

The Job Search Handbook

We Can Help You



Make Magic Happen

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6 Steps to an Effective Job Search

The assertive job search tactics necessary in the current economy require a lot of time and energy.

Step #1: PREPARE JOB SEARCH SUPPORT MATERIALS

Once your job goals have been targeted, resumes and application letters can be tailored to reflect your qualifications as they relate to the interests of prospective employers.

I. Strong Resume

Information regarding resumes is available in the Career Development Center and on our Web site: www.jefferson.edu/jchp/studentlife/cdc.cfm

II. Cover Letter or Application Letter

Information regarding cover letters is available in the Career Development Center; stop by 707 Edison to pick up a brochure.

III. List of References and Letters of Recommendations

- 3-5 references (clinical, academic, and professional)
- Names, titles, addresses, and telephone numbers on list
- Personalized letters of recommendation (if possible)

IV. Transcripts

- Contact the Office of the Registrar and request a student copy of your transcript for yourself
- Request should be made at least 3 weeks before you need the copy
- Official transcripts must be sent from the Office of the Registrar directly to the facility

V. Support Materials

The portfolio concept is gradually widening to include fields in which portfolios have not been traditionally used. Possible items for inclusion include:

- Research projects or journal articles
- Papers that display your writing and/or research abilities
- Patient education pamphlets and/or activities
- Letters of recommendation you've received
- Clippings of articles about work you've done or projects in which you've participated
- Special certifications you've received
- Conferences, workshops, or continuing education courses you've attended

Design your portfolio to stand out on its own as much as possible. Typically, a portfolio has been a ring binder or notebook with plastic sheets to enclose each page. Whatever your medium, your portfolio should be a professional presentation of your best work!

Step #2: RESEARCH YOUR TARGET MARKETPLACE AND DEVELOP CONTACTS

I. Employer Research

Why research an organization? Employers perceive "researching the facility" as a critical factor in the evaluation of an applicant because it reflects your interest and savvy. The main goals in researching an organization are to gather information in order to make a more informed decision and to let the facility know of your genuine interest. This is a good way to discover if the organization is a good match for you. It also allows you to identify the needs of the organization to market yourself appropriately. Company research helps you show initiative and enthusiasm as well as confidence in answering questions during an interview.

The type of information you gather should cover the industry, the employer, and the position you are seeking in the particular organization:

- What is the facility's status in the industry?
- Is the organization large or small, growing or downsizing? Is it national or regional?
- What are the key services offered? Populations served?
- What can you learn about the job you want (duties, salary, benefits, work environment)?
- What is the public image of the facility?
- What is the organization's mission statement? Are the values consistent with yours?
- What type of person "fits in?"
- What are some of the facility's current problems?
- Which people have the power to hire you?

Where do I look for Information Regarding Employers?

A. Career Development Center

The Career Development Center has literature in the file cabinet labeled "Employer Files" for organizations that have posted positions, requested resumes, attended job fairs, or interviewed on campus.

1. Directories and Reference Books

Directories and reference books in the CDC Resource Library can help you with general and contact information about healthcare facilities. Some of these might include:

- Pharmaceutical Industry Guide
- Plunkett's Health Care Industry Guide
- Related Journals and Trade Publications
- Job search and Industry Sites on the Internet
- Yellow Pages (or Internet Yellow Pages, i.e., www.switchboard.com)

2. Alumni Contact Network

Utilize GSA, faculty, Career Development Center, etc.

B. The Employer

If the Career Development Center does not have an annual report or literature regarding a specific organization, call the facility's Human Resources Department and/or Marketing and Public Relations Department and request one. Annual reports are an excellent source of information--required for all publicly held for-profit companies and voluntarily published by many non-profit agencies. Information that may be obtained from annual reports include:

- * **The organization's mission and philosophy** * **The health of the industry** *
- * **What type of people they employ** * **The organization's outlook and growth prospects** *

Sales and marketing brochures will inform you about the organization's products and services, allowing you to develop solid questions from this information. Request a copy of a job description for the position in which you are interested. You also may want to request an Employee Benefits outline. If they agree to send you one, you can discover information about retirement plans, vacation time, salary reviews, etc. that you may not want to ask about during an interview.

C. Media Resources

Review websites, newspapers, business periodicals, trade and professional journals for articles mentioning organizations in which you are interested. Look for information on new products, expansions, consolidations, relocations, promotions, articles regarding research breakthroughs, annual earnings, and current problems.

D. Professional Associations

Associations typically hold regular meetings and publish periodicals, both of which are good sources of information regarding particular facilities and the healthcare industry as a whole. These organizations often have a membership directory, which is an excellent source of names for networking. Job openings are also posted at the association meetings and frequently on the association websites.

E. Relocation Resources

If you are seeking a position outside of your current geographic location, a good place to start is with the Chamber of Commerce and newspapers from the region in which you are interested; this information is easily found on the web.

II. Develop Contacts

A. Networking

Networking is a series of one-on-one contacts that branch out to an ever-widening circle, giving you advice, guidance, tips, hints, leads, introductions, informational interviews, and support.

- Networking can help you research employers and learn of job leads
- Over 70% of all jobs are filled through networking
- Networking is utilizing any or all of the personal and professional contacts that you have at your disposal
- Tell as many people as you know that you are looking for a job. **Do Not Limit the List!**
- Maintain up-to-date records by taking notes and recording all information on the *Job Search Information Sheet* in the back of this packet

B. Informational Interviewing

The main goal of informational interviewing is to obtain information and advice on facilities, settings, and job search strategies through one-to-one, comfortable conversations with professionals

already working in a particular career. Informational interviews are initiated by the job seeker and are not job interviews.

C. Personal Contacts

People are critical in the job-hunting process. Therefore, you need to make lists of people who can give you information and advice. Who is a personal contact?

- Every person you know is a contact
- Every member of your family
- Every friend of yours
- Every person in your address book
- Every person on your Christmas-card list
- Every salesperson you ever deal with
- Every employer you ever worked for
- Every affiliation contact you have
- Every externship/internship supervisor you have ever had

Step #3: DEVELOP A JOB SEARCH CONTROL SYSTEM

I. Planning

Effective job search strategy requires that you master the skills of goal setting and action planning. This means that you set objectives such as those indicated in the following suggestions and designate specific times to complete each one.

- Schedule planning time
- Maintain a list of activities to accomplish (write weekly calendar & enter each item per day)
- Establish target date for getting a job & decide how much time you can devote to the search
- Start a notebook with one section for contacts' names, addresses, and phone numbers and another section for notes about different facilities
- Review your progress by checking off completed activities
- Effective job search requires clerical and organizational skills. Every week you will need to update specific names, obtain more exact titles, and confirm addresses
- Being able to locate this information quickly can make the difference between sending your resume in the mail today or tomorrow (which may be a day too late)
- It is also advisable to have a designated area in your home for all of your career information

II. Record Keeping

Keeping careful records of all contacts made, applications submitted, resumes sent, interviews held, and correspondence sent and received will make your job search more effective and easier to manage.

- It is important to be methodical and organized during your job search

Develop a record keeping system (See *Job Search Information Sheet* on the last page of this booklet) so that you remain organized

III. Contact/Target List

- Find out the name of the contact person to whom you should send your resume and cover letter
- If possible, this should be the head of the department in which you would like to work, not personnel or human resources
- Call the facility and ask to be transferred to the specific department for which you are interested in working
- Once connected to the department, say, "I am trying to forward information to the supervisor/Chief of _____, could you give me his/her name?"
- Ask for the correct spelling of the person's name, credentials, and title
- Maintain up-to-date records by recording information on the *Job Search Information Sheet* in the back of this packet

Step #4: CONTACTING EMPLOYERS

I. By Mail

- Verify your contact information
- Send out a manageable number of resumes (5-10 at a time)
- Customize cover letters to accompany each resume you mail
- Use matching bonded paper for your cover letter and resume; do not staple the two together
- Follow up with a phone call within 10 days

II. By Telephone

- Write an outline or script of what you are going to say on the phone. This will minimize your anxiety and ensure that you will obtain all the necessary information
- If you are calling as a result of a referral, state the person's name early in the conversation
- Do not be abrasive or impatient with anyone in the organization--especially secretaries and receptionists
- Obtain a voice mail account or answering machine if you do not already have one. Employers become frustrated if they are unable to reach candidates to leave messages and will move to the next candidate after 2 attempts. Be sure to record a business-like message on the tape or voice mail box

III. In Person

Unannounced visits are not for the "faint of heart"

- Try it if you do not mind being assertive and are able to speak to strangers and can handle rejection easily
- Dress professionally in business attire and be prepared for a job interview on the spot
- Do all your research so that you know who you have to see

- If you are unable to meet with the appropriate person, leave a resume and call back in a few days to follow up
- Do not be aggressive to Human Resources employees. They will remember this and most likely will inform the recruiter

IV. Responding to Classified Advertisements

- The key to success in responding to a classified ad is to separate yourself from the crowd
- If a facility name or telephone number is listed, call and find out as much as possible about the job, the facility, and the qualifications of the person they seek
- Never mail to a company without an individual's name and title
- Tailor your resume and/or cover letter to the requirements stated in the ad or learned via the telephone. Remember to show a special interest in or unique qualification for the job
 - Wait 7-10 days from the time you send your cover letter and resume in the mail and call the contact person for follow-up information
 - Ask if your resume was received and if so, if you can answer any questions
 - Try to schedule a mutually convenient interview with the contact person
 - If interviews are not being scheduled, ask when they anticipate scheduling them
 - Express interest in the position and that you look forward to interviewing with them

Step #5: FEEDBACK

- Rejection letters are inevitable. Do not take them personally
- Obtain some real benefit from each rejection letter. You cannot let a simple "no" affect you in a negative way. Do something positive about it
- Call each person who sent a rejection letter & thank him or her for their consideration
- Ask for feedback to improve your resume, interview skills or job search direction
- Ask for referrals to other facilities or people who may be hiring
- Ask what the person would do if they were in your situation. Who would they call?
- Try to get at least 2 or 3 leads or suggestions from each person who has sent a letter
- Above all, never give up...keep calling...keep learning...keep improving...and you will be successful

Step #6: WHAT SHOULD I DO WHILE I WAIT FOR AN INTERVIEW?

- Join a local chapter of your professional organization and attend meetings to expand your contacts and network

- Consider shadowing or informational interviewing to get your foot in the door; the Career Development Center can assist you with facilitating this process
- Read all of your professional journals and publications and write a letter to someone who has written an article, expressing your job search goals
- Attend local and out-of-state job fairs and networking programs

Good Luck!

JOB SEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

Contact Name: _____

Referred by: _____

Contact Title: _____

Organization Name: _____

Department Name: _____

Organization Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone #: _____ Fax #: _____ e-mail: _____

Date of Initial Contact: _____

Result of Contact: _____

Other Names Provided or Leads: _____

Name: _____ Company: _____ Phone #: _____

Name: _____ Company: _____ Phone #: _____

Name: _____ Company: _____ Phone #: _____

Resume Sent (Y/N): _____ Date: _____

Phone Follow-up and date: _____

Result of Follow-up: _____

Interview Date: _____

Interview Results: _____

Thank You Note Sent:(Y/N): _____ Date: _____

Follow-up Contact: _____

Date: _____ Results: _____

Date: _____ Results: _____

Date: _____ Results: _____

Note: Keep a separate file on each company/facility with the Job Search Information Sheet. Attach a copy of a job advertisement (if applicable), letters sent and received and any other pertinent information (i.e., company brochures, business cards, copies of applications, etc.)