

Job Search Strategies



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MAJOR AND CAREER ADVISING

- Individual advising by scheduled appointment or during Walk-In Hours (9:00 - 11:30 a.m., Monday - Thursday, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m., Monday - Friday)
- Self-assessment exercises
- Computerized career guidance programs: CareerBeam® and FOCUS
- Seminars on a wide range of career topics including Résumé Writing, Interviewing, Career Search Strategies, Business Etiquette & Professional Dress, etc.

JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE

- Personal advising on job search strategies
- Résumé and cover letter critiques
- Résumé and Interviewing Techniques seminars
- Mock Interview Program
- On-campus interviewing for winter break and summer jobs
- Monthly Online Summer Jobs and Internships Bulletin (January - May)
- Career fairs and networking events (see schedule below)
- CareerBeam® (Over 18 million employer leads)
- VAULT® Online Career Library

CAREER RESOURCE CENTER

- Career guides
- College and graduate school information
- Graduate admissions tests registration materials
- Computer lab

BOBCAT ONLINE JOB SEARCH PROGRAM

For Current Year Graduates and Alumni

(You must register for these services - ask for more information.)

- Résumé Referrals
- Online Job Postings
- On-Campus Interviewing for Career Positions

CAREER FAIRS, 2007 - 2008

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|--------------------------------------|------------|
| • Ohio University Fall Career Fair | October 3 |
| • Ohio University Winter Career Fair | February 5 |
| • Teacher Recruitment Consortium | April 11 |

CAREER SERVICES WEB SITE

- <http://www.ohio.edu/careers>

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

Career search skills are very important in today's economy. Trends indicate that most people will have three different careers in their lives, work for approximately 10 different employers, and remain in each position an average of 3.5 years (National Association of College and Employers, NACE). These statistics illustrate the need for keeping your search skills current with hiring trends. Most successful candidates find positions through networking, contacting an employer directly, or using their Career Services office.

There are many issues to consider when you are seeking a career position. Not only do you need to maximize your job search options, but you must exercise those options with care and be aware of proper etiquette whether you are contacting employers directly, going through the Office of Career Services, and/or using the Internet. You must be ethical and honest in all communication with prospective employers!

GETTING STARTED WITH YOUR SEARCH

What Employers Are Looking for in Prospective Employees

It is important to understand what employers are looking for in prospective employees. According to NACE, the top skills are: written and verbal communication skills, motivation, initiative, teamwork, leadership, academic achievement/GPA, interpersonal skills, flexibility, adaptability, technical skills, honesty/integrity, work ethic, analytical/problem-solving skills, and computer skills.

Self-Assessment

If you are unsure about what type of position might be a good "fit" for you, consider taking CareerBeam®, a self-assessment inventory, through the Career Services' web site. Once you have a list of career options, research these options using VAULT® Online Career Library, meet with a counselor, and/or utilize the Career Resource Center in Career Services. Informational interviews and career shadowing might also be good options as you explore the types of positions you may obtain after graduation. The first step to a successful job search is to know what you want.

In addition to a specific career, it is important to consider the following factors:

- Ideal work environment: large corporation or small company? public or private?
- Geographical location: is there a particular city or state in which you wish to work? A distance you are willing to commute?
- What are your most marketable job skills: identify 3-4 top skills
- Do you work best with people, data, or things?
- What is most rewarding in a job? Salary? Prestige? Advancement? Mission?

Be Prepared

In order to have an effective career search, it is essential to develop professional job searching skills and correspondence. You must create a résumé tailored to your career area and the specific skills, qualifications, and experiences that make you an ideal candidate. In addition to a résumé, you will need to develop a basic cover letter that can be easily adapted for each specific position and company.

As part of your career search preparation you may also want to begin thinking about interviewing skills. It is important to be prepared to interview as soon as you begin applying for positions. There are many things you can do ahead of time that will make an interview situation less stressful. In addition to being familiar with your skills, qualifications and common interview questions, you may want to consider Career Services' Mock Interview Program. This program allows you to have a practice interview directed specifically at your skills and career field while receiving immediate feedback about your areas for improvement as well as your interviewing strengths.

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

When conducting a career search, it is important to use multiple avenues of searching. There are a variety of ways in which a company may advertise, promote, or recruit for open positions. If you are only using one method of job searching, you may miss opportunities that match your criteria. The following sections discuss different types of strategies to use for a career search. The Office of Career Services suggests employing multiple approaches for the most effective search.

Bobcat Online Job Search Program

The Bobcat Online Job Search Program is for students graduating by August 31 of the current academic year and all alumni. This program is hosted through eRecruiting®—a career database management program used by many colleges and universities. Students must attend a 30-minute registration orientation session, complete a registration form, pay a registration fee, complete an online profile, and upload a résumé and other relevant documents to complete the registration process. Alumni should contact Career Services for registration information. Once students/alumni have completed their registration, they are eligible for the following services.

1. **Résumé Referrals**—Career Services sends uploaded résumés to employers based on their search criteria. Employers with whom our office works frequently also have access to the database.
2. **Online Job Postings**—Students/alumni can view and apply for positions online.
3. **On-Campus Interviewing**—Students/alumni are able to interview with recruiters who visit the Ohio University campus. Notification of employers interviewing on campus, as well as résumé submission deadlines and scheduling interview times, is accessible online.

Ohio University Career Fairs

Each year the Office of Career Services organizes three Career Fairs. In the Fall and Winter, there are employers from a variety of companies and in the Spring is the Teacher Recruitment Consortium for those seeking work in a school system. Information regarding our Career Fairs can be found on our website (www.ohio.edu/careers) under the list of resources for students.

Through our Career Fair link it is possible to find the dates and times of the fairs, a list of participating employers, and tips for a successful Career Fair experience.

Help Wanted Advertisements/Online Job Sites

There are a variety of locations that contained help wanted advertisements. You may use online listings, local newspapers, industry publications, or professional organizations to suggest a few. In this method you reply to a specific posting by submitting a cover letter, resume, and any other requested materials. When responding to an advertisement, it is important to honor the request for materials. In general, if an employer requests a document you should submit it with your applications; if it is not requested, wait until an interview to send supplemental materials (reference list, portfolio, transcripts, etc.). Employers will pay attention to how well you follow the directions in an application process and may make assumptions about your capacity to follow directions on the job. If you are unsure whether or not a company requires a particular document, contact them and ask for clarification.

The Career Services' web site has a section entitled, "Internet Links for Finding a Job," which is under the "Resources and Handouts" section in the "For Students" category. Our web site includes search engines and popular links for you to begin your career search, and the links are listed in categories to help you organize the search. Do not limit yourself to one category or site. Allow yourself enough time to explore all of these areas.

Targeted Mailing

Once you have a career objective in mind, you can be proactive in sending a résumé and cover letter to organizations that may have a need for someone with your skill set. In using this method, you will want to be targeted and deliberate about sending your application materials. This requires you to research perspective employers, determine if they may have a need for the type of job you are seeking, and identify the best person to contact. This method also requires you to be organized and follow up on the résumés you have submitted. You may wish to review the section of this handout discussing resources for employer research.

Networking

Many positions are filled without ever being advertised anywhere. Building an effective network and using it wisely is your key to finding this hidden job market. Approximately half of all people in the career search process obtain their positions through networking! The principle of networking is not asking the people you know for jobs, however it is using the connections you have to find out more about an organization or to get your résumé in front of the right person. Here are some general tips on networking:

- **What Networking Is Not:** confronting complete strangers, forcing business cards/ résumés onto people, an isolated process.
- **What Networking Is:** formed over time out of mutual trust and admiration, mutual desire to help each other network; careful, thoughtful nurturing of relationships, a two-way street, a win-win situation.
- **Networking Basics**
 - Relax—don't try too hard.
 - Listen—half as much as you talk.
 - Find a common interest—move on if there's no connection after 10 minutes.
 - Do not strive to be impressive—leave a positive impression.
 - Make a graceful exit—don't overstay your welcome.
 - Follow through with contacts.
 - Acknowledge networking favors.
 - Don't forget the personal touch—build mutually beneficial relationships.
 - Never try to disguise a networking meeting as a job interview.
 - Never come off as aggressive or pushy. If giving a person your résumé, don't ask them for a job, but rather ask them to pass along your résumé if they know someone looking for a strong candidate.
 - Have an idea what you hope to gain from the networking opportunity—information, contacts, support, résumé assistance, etc.
 - Explore all your networking options—friends, coworkers, professors, people who speak to your classes, career fairs, on-campus interviews, Alumni Mentors Program, professional groups/organizations, social groups, religious groups, friends, family, informational interviews, career shadowing, alumni chapters—the options are endless!

Many times, professional organizations related to your area(s) of interest will have discussion groups or a listserv you can join. Access the organization's web site for more information. It is important that you research the group before you join. You will want to watch the group for a few weeks to see how they communicate. If you join, be polite!!! You should not send ads unless it is a group that accepts them.

IDENTIFYING AND RESEARCHING EMPLOYERS
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There are many sources available for identifying and researching potential employers, so exhaust all your options! Researching employers is also important prior to interviewing or contacting an employer regarding possible openings. These sources include:

- Career Resource Center in Career Services
- CareerSBeam®, a net-based career development system
- VAULT® Online Career Library
- Alumni Mentors Program
- Services through Ohio University Office of Alumni Relations
- Attend Alumni Chapter events
- Advisors/Professors who may have connections or know alumni
- Internet and employer web sites
- Annual Reports (if the organization is publicly held)
- Attending professional organization meetings
- Networking with students who may have interned or interviewed with the organization
- Networking with professionals in the industry who may have knowledge about the organization
- Employees—current or former
- Calling or e-mailing the human resources department
- Attending a career fair if the organization will be participating
- Attending pre-night/information sessions the night prior to on-campus interviews
- Business/industry publications
- Conducting informational interviews
- Internships/co-ops/experiential learning
- Career Shadowing
- Attending career fairs in cities where you'd like to live
- Chamber of Commerce web sites in cities where you're conducting your search

ETIQUETTE

General Etiquette

Following proper etiquette during your career search will demonstrate your professionalism to prospective employers. There is proper etiquette for résumés, cover letters, face-to-face interviews, phone interviews, references, thank you notes, the offer itself, netiquette (electronic etiquette), and etiquette for international employment. The following list includes general guidelines for career search etiquette.

- Answering machine or voice mail message should sound professional.
- Review your online profile, particularly FaceBook®, MySpace®, etc. edit for content or privacy.
- Absolute honesty in all correspondence and interviews is imperative.
- Be respectful of the other person's time.
- Always err on the side of addressing someone formally unless you are told otherwise.
- Always acknowledge an employer's communication with you.
- If you miss a recruiter's call, return it as soon as possible.
- Be prepared and on time for interviews.
- Respect deadlines—especially if you're entertaining multiple offers.
- Do not use an offer from one organization as leverage against another organization.
- Once you have accepted an offer, you must not interview with other organizations—this reflects badly on the candidate and Ohio University.
- Once you have accepted a position, you should remove yourself from consideration for other positions (inactivate your eRecruiting® account through Career Services, for example).
- If an employer with whom you interview tells you a hiring decision will be made in two weeks, and you do not hear from the employer in two weeks, it is appropriate to call her/him.
- Respond graciously to all offers whether you accept the position or not.
- Do not accept an offer and then turn it down at a later date.
- Be respectful of a person's time.
- Never burn a bridge—you may need these contacts for networking purposes later in your career.
- Express genuine appreciation for the employer's interest in you and your skills.
- Be sincere when accepting on-site interviews and be reasonable about expenses.
- Don't forget thank you notes—for a person's willingness to help you network, providing contact names/information, granting informational interviews/career shadowing, job interviews, etc.

E-Mail Etiquette

E-mail is an increasingly utilized resource in the career search process. However, improper e-mail etiquette will get you noticed by an employer quite readily—but noticed for all the wrong reasons! Some tips for e-mail etiquette include the following guidelines:

- Make sure your e-mail address is professional and appropriate.
- Include your name, address, and telephone number at the end of the e-mail so the employer has more than e-mail contact information.
- Run spell check prior to sending—e-mail correspondence should be as formal as correspondence you would send via regular mail.
- Do not save your resume/vita as “Resume.doc.” Include your name in the “save” title (ex. janedoesresume.doc).
- If you need immediate information, call the employer.
- Follow-up with a thank you note via regular mail. However, an e-mail thank you is appropriate if you think you may have a second interview before the recruiter would receive the note through the mail, the recruiter is traveling and will not receive the note in a timely fashion, or the recruiter is a computer-oriented person. It is appropriate to follow-up an e-mail thank you with one sent through the mail.
- Double check that any documents you send are virus-free.
- Format résumés in either Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format (RTF). PDF files, Illustrator, or PhotoShop documents may or may not be readable by some employers—you might want to ask what format works best if you are communicating with a recruiter.
- NEVER send jokes, chain letters, or other inappropriate e-mails.
- Hyperlink your e-mail address in your contact info at the bottom of your e-mail.
- Check your e-mail daily and respond to any messages from employers—or call if an immediate response is required.

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR FINDING A POSITION

Career seekers hear a lot of advice during their search campaign. The following ideas might be helpful as you develop your own approach.

- Don’t wait for a job to find you!
- Think of the search as a full-time job.
- Approach your career as an entrepreneur.
- Learn how to be a “quick change artist” based on skills you have that are in demand.
- Consider working on a short-term, contractual basis.
- Anticipate having “multiple careers.”
- Explore nonprofit and government opportunities.
- Don’t be afraid to start at a small firm.
- Be flexible.
- Develop specific skills for general application.
- Stay on top of shifting market demands.
- Be creative and take calculated risks!

Useful web sites addressing a variety of job search issues are listed below.

- <http://www.rileyguide.com/> The Riley Guide with links to other resources
- http://www.pmi.org/info/PDC_JobSeekerCareerPlanning.asp from Project Management Institute
- <http://www.quintcareers.com/> Quintessential Careers
- <http://www.jobweb.com/> from NACE, National Association of College & Employers
- <http://www.careerjournal.com/> from *The Wall Street Journal*