



Job Search Strategies

Sitting behind a computer searching online job boards is not an effective way to look for a job. Like investing in the financial markets, researching options before beginning your search, and diversifying your portfolio of job search techniques will allow you to expand your prospects of finding a rewarding job.

Use the resources in this section to help you prepare for a successful job search.

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Interviewing Yourself into a Career

Q: What is the best way to learn about an occupation?

A: Talk to as many people as you can who work in that field!

Whether you are undecided about what career to pursue or know exactly what you want to do, visiting with career professionals can provide important insights about occupations that you can't find by reading a book or looking at employment statistics.

Unfortunately, few students utilize this valuable human resource. Yet, the advantage of conducting what are termed "informational interviews" is that you gain important information about what a job is really like, whether it is something you might like to do and, if it is, how to better prepare for it. And since you are the one doing the interviewing, there is no pressure and no competitive forces at work.

How do you find people to interview? Ask family, friends, faculty and staff members if they know anyone working in your field of interest. Contact your Career Center for help connecting with alumni who doing the type of work you want to explore, and use online resources to search for companies, organizations and agencies that employ people who work in the field.

Scheduling & Conducting Informational Interviews

When you conduct an informational interview, you are not seeking employment.

You are seeking information about what motivates a person to do their job, what they like, and dislike about it, and how you can best prepare yourself for the job.

When contacting professionals to interview, identify yourself, tell them how you obtained their name. Explain that you are gathering career information.

Ask for no more than 30 minutes to talk with them about their career. Don't limit yourself to contacting just one individual in one company in a particular field. Every job, even in the same field, is slightly different. So, scheduling visits with several people who work in the same occupation will be more useful. It will also help you expand your knowledge and network of contacts.

Do your homework before an interview.

Learn as much as you can about the occupation and field you are investigating. Research the organization your contact works for by reviewing the company's website. Ask the company's receptionist how you can learn more about the company. Talk with people you know who work there, or those who do business with the company.

Write a list of questions you want answered during the interview.

The list will help you keep the interview on track and gain the information you are seeking (see Informational Interview Questions at the end of this article).

When going to your interview, or when visiting a company to gather information, dress appropriately.

Don't just walk in off the street in ragged jeans, a T-shirt and a baseball cap. Make a good impression every time you visit a company. You may want to work there some day, and first impressions are often lasting ones.

When going to the interview, bring a pad of paper and a pen (one that works!) to take notes, but don't get carried away writing everything down.

Listen intently. Jot down important ideas and the names and phone numbers of other potential contacts. Ask for recommendations regarding your overall career plans.

Keep track of the time.

If you asked for 30 minutes, be respectful of that time limit. Acknowledge when your time is up and only continue beyond it if the individual gives you permission.

Thank your source for meeting with you, both upon your arrival and your departure.

Express your appreciation for their time and chance to learn about their career. If additional contacts are not offered during the interview, before you depart, politely ask for names of additional people they think might be helpful to visit with.

Do not ask them for a job!

You scheduled the interview to gather information about their career and to express your career interests. Asking for a job, or for a job referral, will leave them feeling that you asked for their time under false pretenses. However, if they happen to mention an internship or job opportunity with their company or organization, certainly express your interest in learning more about it.

Lastly, follow up with a thank you card or letter.

Ask to be kept informed of any other information that may be of help to you in your career research. Informational interviews are one of the most practical, educational and effective methods to explore career options and to develop a network of professional contacts. So, get out there and start talking to people. You just might end up interviewing yourself into a career.

Informational Interview Questions

Here is a list of potential questions to help you get the most out of an informational interview with a career professional.

1. What motivated you to pursue this occupation (or career)? How did you end up in this occupation?
2. What is your job like? On a typical day, what kinds of problems do you deal with and what kinds of decisions do you make?
3. What do you like most about your job? What do you like least about it?

4. What social obligations go along with your job? Are you expected to join any organizations or participate in any activities outside of work?

5. What kind of preparation such as: work, activities, schooling or hobbies did you do before entering this occupation?

6. What was most helpful in preparing you for your current position?

7. What are the most important skills you use in this job?

8. Are there any specific educational requirements for this job?

9. What do you think is the best way to prepare for and enter this occupation?

10. Are there advancement opportunities in this field?

11. Are there any major changes taking place in your occupation, either due to technology or the marketplace?

12. Why do people decide to leave this occupation?

Remember, these are just sample questions, but they cover most of what you should ask during an interview. If your source does not provide you with any referrals during the interview, before you leave, **be sure to ask if they know of anyone else in their profession who you might contact.** Thank them for their time then follow up with a thank you note or card.

Never ask for a job. The purpose of an informational interview is to help you learn what led an individual into a specific occupation, to see if it is a good fit for you, and to begin developing a network of professional contacts that might be able to assist you in your quest to find a fulfilling internship and job opportunity in the future.

For more assistance in preparing or coordinating an informational interview, **contact Academic & Career Advising at 360-867-6312 to schedule an appointment with one of our Career Advisors.**

Get LinkedIn to Your Job Search

LinkedIn is an online networking tool. Unlike Facebook, which is used to socialize and keep you connected with family and friends, LinkedIn is for professional networking. It can be an valuable tool for students weighing their next steps after graduation, and for alumni seeking a career transition.

Your LinkedIn profile can make it possible for opportunities to find you. It is a virtual billboard that communicates your knowledge, skills, abilities, accomplishments, education, interests, and motivations to potential employers and colleagues 24 hours a day. It enables you to take charge of your own professional identity.

Here are a few steps make your profile standout:

- Use the [Summary section on your LinkedIn profile](#) to tell people who you are professionally and who you want to be professionally
- Make your profile [your portfolio](#). Upload documents, videos and images to your LinkedIn profile to showcase your successes throughout your education. Share a research project or presentation you conducted for a class, a video you produced, an internship you participated in, or your involvement in student clubs and leadership.
- Add Student Sections to capture your experiences in and out of the classroom like projects, honors and awards
- Define your Skills and Expertise
- Follow the Companies, Influencers and Groups that relate to the fields and industries you're interested in

A great profile ensures you are putting your best foot forward and makes it possible for recruiters and like-minded career professionals to find you.

Create a Network Based on Quality Contacts, Not Quantity

LinkedIn is for business. So your connections should reflect who you are as a future professional and consist of trusted relationships. Here are four affiliations you should focus on while growing and maintaining your network:

1. Friends and family
2. University connections
3. People you shared work experiences with
4. Those who you share volunteer and causes with (including student groups and fraternal organizations)

Need more ideas about who to connect with? Check out the People You May Know profiles that are presented to you on your Connections page, located in the My Network drop-down

menu. By connecting with the great people you meet you can to build a community of experts that can help support you throughout your career.

Make Alumni Connections

Utilizing LinkedIn's Find Alumni feature in the drop-down menu under My Network, you can find profiles of people who graduated from your college or university who are working in the fields and for the companies that interest you. Once you have identified and connected with them, they offer a great opportunity for setting up informational interviews to learn what motivated them to pursue their careers and how you can better prepare yourself to enjoy similar success.

For more assistance in setting up and utilizing a LinkedIn Profile, **contact Academic & Career Advising at 360-867-6312 to schedule an appointment with one of our Career Advisors.**

Five Tips to Help You Stay Motivated

By Jennifer Montez

Sit in front of laptop. Lie on couch. Eat pickles for lunch. Back to laptop. Feel sorry for self. Feel sick of self. Tear hair out in frustration. And ... back to couch.

If this is your 9-to-5 routine, you're probably like 14 million other Americans: unemployed. And in addition to the frustration of looking for work, you might find yourself feeling a little lonely.

Sure, you chat with friends online all day. And you may have a family or significant other who comes home in the evening. But is good old fashioned, face-to-face contact with another human being before dinner kind of rare these days?

In running my unemployment blog, I've received plenty of emails from readers. And although many of them were lighthearted in nature, a number of them were quite the opposite. One of the saddest read: "You're the first person I've spoken to in days." Unemployment can make a recluse out of even the most social of butterflies. After all, you want to spend as much time as possible looking for work. And where do you look for work? Online. And where do you go online? At home.

But spending too much time alone can be detrimental, not just to your emotional well-being, but to your job search too! Staying connected with the rest of the world is not a luxury. It's a necessity!

Here are five ways to help you stay motivated and keep you job search on track.

Work from a coffee shop.

Find a coffee shop with Wi-Fi in your neighborhood (even better if it's free Wi-Fi__33!). Grab your laptop and go. You may not be striking up conversations with fellow coffee shop patrons, but it's nice to be in the presence of other human beings. It's also nice to have a change of scenery; one that doesn't include Oprah on mute and swag from your previous employer.

Team up with other jobseekers.

Chances are you know others who are unemployed. Instead of each working alone in your respective homes, why not team up? Agree to meet at someone's house, and look for *jobs* together. After all, misery loves company. Not only will you have others to talk to who are in the same situation, you might just find that your jobless friends make good leads. You never know who might know of a job that isn't quite right for them, but fits you perfectly.

Go to networking events.

Whatever your industry, there are probably relevant networking or trade association events taking place locally. Not only will you keep abreast of changes in your field, you'll get

to rub elbows with living, breathing, hiring members of the work force. We all know that spending hours and hours online every day is not the most efficient way to get hired. The majority of **job seekers** find work through a contact. You need to get out there and network!

Get a (night) life!

Spending eight dollars on an Apple Martini may be the furthest thing from your mind right now. And rightly so. But maintaining and growing your social network (and we don't mean Facebook) can be a valuable part of your *job search*. And you don't have to spend exorbitant amounts of money (or borrow cash from friends) to go out. Especially right now, there are plenty of extended happy hours and recession specials.

Volunteer

I've said this before and I'll say it again: You can't spend all day, every day, looking for work. Volunteering a couple of days a week will give you something else to do, a fresh perspective and a chance to spend time with others who share your passion for a cause. And depending on the type of volunteer work you choose, it may even help keep your career on track (and your resume strong).

I know a laid-off writer who started volunteering in the communications department of a non-profit agency. She says it's keeping her busy, helping her develop her writing skills, and preventing her from sticking her head in an oven. Not bad for a dozen or so hours a week, which would have otherwise been spent obsessively surfing the web.

For more assistance in diversifying your job search strategies, **contact Academic & Career Advising at 360-867-6312 to schedule an appointment with one of our Career Advisors.**

How to Successfully Navigate a Job Fair

Like “speed dating,” job fairs are a popular way for employers to meet and speak with many prospective employees in a short amount of time. These events can benefit both the job seeker and the employer. Unfortunately, most jobs seekers are ill-prepared to take advantage of these great opportunities.

With hundreds of other job seekers out there attending the same fairs and speaking to the same employers, you need to know how to stand out from the crowd. Here are a few tips on how to successfully navigate a job fair, to get the most out of your time, and achieve greater results.

Be Prepared

If you show up unprepared and empty handed you’ll be lost in the crowd. Research the employers who are scheduled to attend a fair so that, when an opportunity arises, you can engage with them in a professional and knowledgeable conversation. Bring copies of your resume. Make sure it’s concise, professional and free of any factual, spelling or grammatical errors.

Communicate

Network with other job seekers. Exchange job hunting tips, previous experiences, personal support and/or business contacts. Be prepared to talk about yourself, your strengths, weaknesses, and previous experiences. Handing over your resume is just one step in the process. Many employers look for potential employees to initiate conversation, ask questions about the company, or discuss previous work experiences. Express your interest in a second conversation or interview at a later date.

Market Yourself

You are your own strongest selling point. Present yourself as a marketable product. Dress as if you were headed to an interview. Use name tags, if available, to allow employers to quickly match your face with a name. If attending a job fair with friends, colleagues, or other acquaintances, leave them at the door and visit with employers alone. Don’t let anyone distract you from your chance to stand out! Show initiative, and introduce yourself with a firm handshake. Don’t wait for an employer to take the lead.

Take Notes & Follow Up

Bring a notepad to take notes. Collect business cards, contacts, and information that you will want to remember. Always follow up with employers that interest you. Sending a short thank you note is a surefire way to show your interest in a business or employer.

Ultimately, job fairs offer an excellent opportunity to network, hand out your resume, and talk to several employers in a short amount of time. Although you probably won’t be hired on the spot, showing up prepared, confident, and knowledgeable will undoubtedly make you stand out of the crowd and enhance your chances of landing a job.

General Job Boards

[Indeed](#) Use this meta site to find job postings across the web by searching for keywords and locations

[Idealist](#) Meta site for jobs, internships, and volunteer work

[JuJu](#) Use this meta site to find job postings across the web by searching for keywords and locations

[Highereducationjobs.com](#) Find jobs working in higher education by using category, location, or type of institution

[Careers.wa.gov](#) Find a job working for Washington State

[U.S. Jobs](#) National job search site. Specific areas of interest: vets, disability, seniors, students

[US AJOBS](#) Federal government's official one-stop source for federal jobs and employment information

[Philanthropy Northwest](#) Educational and networking opportunities, customized philanthropic consulting services, and mission investing resources for foundations and corporations

Industry Specific

- [4EntertainmentJobs](#) This site features jobs in the entertainment industry
- [American Mathematical Society](#) – Site features several job boards for job seekers in the field of mathematics
- [Sports Jobs & Internships](#)
- [Jobs with Justice](#) – Job board for positions in the field of social justice
- [Accounting Career Center](#)
- [Payroll Jobs](#)
- [Jobs in IT](#)
- [Environmental Career Opportunities](#)
- [The Green Job Search Engine](#)
- [Careers in Criminal Justice](#)
- [Nursing Career Center](#)
- [Medical Jobs](#)

- [Washington Healthcare Careers](#)
- [The Chronicle of Philanthropy](#) – Job search in philanthropic fields
- [Science Jobs](#)
- [National Science Foundation](#) – Jobs available in a variety of different fields
- [Science and Technology Jobs](#)
- [Life Science Career Opportunities in Washington](#)
- [Teaching Opportunities](#)
- [Teaching & Administrative Jobs](#)
- [Teaching Jobs](#)
- [HealthITJobs.com](#)

For more advice and assistance with conducting a job search, **contact Academic & Career Advising at 360-867-6312 to schedule an appointment with one of our Career Advisors.**

Websites Related to Disability Issues

The following websites may assist job seekers and employers in addressing disability issues. To receive this material in an alternative format, please contact Academic & Career Advising at 360-867-6312 or email us at advising@evergreen.edu.

www.disability.gov/employment

Provides resources for people who are looking for a job or who are interested in becoming self-employed. It includes information about job listings, vocational rehabilitation, mentoring programs, and starting a small business. It also offers tips for employers who want to hire people with disabilities and advice on job accommodations to help employees succeed in the workplace.

www.disabledperson.com

This is a free job search website for individuals with disabilities that can help individuals to search for jobs by job type and/or location. The site also provides tips for employers on recruiting employees with disabilities.

www.disabilityresources.org/EMPLOYMENT.html

Disability Resources, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established to promote and improve awareness, availability and accessibility of information that can help people with disabilities live, learn, love, work and play independently. It serves thousands of individuals with disabilities through a multidisciplinary network of service providers and consumers. It disseminates information about books, pamphlets, magazines, newsletters, videos, databases, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, telephone hotlines and on-line services that provide free, inexpensive or hard-to-find information to help people with disabilities live independently.

[Employer Assistance & Recruiting Network \(EARN\)](#)

The Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN) is a resource for employers seeking to recruit, hire, and retain qualified employees with disabilities.

[eSight Careers Network](#)

The eSight Careers Network is part of Lighthouse International's career services initiative to help people with low vision or a visual impairment find employment. eSight provides information for not only job seekers, but also employers and small business owners.

[Federal Employment of People with Disabilities](#)

This site helps individuals with or without disabilities to better understand how to hire and retain persons with disabilities. It includes general information on federal disability hiring programs, laws and regulations, frequently asked questions, workplace accommodations, and resources related to the employment of people with disabilities.

www.opm.gov/disability/Peoplewithdisabilities.asp

This is a link to a separate page on the US Office of Personnel Management website that provides information specifically for job seekers with disabilities.

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is the leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. Working toward practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee, JAN helps people with disabilities enhance their employability, and shows employers how to capitalize on the value and talent that people with disabilities add to the workplace.

Monster Diversity & Inclusion

A resources website from Monster.com that includes job search and Diversity & Inclusion Articles.

United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

This U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) website provides information on discrimination laws related to job applicants and employees because of a person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information.

JobAccess

The goal of ABILITYJobs and JobAccess is to enable people with disabilities to enhance their professional lives by providing a dedicated system for finding employment. By posting job opportunities, or searching resumes, employers can find qualified persons with disabilities as well as demonstrate their affirmative action and open door policies. ABILITYJobs is the leading website dedicated to employment of people with disabilities. It is the largest resume bank with tens of thousands job seekers with disabilities, from entry level candidates to PhD's.

Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)

Links to the US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, and provides links to a wealth of information on employment policies, technical assistance, publications, programs and other resources related to the hiring of individuals with disabilities.

Workforce Recruitment Program

The Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities (WRP) is a recruitment and referral program that connects federal sector employers nationwide with highly motivated postsecondary students and recent graduates with disabilities who are eager to prove their abilities in the workplace through summer or permanent jobs. It is co-sponsored by the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the Department of Defense with the participation of many other federal agencies and sub-agencies.

Work Site Employment Support for People with Disabilities

This site links to the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Program, which provides most people receiving Social Security benefits (beneficiaries) more choices for receiving employment services. Under this program, SSA issues tickets to eligible beneficiaries who, in turn, may choose to assign those tickets to an Employment Network (EN) of their choice to obtain employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, or other support services necessary to achieve a vocational (work) goal. The EN, if they accept the ticket, will coordinate and provide appropriate services to help the beneficiary find and maintain employment.

WorkSupport.com

This site links to the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)-RRTC and provides resources for professionals, individuals with disabilities, and their representatives. Its team of nationally and internationally renowned researchers is committed to developing and advancing evidence-based practices to increase the hiring and retention for individuals with disabilities.

www.choosework.net

This site links to resources and information about the "Ticket to Work" program that offers individuals who are receiving cash benefits under the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program and/or the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program based on disability or blindness, expanded choices for obtaining the services and support to enter and maintain employment.

National Rehabilitation Information Center

This link take you to the National Rehabilitation Information Center's online gateway to an abundance of disability- and rehabilitation-oriented information organized in a variety of formats designed to make it easy for users to find and use.

www.NISH.org

NISH is a national nonprofit agency whose mission is to create employment opportunities for people with significant disabilities by securing federal contracts through the AbilityOne Program for its network of community-based, nonprofit agencies. Providing employment opportunities to more than 45,000 people, the AbilityOne Program is the largest single source of employment for people who are blind or have other significant disabilities in the United States. More than 600 participating nonprofit organizations employ these individuals and provide quality goods and services to the federal Government at a fair price.

www.EnableAmerica.org

Enable America is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people with disabilities find employment and live independently. It is committed to raising awareness of employment-related disability issues on a local and national level.

www.PVA.org

Paralyzed Veterans of America works to positively change lives and build brighter futures for our nation's veterans with disabilities and their families. Whether it's fighting for quality health care and decent benefits for all who served, providing opportunities -- post serious injury -- to get back into life through adaptive sports, helping veterans with disabilities get good jobs and careers, educating clinicians about spinal cord injury/dysfunction or investing in a cure for paralysis, Paralyzed Veterans leads the way in empowering people with disabilities with everything they need to live full and productive lives.

www.quintcareers.com/disabled_career_resources.html

This links to Quintessential Careers' career and job resources for disabled and other disadvantaged job seekers.

www.cvtips.com/job_search_for_disabled_people.html

CVTips' job search information for individuals with disabilities.