing to take. If you have other possibilities in line, you will have other options to pursue should the offer not be made. If this risk is too great, you will want to carefully consider the offer from your 2nd or 3rd choice.

As another alternative, have you considered pursuing graduate education or entering the Military?

Graduate School - www.citadel.edu/career_services/GradStudy.htm

- Consider applying to 2-3 schools of interest to you. Research them and apply by the indicated deadlines. Find out how long your application is good for should you be offered admittance, but decline the offer. You may be able to delay your acceptance and start a semester or two later. You may end up taking a full-time job AND attending classes in the evening by doing this. Keep in mind that there are deposits and application fees involved. Speak with an admission representative for each university to ask for advice regarding your application while also seeking full-time employment.

Military

- Consider entering the military. What branch would be of interest to you? Would you want to be in the Reserves or Full-time? Contact the appropriate recruiter through Jenkins Hall or with the Charleston area recruiting offices.

Suggestions For Those Seeking Graduate Degree Programs:

A Temporary Job Search

If you will need to find a job in between graduation and the start of graduate school, review the *Seasonal Job & Internship Searches* information via www.citadel.edu/career_services/JobSearch.htm.

A Back-Up Plan

At the start of your senior year / final graduate year of current program, develop a back-up plan in case graduate school does not work out for you. You have likely heard the saying "do not place all of your eggs in one basket." The same applies to your graduate school or job search. In most cases, you will likely end up doing what you have planned to do. Yet, there are no absolutes. A number of factors could come into play that you are not aware of now and have no control over. Should something unforeseen prevent you from getting into the school you want, having an alternative plan will help you stay on track and keep you from having to start from the beginning, late in the process.

If your first career plan were not possible, what else would be of interest to you?

Graduate School - www.citadel.edu/career_services/GradStudy.htm

- If your first choice of graduate schools is not possible, consider having 2-3 other schools in mind. Do research on them and apply by the indicated deadlines.

Military

- Consider entering the military. What branch would be of interest to you? Would you want to be in the Reserves or Full-time? Contact the appropriate recruiter through Jenkins Hall or with the Charleston area recruiting offices.

Full-time Job

- Consider searching for a full-time position as an alternative. Participate in the On-Campus Interview program and attend the Career Fairs. Network with potential employers and learn about your options. Have contacts established that you may reach in the event that your first choice with attending graduate school does not work out.

The next immediate step with a back-up plan is to have a resume ready. If you followed the *Career Planning Timeline* within *My Career*, then you likely have at least started one. If not, refer to the *Resume Packet* at www.citadel.edu/career_services/ResumeSamples.htm for construction tips, samples, common errors to avoid, etc. Include internships, seasonal jobs, leadership roles, jobs (CGC), etc. and, in some cases, you may refer to high school activities and achievements.