

## Support Your Application with Experience

### Getting Experience from Unpaid Work

- Volunteering gives you the opportunity to practice important skills used in the workplace, such as teamwork, communication, problem solving, project planning, task management, and organization. Take time out of your schedule to get some experience, such as with after-school programs, volunteering at your library, community assistance, etc. Consider finding opportunities through [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org) or [www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org), or through your local community agencies.
- Consider your hobbies or other interest that may have relevancy.

### Getting Experience in School (either during or after)

If you are current student:

- Put yourself in situations over a long enough period where a professor or supervisor can appreciate your traits and abilities.
- Summer can be an excellent time to find employment or volunteer opportunities or research assistant.
- Undergraduate research experience is *always* relevant (although not required).
- Discuss your experiences with an academic advisor to see what program/degree would be a best fit see which of your experiences are relevant
- [The Importance of Bringing the Real World into Graduate School](#)
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- Social media platforms have given ability for others to express themselves, their ideas, and projects use this to your advantage! Create content that is connected to your interested field of study.

### Build Relationships

- Establish relationships with work colleagues, supervisors, managers, etc. Besides providing a strong recommendation letter for graduate school, they may also be able to connect you with new opportunities to learn.
- Join an alumni networking group at your alma mater.
- Consider becoming a member of the professional organization or association for your field of interest. This can help you to not only learn more about the field, but also connect with other professionals. [What is a professional organization?](#)
- Connect with program staff and faculty before you consider applying