

Kasie Whitener ([00:02](#)):

Welcome into More Impact. This is Kasie Whitener, your host, and with me today, Kacie Ingram, senior career coach at the Darla Moore School Office of Career Management. Welcome, Kacie.

Kacie Ingram ([00:12](#)):

Thank you.

Kasie Whitener ([00:12](#)):

How did you, how did you get started with the Office of Career Management? What's your journey look like through, I know you're a Carolina alum, so what does your journey look like? How did you come to OCM?

Kacie Ingram ([00:21](#)):

Well, after I graduated Carolina with my master's in retail, I went on to work in big box retail in the management roles for about eight years and then decided to completely change my career path and became certified as a career coach shortly after. Started working as an adjunct instructor for BADM 301 through the Office of Career Management. And then within a year or so, they opened up additional career coach roles to meet the needs of our students. And I was one of the ones that filled those initial roles. So I've been in this position now as a senior career coach for over 10 years.

Kasie Whitener ([00:59](#)):

You said you had the retail merchandising degree and went into big box retail. Do you have students that are looking at similar career paths?

Kacie Ingram ([01:07](#)):

Some cases, I think more often than not, they are looking at the similar industries. So really like the retail industry or things that align with that in HRSM and oftentimes have minors in that area.

Kasie Whitener ([01:20](#)):

What is it about career coaching that gets you passionate or gets you fired up?

Kacie Ingram ([01:26](#)):

For me, it's the aha moments. So it could be simple things that we're teaching in class and students finally get it, whether it's the first or 10th time they've heard it or students that I've met with possibly for the first time or after multiple times and things just click. And sometimes it's those small unlocks, if you will, that make a big shift in whether it's their internship or job search.

Kasie Whitener ([01:49](#)):

Let's walk the path of a student. How do they, as a freshman, they come into the Darla Moore School kind of wide-eyed and looking around, what am I gonna do here for the next four years? What does their journey look like through the Office of Career Management?

Kacie Ingram ([02:03](#)):

So our first touch point would likely be through the business sections of University 101. While it's not directly through the Office of Career Management in the Darla Moore School of Business, it was initiated through the Darla Moore School of Business and the Office of Career Management. Started teaching those sections and they have grown to expand way beyond what our career coaches could potentially manage. So ideally students would come in, start with the U-101 business section, and then as sophomores pre-business in most cases, take BADM 301, which is a career tools and professional development class. And that starts from the very beginning of a job or internship search with resumes, cover letters, professional documents if you will, all the way through how do we do a job and internship search, what does networking professional development look like to, I got the offer, let's discuss it and let's negotiate and talk about what that negotiation process looks like. So really from the start to the finish and if they come in and take that class, you know, first eight weeks in the first semester of sophomore year, they get introduced not only to the class, but the Office of Career Management and the fact that they each have a career coach based on major, which is unique to not only the college, but even at the university level. So being able to reach out to their major specific career coach to get one-on-one help beyond what we do in that class.

Kasie Whitener ([03:35](#)):

When we think about students as early as their sophomore year looking for internships and trying to line up what will eventually be their career through this internship focus, you all provide all the resources necessary, including LinkedIn coaching.

Kacie Ingram ([03:51](#)):

LinkedIn coaching is actually one of my favorites, but yes you could literally name a career I guess need and we can meet it. And so that we work with sophomores, juniors, and seniors only business school students. And we even work with our alum within 12 months of graduation. And I know many of them don't realize that nonetheless, yes, we do everything beyond resume. And I think that's a common misconception is go to the OCM and get your resume reviewed. That's just the beginning. Yes, your resume does need to be reviewed and make sure that it meets the job description that you're applying to, but we do so much more than that beyond that initial resume review. And honestly, it's not so much about getting the word out to the students once they come. It's about encouraging them to continue to come back. I know I end every single one of my student meetings with the fact that this is not meant to be one and done right. I encourage you to come back, reach out to me, let me know what you need from me. And a lot of them do

Kasie Whitener ([04:54](#)):

Just a tremendous resource for our students knowing that while they're in the classroom, working toward their degree on the one side outside of the classroom, we have OCM that can support them aiming toward their careers and helping them to find the right jobs, the right internships that will line them up for their long-term success. When you think about the soft skills piece, I love that you said like it's so much more than just LinkedIn than just putting yourself on LinkedIn. When you talk through some of these soft skills that our students, the employers want them to have and that our students need, what does that training look like?

Kacie Ingram ([05:27](#)):

Well, in the class we do a lot of professional development. And so that could be things from just talking about what professionalism looks like to a personal brand, to even activities that we conduct throughout

the class from interviewing to networking activities, things of that nature. 'cause We try to make it more than just a lecture and actually get them hands on and do those experiences. Hey, let's stop what we're doing and let's do our elevator pitch, find a partner. While it makes them uncomfortable and gets them out of that comfort zone, it is really good practice. I know one of the assignments that we do is a mock interview on big interview, which is equivalent to a Hire Vue interview that many companies use and students do not like it going in. But I have had so many countless students tell me after the fact, I'm so glad that we had to do that assignment because literally a week after I got a HireVue interview and would not have known how to approach that.

Kasie Whitener ([06:23](#)):

Unpack that just a little bit for me. Hirevue, what does that mean?

Kacie Ingram ([06:26](#)):

So essentially it's an asynchronous interview, like a video interview. So in most cases it is a real person asking questions, but prerecorded and you essentially kind of get a setup going in. But most of the times the students, once they start recording, they don't see themselves. It's a blank screen. They're asked a question and they have to respond. And a lot of AI or artificial intelligence is built into it to read beyond the student's answers. So they're, you know, verbals, non-verbals, are they making eye contact or do they appear nervous? Are they answering the questions? And there's a lot of that AI piece that even the recruiters on the other side are, you know, utilizing that information in addition to listening to it and viewing it themselves.

Kasie Whitener ([07:15](#)):

So this is a software program that our students are engaging with because certain companies are using it to conduct these video interviews.

Kacie Ingram ([07:24](#)):

Absolutely. So it, it is more even than that because we not only use it for the class, students can use it to practice. And one of the things I encourage is there is an interview roulette option. And so I really like that one because you get a variety of types of questions as well as complexity of interviewers. So really friendly to, you can't get any feedback whatsoever from them. And so I think it just gives them the opportunity to answer questions that they normally may not be prepared for so that they're not caught off guard when they get into those interviews.

Kasie Whitener ([07:57](#)):

So I just wanna be clear, HireVue is a simulation tool that our students can use to train themselves for these interviews. Our companies using these tools as well to interview students or to interview potential candidates.

Kacie Ingram ([08:12](#)):

Yes. So HireView is one of the tools that company, excuse me, that companies use. However, a big interview is a resource that the university has purchased and uses for our students, but it's very similar platform to HireVue or other very similar ones that other companies use. Hirevue is just the most common.

Kasie Whitener ([08:32](#)):

I mean, I just probably sound like a complete moron because I've never even considered that companies would be using video interview techniques in the early rounds of interviewing. I mean, I guess I'm just like old school in <laugh>, how we get jobs like send your resume, they call you, you set up an in-person interview, but it makes sense after Covid and when they're screening, you know, just a hundred applicants for each of these individual jobs to say, okay, this is the way we're going to go do our initial round of interviewing. So these are large employers, our bigger companies that are using higher interview.

Kacie Ingram ([09:05](#)):

It's a combination and I will say to reiterate that it's essentially in most cases replaced the phone interview and is that first interview for most companies because they can do a larger quantity of interviews and work through them a lot faster based on the AI feedback that's provided.

Kasie Whitener ([09:22](#)):

I got you. Just stunned by this. I think it's great. Like, I think it's great that OCM is on in front of this, that you're aware that this is a thing and you're using that software big interview to train our students how to be able to do it. I think I would be completely caught off guard if I was to go for another job and they would say, oh, the first thing you'll do is this, you know, video interview where you can't see yourself on camera, you're just going to be responding to this recorded voice. I would have no, I would have no idea what to even do <laugh>. I mean, it sounds terrifying. And so now I think about the people who are gonna be listening to more Impact. A lot of them are potential students. And so knowing that we have OCM to prepare them for the, the challenges that are gonna come to them as far as workforce and trying to find a role for themselves out in the world, I think is really important. So in beyond training them for their video interviews, what are some of the other soft skills that you all are going through in class?

Kacie Ingram ([10:18](#)):

So, communication as well as, and, and let me back up. So communication, obviously verbal, but even written communication. So even in my syllabus and I would say the syllabus for all of the classes, essentially that piece is built into it from a professionalism and communication standpoint of this is the expectation of what an email should look like whenever you send it to me, making sure that it's professional overall, but that you are using proper communication throughout that email, right? And so it impacts the overall I guess not so much the grade, but just essentially the feedback and, and all that that they'll receive based on that information. Problem solving is another one. So as they go through and do some of the different not only assignments, but also in class activities, being able to go, you know, essentially solve the problems based on whatever the situation is. And working with a one team member or possibly in groups beyond that helps from a teamwork and collaboration standpoint.

Kasie Whitener ([11:25](#)):

I like the idea that our students are getting this, I, I don't even wanna call it supplementary, it's the idea that you're preparing them for their real workforce interactions beyond the discipline that they're in. So these are for it's finance students, marketing students, management students, all of our students that are attending these BADM classes and able to access your skillset and your colleague skillset to be able to train themselves to get better at, at these kinds of soft skills, which I think is amazing. What about presentation skills and the ability to properly communicate in front of a group or public speaking and things like that?

Kacie Ingram ([12:05](#)):

Well, so I guess from the communication and public speaking standpoint, the interviewing is a big piece of it. Having them I guess in the moment, either do their elevator pitches in class or one of the networking activities we do is we go around the room and each student will stand up and introduce themselves briefly and say, you know, one or two things that they can offer to their peers in the class. And it's kind of like a double-sided situation where not only that person is more or less presenting themselves and branding themselves for this particular thing, but also the other students are supposed to be taking notes and then at the end they all are supposed to go to the individual that resonated with them, they felt like they could benefit from, and have a conversation with them, introduce themselves. I've had some of them walk away with not only, you know, new friends, but also, you know, I would've never even thought that I could find a resource for, I mean so many languages that our students speak, right? And connections that they have. So it's just amazing that they don't look next to them to find those resources.

Kasie Whitener ([13:10](#)):

I love the idea that they're able to spend some time thinking about what they have to offer and then putting that on offer to their classmates. I think that's fantastic. Let's go back to U 1 0 1. So U 1 0 1 is how our freshmen to get basic college survival skills, help them understand how to navigate processes at the Moore School, but also at the university as a whole. What are some of the skills that are being taught in the U 1 0 1 class and is it what makes it as valuable as it is? We know we have the best first year experience, right? So, and U 1 0 1 is a big part of that, that all of our students go through that, and that's a model that's been practiced and been copied at other universities where they're putting students through U 1 0 1. It's a small credit class. What is it? One credit class?

Kacie Ingram ([13:55](#)):

I believe it's three credits. It maybe three credits a full semester. Yeah.

Kasie Whitener ([13:58](#)):

And so talk a little bit about the skills there and these, our, our bright-eyed freshmen that come in and are sort of maybe a little bit overwhelmed

Kacie Ingram ([14:05](#)):

<Laugh>. Well, it is intended, so it's smaller classes, so usually 19. It's intended for the students to get to know each other on a more personal level than what they would in traditional classes to get them engaged not only in the classroom, but on campus to learn about all the various different resources in general on campus. But the business specific sections are they incorporate a lot of the basics around, like they get introduced to the resume, they get introduced to different activities that involve some of the skills that we were talking about around problem solving and communication and presentation. And the instructors have a little flexibility around what all they incorporate so they can incorporate more business aspects and more around career beyond whatever the expectation is for that particular section. And then, you know, they also gauge a lot of the U 1 0 1 is based on the actual students that you have in that class. So a class that I taught last fall may not resonate and react to some of the same material and the way it was presented. So then you have to adapt and sometimes it's right in the moment.

Kasie Whitener ([15:16](#)):

The dynamics of U 1 0 1 are a lot of fun and the way that you get a chance to reinvent every semester based on the responses that you're getting from your students. Let's shift gears just a little bit and talk about Business Expo. So I know the Office of Career Management does a lot of work with our corporate partners and we bring a lot of recruiters to campus to create opportunities for our students, whether those opportunities are internships or jobs as they're coming out of school. And you all spend a lot of time helping students prepare for that. Everything from what to wear posture, how to speak their elevator pitches, designing their resumes, getting their LinkedIn profiles, polished up all the things so that when they go to Business Expo they can have a successful experience. And students love it. I mean, they, they really believe that this is a tremendous advantage that's being offered to them. Can you talk a little bit about Business Expo and I, I don't know that, did I just say it all that you were gonna say <laugh>?

Kacie Ingram ([16:06](#)):

Never. Never. So what

Kasie Whitener ([16:07](#)):

Your team does to organize this, it's a major event. It happens twice, a twice a year. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> once in the fall, once in the spring. So it really does set our students up for success.

Kacie Ingram ([16:15](#)):

So I will say that you mentioned the twice a year, fall and spring. It is always the first eight weeks. And so that's relevant because as part of the BADM 301 class, we require students to attend that particular event. And so we prepare them in the class and make sure that they have to your point, resume completed. That's the very first thing that we do. And we do the elevator pitch and we practice the interviewing and LinkedIn and all of those things to get them ready. And I will just say like this past fall, we had 131 companies and our largest attendance from a student perspective, and it's not exact number, but I know it was over 1700, which was pretty significant to the previous time. And so our students do get that face-to-face Time. They do have some employers that we're consistently coming in that we have great relationships with, and then even some brand new employers that we try to bring in as frequently as possible where it makes sense and where we can utilize those alum to be able to get them in and hopefully recruit some more Gamecocks, specifically business schooled Gamecocks, so that they'll have that presence there and it'll continue that relationship.

Kasie Whitener ([17:29](#)):

I've got a couple of students that Lindsay comes to mind immediately that went through their business expo experience. They graduated, they got this really great job, and now they're on the recruiting team to come specifically to Carolina because they're alum, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So she'll call me, she'll email me a couple days before Expo and she'll say, Hey, Dr. Whitener, can I come to your classes <laugh>? I'm like, of course you can. I would, would love to have you come to my classes. And so I think that connection and bringing in people that were just, you know, a year ago, two years ago, they were sitting in your seat and here they are telling you all about the job that they have and the opportunities that are in the company that they're in. It's such a great bridge and some students really respond to it, especially my juniors who are looking for, I'm not really sure where they're headed. My seniors may be a little bit less engaged, <laugh> 'cause some of them have already figured out where they're gonna go. But my sophomores and my juniors tend to really respond to having the alum come back in and say, Hey, five years ago I was where you are right now, but this is what I'm doing in my career. And that's a

lot of that is the bridge that's being built by OCM through Business Expo and through those alumni connections that you all are bringing back to campus.

Kacie Ingram ([18:33](#)):

Well, that brings up a couple of things in my mind. So we talked about LinkedIn early on. So yes, it's a required topic that we discuss and go over and in various detail. I mentioned that LinkedIn is one of my favorite resources and I really, I could talk for hours and bore people to death with it. But <laugh> from that standpoint, one of the aspects of that assignment is having students connect with the instructor. And I jokingly tell them, you know, I have 4,000 plus connections. What value are you adding to me today by connecting with me? And the answer is probably none. Right? And I said, well, let's look beyond short term and look at the long term. So you are getting value today because now all of my 4,000 plus connections are your second connections, right? So you just exponentially expanded your network beyond that in five years when you've graduated and you're in maybe your first or second role, and I have a student that's interested in the company that you're working for, the company that you did an internship for, that's where you add value, not only to me, but then also to that particular student or group of students.

Kacie Ingram ([19:44](#)):

And I will say, anytime that I have ever reached out to any of our students, whether I taught them BADM 301 or just coach them individually, not only are they responsive, but they immediately say, not only will I speak with that individual, but I'm happy to talk to any student that you feel like would, I would add value for them and their overall career journey.

Kasie Whitener ([20:06](#)):

I love the strength of that network and Gamecocks helping Gamecocks, I mean, making sure that our alumni are reaching back and giving back because they were helped up too, right? So they had other alum that reached out for them and and brought them on board. So it's a great strength of the Darla Moore School of Business that we've got students and alum who are willing to participate in that particular way. Let's talk a little bit about the one-on-one coaching. So you mentioned after BADM for the sophomores in their, now in their junior year, they're in their senior year. What are some of the things that our juniors and seniors are coming to you for individually? One-On-One sessions,

Kacie Ingram ([20:42](#)):

In most cases, they are looking specifically at internship and job search. So they essentially have had their resumes reviewed and approved, if you will. And then from there, they wanna fine tune what that job or internship search looks like. They come at different points. In most cases though, I'll say my students, so I work with marketing and real estate students, they come to me before they officially begin to make sure that they have the right plan going in. And if there's anything that we need to adjust, whether it's from their actual strategy to, you know, look at my LinkedIn profile, go back over my resume one more time, things of that nature, we'll do that and then talk about specific strategy to that individual. And then the follow up piece, again, I put it back on the student, but would be, you know, if you get three, four weeks out and you kind of stall, reach back out to me. Let's talk about what you've been doing. Maybe we make some adjust adjustments and move forward to try to get you that traction of getting the interviews, hopefully getting, I like to say offers. So we have choices, but ultimately making progress

Kasie Whitener ([21:47](#)):

Good. When we think about our students being realistic about how long it's going to take to get engaged with the company, find the right fit for the company be on your very best stellar performance for your interview and impress that company in a way that they're going to make you an offer. It's a long journey, and I know a lot of my students will begin in like January, February timeframe to get ready for a summer gig, right? Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative> for a summer internship. Some of 'em in November and October already have their summer gig lined up because they've already spent time working through this process. So it's great to have OCM there as guides for this unfamiliar terrain for young people.

Kacie Ingram ([22:27](#)):

I think one of the aspects too that and we alluded to it earlier, is when it comes to career, there's so much personal woven into that. So if someone is having, you know a personal problem, then it also impacts how they approach their career search. And same thing, if you know, things are going really well, it's gonna positively impact their career search. But a lot of what we do is not just talking about career, it's also, you know, being that non-biased person, listening to them for things that they've talked to their parents about, but their parents are trying to push them in one direction. They're wanting to go in the other and they need someone there just to listen. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so a lot of times we are there just as a listening partner and to help them make decisions without telling them what to do.

Kasie Whitener ([23:15](#)):

Right. And framing the conversations they're gonna have to have, right. Eventually with their parents. Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative> or any other stakeholders in their lives as to why they've chosen to go one direction or the other. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, our students are so lucky to have you. Thank you. OCM is a tremendous resource, and I have to tell you, in my classes, at least, I'm telling my students over and over and over again, you will never be surrounded by more people who want you to be successful than you are while you're at the Darla Moore School of Business. And OCM is just chockfull of 'em. Thank you so much, Kacie, for coming in to be part of Moore Impact.

Kacie Ingram ([23:46](#)):

Thank you.

Kasie Whitener ([23:47](#)):

This has been Moore Impact. When you learn more, you know more. And when you know more, you do more. Thanks for listening.