

Job searching involves the same key steps, regardless of your age. This handout will get you started. Your motivation and determination will ensure that you finish successfully.

TIP 1: The Resume

Your resume is used to introduce yourself to a prospective employer. Make the information relevant and focused. Keep in mind that resumes are “scanned” for key words.

Sections of the resume include:

- Heading
Contact information including name, address, phone, e-mail
- Summary of Qualifications or Professional Summary
Overview of who you are and what you offer
- Work Experience / Activities
Chronological order, most recent first
- Education/Certifications
Degree and any certifications (i.e., CPA, CFE, etc.)
- Professional Associations
Associations to which you belong
- Professional Development
Relevant training courses you may have attended

TIP 2: The Cover Letter

Cover letters can be used to apply for a specific position or as a general application to a company of interest. In both cases, the cover letter should be customized, noting how your background and skills would be an asset to the role and the organization. Cover letters should be no more than 3 or 4 paragraphs, concise and focused.

Sections of the cover letter include:

- Your contact information
- Date
- The receiving party's information
- Salutation
- Opening Paragraph:
Why you are writing, how you found the position, what you value in the organization and an overall statement about how you can contribute to their mission.
- Middle Paragraph:
Why you are interested in the position, what you offer - “tying your experience to the role”, and proven results. Be concise and focused with your wording.
- Closing Paragraph:
Give contact information, extend offer for follow up phone call, and thank the person for time/ consideration.
- Signature line
Include attachment or enclosure line if applicable.

TIP 3: Networking/Outreach

Up to 75% of all positions are secured through some type of personal connection. Networking comes in many facets including:

- People you know well such as family and close friends.
- Acquaintances who may be business associates, peers on an association or board, people you meet through sporting or recreational events, etc.
- Extended contacts are connections through other people you may not know well but could reach out to through a mutual friend or acquaintance.
- Your local business journal, chamber of commerce or regional growth association may have information on up to date changes and business environments, as well as contacts and networks to tap.
- The Washington University Alumni Association and Directory is a great way to network with other Washington University colleagues, reunite with old friend or meet new ones. For more information visit <http://www.wustlconnections.com/>.
- State unemployment offices may have access to net working groups and resource lists. It is beneficial to check this source for additional information.
- Online resources such as LinkedIn or Facebook.

Tip 4: Keep Networks Alive

Following-up helps you maintain strong networks.

- Following up to ensure the organization received your application shows your interest and enthusiasm.
- Follow up calls should be clear and concise and use the receiver's time wisely.
- Networking contacts – let them know that you appreciate their time and keep in touch as appropriate.

Tip 5: Where to Find Positions

Job search sites include posted positions and are used by companies to source candidates. Sites can be both general and industry specific. The listings below are a sample of job search sites but is not an exhaustive list.

Job Search Sites:

- General sites include:
www.indeed.com
www.simplyhired.com

monster.com

www.careerbuilder.com

www.ladders.com (100K+ positions)

- Industry specific sites include:

www.americanbanker.com

www.jobsinthemoney.com

www.engineerjobs.com

www.environmentalcareer.com

www.computerjobs.com

www.nonprofitjobs.org

www.idealists.org

www.socialservice.com

Temporary/Contract Work

Many organizations specialize in temporary and/or contract workers such as Kelly Services, Robert Half, Accountemps, Ajilon, Spherion, Manpower, etc. You can search for a larger list of these organizations on Google or research databases such as Hoovers.

- Temporary

Positions that are temporary in nature, perhaps to fill in for vacation or complete a project.

- Contract

May have an end date or could be more open depending on the role. May request specific skills and technical abilities.

Search Firms

Search firms are paid by the hiring organization and find candidates through postings and proactive sourcing.

- Contingency Firms

Firms are hired to find specific skill sets; fee is paid by the employer when a candidate is placed.

- Retained Firms

Firms are hired to find high end executive level candidates; fee is paid by the employer as a retainer” regardless of final placement of a candidate.

Keep in mind that if you are hired through this method, the hiring organization is responsible for a “hiring fee” that they pay the search firm. Should you decide to use a search firm, it is your responsibility to verify the credentials of the search firm with which you work.

Tip 6: Interview Skills

Strong interviewing skills are critical as this may be the only opportunity to meet the hiring manager. Critical aspects of the interview include preparation and professionalism.

- Research the company, their industry, and the position. Understand how you fit all three.
- Be ready for different types of interview questions.

1) Traditional

Understand your experience and background, skills, strengths, development opportunities, etc.

2) Behavioral

Focus on how you have handled situations in the past (i.e. tell me about a time when).

3) Case Studies

Given a situation and are tasked with providing a recommendation and/or solution during the interview.

4) In-Basket

Simulating “on-the-job” functions.

- Pay attention to Non-Verbals - a strong handshake, good eye contact, voice inflection, and a professional image form a positive impression.
- Business attire and grooming – be aware of the little things such as a pressed/tailored suit, shined shoes, modest jewelry etc...
- Phone etiquette – phone interviews are common and a clear, professional, positive phone demeanor is critical.

Thank You Notes

- Always send a thank you within 24 to 48 hours of the interview.
- Personalize for each interviewer. If possible, highlight a comment or observation they made that may tie to what skills you can bring the team.
- Thank you notes can be sent e-mail or via U.S. mail; if sent U.S. mail, can be handwritten or typed with a signature.

Career Center Resources

The Career Center website is a valuable resource for weblinks (research focused) and job search information. This information is available to you at careers.wustl.edu.

In addition, an individual job search skills consultation with a Career Center Advisor is available. Please call 314-935-5930 to schedule an appointment.

Job Search Resources

Job Search Books:

- Change your Job, Change Your Life: *Careering and Re-careering in the New Boom/ Bust Economy*, Ron Krannich, PhD
- What Color is Your Parachute? 2009: *A Practical Manual for Job Hunters & Career Changers*, Richard Nelson Bolles

Interviewing Skills Books:

- The 250 Job Interview Questions, Peter Veruki
- Winning Job Interviews: *Reduce Interview Anxiety/Outprepare the Other Candidates/Land the Job You Love*, Paul Powers

Networking Books:

- Dig Your Well Before Your Thirsty: *The Only Networking Book You'll Ever Need*, Harvey Mackey
- Highly Effective Networking: *Meet the Right People and Get a Great Job*, Orville Pierson

Resume Books:

- Resume Magic: *Trade Secrets of a Professional Resume Writer*, Susan Britton Whitcomb
- Gallery of Best Resumes: *A Collection of Quality Resume by Professional Resume Writers*, David F. Noble

Cover Letter Books:

- Gallery of Best Cover Letters: *Collection of Quality Cover Letters by Professional Resume Writers*, David F. Noble
- Adams Cover Letter Almanac, Richard Wallace

Search Firms Reference Book:

- Directory of Executive Recruiters, 07-08, Kennedy Information

Online Resources:

- Linked In (www.linkedin.com), a business professional networking site where you create a business profile.
- Facebook (www.facebook.com), a social avenue but can also be used to network. A professional business profile is recommended.

