CAREERS IN ENGLISH

What Can I Do with an English Degree?

A major in English can be good preparation for continued graduate or professional training in areas such as English, law, political science, government, public administration, psychology, counseling, communications, and religious studies (seminary).

Develop a specialty area of interest via additional coursework and work experience for greater marketability within that specific career field.

Save samples of written work to be used for a portfolio.

Be prepared to be proactive, determined, assertive, and confident in order to secure freelance writing opportunities. Writers typically experience many rejections for each piece that is accepted for publication.

Cultivate other career opportunities in order to supplement a freelance writing income. Obtain additional areas of expertise such as journalism, broadcasting, technical writing, or politics for specialized positions.

For careers in advertising or public relations be prepared to begin in an entry-level position.
A bachelor's degree in English is sufficient for many entry level positions in business and industry.

Appropriate teacher certification is required for public school teaching. A graduate degree is required for teaching at the college or university level.

WRITING/EDITING

Creative Writing | Journalism | Free-Lance Writing | Technical Writing

EMPLOYERS
Newspapers | Magazines
Broadcast media companies | television and movie industry
Trade, professional, consumer publications
Internet sites | Advertising agencies |Large corporations
Government agencies | Colleges and universities
Technical industries | Manufacturers

STRATEGIES
Select elective coursework in a particular area of interest. Write for campus publications such as college newspapers, magazines, or departmental or program newsletters. Develop speaking and debate skills. Volunteer to assist or tutor students in a writing center. For technical writing positions obtain a concentration in technical writing. Take science or computer courses to gain knowledge about technical areas and trends. Become familiar with the proposal writing and submission process involved in freelance writing.

EDUCATION

EMPLOYERS
Public schools | Private schools | Colleges and Universities | Libraries | Private Learning Centers | Tutoring Centers

STRATEGIES
Acquire computer skills. Gain volunteer experience with a Big Brother Sister program, tutoring, sports, summer camps, teen counseling, child care centers, or with other special populations. Participate in school activities such as debate, literary club, campus publications, student government, alumni relations, and admissions. Obtain appropriate state certification for public school teaching.

A graduate degree is required for post-secondary teaching. Earn certification to teach multiple subjects/age groups for increased job opportunities.

PUBLISHING

Editing |Advertising | Sales | Circulation | Production | Publicity

EMPLOYERS
Special interest magazines | Trade magazines
Associational and organizational magazines
Sunday newspaper supplements
Educational and professional books
Religious books and magazines
Book publishers

STRATEGIES
Obtain summer internship in an area of the publishing industry. Participate in summer publishing institute. Develop word processing and editing skills. Work on student publications. Conduct an informational interview with or shadow a professional in the publishing industry.

ADVERTISING

Creative | Media | Branding | Research

EMPLOYERS
Advertising agencies
In-house agencies or advertising departments of large companies

STRATEGIES
Demonstrate talent, persistence, assertiveness, and enthusiasm. Be prepared to start in an entry-level position. Obtain strong statistics background for market research positions. Create portfolio of writing and ideas showing originality and imagination for creative or advertising positions. Gain knowledge of various media, contemporary tastes, and trends. Obtain campus newspaper, television, or radio experience. Participate in sales and promotions in student organizations or private businesses. Complete an internship in a market research firm or advertising agency. Supplement curriculum with courses in business, art, or graphic design.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Research | Writing | Editing | Media

EMPLOYERS
Public relations firms | Advertising agencies
In-house public relations departments
Trade associations | Colleges and universities
Nonprofit organizations | Government agencies

STRATEGIES
Obtain internship or other relevant work experience. Write for your campus newspaper. Participate in fundraising and event-planning activities. Develop strong research skills, public speaking ability, enthusiasm, and interpersonal skills. Supplement curriculum with business courses. Become an effective team member by working on group projects for campus organizations.

LAW

EMPLOYERS
Law firms | Corporate legal departments | Government agencies | Public service agencies

STRATEGIES
Develop strong organizational skills and attention to detail. Become skillful in debate and public speaking. Organize campus events, speakers, or political rallies. Obtain summer or part-time work in a law firm. Complete special training requirements for paralegal positions. Attend law school and earn a law degree to become an attorney.

BUSINESS/INDUSTRY

Management | Sales | Marketing | Human Resources | Insurance Claims | Insurance Underwriting

EMPLOYERS
Business organizations including banks, real estate agencies, insurance firms, and large and small corporations. Retailers including department, grocery, drug, specialty, variety, and book stores

STRATEGIES
Obtain a business minor. Gain work experience through part-time jobs, internships, or relevant volunteer work. Secure leadership roles in campus organizations. Join student professional associations. Develop strong analytical and computer skills. Gain experience as financial officer or treasurer of a campus organization.