

Title: CareerQuest takes Everyone Favorite City

Up until last week, I was uncertain about my future. I didn't know where I wanted to work, what I wanted to do, or even what to look for when applying for my first job out of college. My most recent trip to San Francisco was no vacation, but it did answer a lot of these questions.

Up at the crack of dawn (or what felt like the crack of dawn for us college students), my CareerQuest friends and I ventured out into the 'yuppie' capital of the west where young urban professionals go to get a head start on their career.

We had the opportunity to sit with employees and alumni from a few different companies each day from big tech giants like Google and Facebook to startups like Cloudera and Pop Sugar. I learned a great deal of valuable information about company culture, work dynamic, and opportunities within the company I wouldn't have gained without visiting their campuses.

I appreciate the fact that most of the people we spoke with, at one point, were in the same position as me. They explained the efforts they went through to get their first job, one person going so far as to pretend they had the same dog as the hiring manager for that position!

One thing I was looking for in a job is excitement--I was worried I would be doing the same thing every day as mentioned in a job description. At companies like Google and Facebook, I learned that this isn't the case because employees can start their own initiative or project. This ensures that employees are happy and that they are doing meaningful work that aligns with the company's mission. Individuals are even able to work across teams if their team is awaiting a project etc.

Frankly, I am still pretty uncertain about my future, but at least now I know what steps I need to take to get in the right direction. The most important takeaway for me was the fact that your dream job isn't going to be the first one out of college. It could take two, three, or ten years. It's about the lasting experiences and connections you make along the way. And who knows? Maybe you see yourself gaining interest in an area you never thought applied to you. I saw first-hand individuals who are working in a field that is unrelated to their undergraduate degree; they are happy and successful where they are today. This experience wasn't the be-all and end-all of my career exploration but I've gained valuable information through CareerQuest. If I had the option to go again, I would, even if it evolves waking up at the crack of dawn