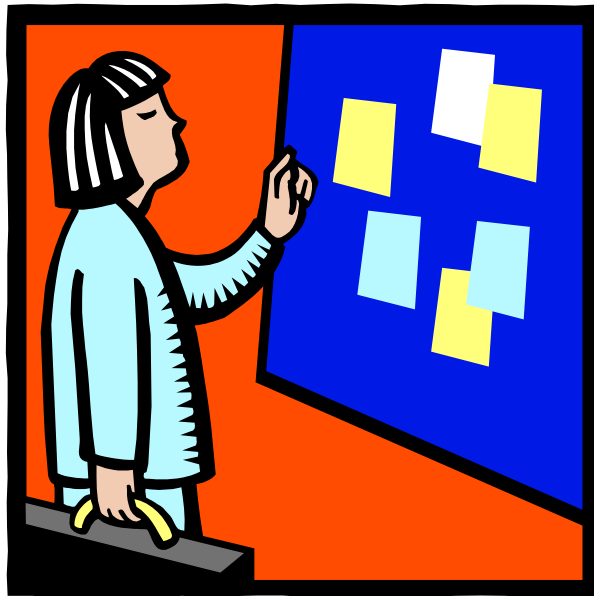


# JOB SEARCH GUIDE

## JOB HUNTING IN THREE PARTS

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## **Part One: What do I want?**

If you are unsure about the type of job you want or that would make the best use of your skills, answering the questions below might help you narrow your search. (Adapted from *Now, Discover Your Strengths*, by Marcus Buckingham, and Donald O. Clifton, Ph.D., 2001.)

### 1. Interests

a. What kinds of activities have I maintained an interest in over the years?

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b. What activities, situations and events do I find myself so caught up in that I lose all sense of time and cannot wait to become involved in again? \_\_\_\_\_

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### 2. Skills

a. What skills do I find easy to learn? \_\_\_\_\_

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b. What do others tell me that I do well? \_\_\_\_\_

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### 3. Satisfaction

a. What jobs, hobbies, and volunteer activities have I really enjoyed? What did I like most about those activities? \_\_\_\_\_

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b. What kind of environment do I work best in? \_\_\_\_\_

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c. What kind of people do I work best with? \_\_\_\_\_

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d. At the end of each week, what do I want to look back upon with satisfaction as having accomplished? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Part Two: How do I find a job?**

**NETWORKING**

Many job seekers spend the most time with the least effective methods, such as responding to want ads or searching online, but they neglect the most effective technique - *networking*. Networking is seeking advice, information, and ideas from people who are working in the type of job or industry that interests you or who could put you in touch with such individuals, and it enables you to tap into the hidden job market through personal leads. As described on page three, it can be done through informational interviewing or by calling actual job leads.

Contacts for your network come from many sources. Friends, neighbors, relatives, colleagues, businesses you support, alumni associations, and the names of managers as seen in trade journals are good places to start. One contact can lead to many others. When calling your contacts, ask them for information about (1) people who have openings, (2) the names of hiring managers where you want to work, (3) companies who are hiring, or (4) people who might know other sources of job leads.

<b>NETWORK CONTACTS LIST</b>	
Family Members	Businesses You Support (ex: barber, mechanic)
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____
Neighbors	Names from Journals and Annual Reports
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____
Friends	Professional and Alumni Associations
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____
Former Co-Workers/Current Colleagues	Community (ex: clergy, librarian)
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____

## Networking through Informational Interviewing

The purpose of informational interviewing is to get advice about a career field and information about a company or organization. When calling your contacts, explain that you are in a transition and you are seeking information, ideas, and advice. In addition, be prepared with a short description about your background, and share information of interest to people in your line of work, such as information you've researched about the contact's company, job, or industry. Offering to share information you've researched shows your commitment to the field and might increase your contact's interest in meeting you. If you say you are calling for information and advice, do not ask for a job, and as a courtesy, ask the person you are calling if the present time is convenient for them to speak with you.

Sample phone script: *Hello Ms. Smith my name is \_\_\_ and Sue Davis suggested I call you regarding the field of \_\_\_. Do you have a few moments? I am not calling for a job, but Sue said you would be a good person to talk with about opportunities and emerging trends in this field. I have a background in \_\_\_\_\_, and I've been doing research about \_\_\_\_\_ that I would like to discuss with you. Do you have 10 to 15 minutes within the next week when we could meet?*

Always have a list of questions prepared ahead of time (see the appendix, page 6, for sample questions), and bring your resume in case the contact is interested in your experience and they mention they have an opening. If the contact does not have time to meet in person, ask if they have a few moments to speak to you by phone, and ask if you may send them your resume. Whether you meet in person or by phone, ask for the name of at least one referral and get permission to use the contact's name when you call that person. Finally, write a follow-up letter to thank them for the time they took to meet or talk to you, and include a copy of your resume if you did not give it to them previously.

## Networking for Actual Job Leads

Your research and your network of contacts will probably lead you to people or companies who have openings. Unlike informational interviewing, networking for job leads is calling to apply for a job and request an interview. To increase your chances of being interviewed, express knowledge of and interest in the company's mission or product and how you obtained the name of the person you are calling (such as the name of the person who referred you or the source where you found their name). As with informational interviews, ask the person you are calling if the present time is convenient, and be prepared with a short description about your skills, experience and training. If the job lead does not have an opening, ask if they know someone who might be able to utilize your skills get their permission to use their name as a referral.

Example phone script for job lead: *Hello Mr. Jones, my name is \_\_\_ and Bob Smith suggested I call you about my interest in the field of \_\_\_; do you have a few minutes? I am exploring opportunities in \_\_\_\_\_ (type of dept or work, such as marketing). I have extensive experience in \_\_, specifically \_\_\_\_. I am strongly interested in \_\_\_ (name of company and their mission or product), and Mr. Smith suggested that you might be able to utilize my skills. Could we get together for a brief meeting?*

## RESPONDING TO WANT ADS

When responding to an ad, include a cover letter with your resume, and follow the ad's instructions, such as sending your resume to a certain department. If the ad asks for your salary requirement, state a general figure (e.g., mid thirties) or that your salary requirement is negotiable. Address your letter to a specific person, but if no name is given, call the company and ask for the name of the hiring manager or the person who is receiving resumes. If you are unable to get the name of the hiring manager, address your letter as, "Dear Hiring Manager:" and call the company approximately one week afterward to request an interview.

## SEARCHING ONLINE

Searching for a job online can be done by posting your resume on job boards and waiting for employers to contact you, and/or by replying via e-mail to jobs posted on the Internet or a company's web page. Sites where you can search for jobs online include:

1. <http://www.howardcc.edu/career/HCCJOL.htm> - Howard Community College's online resume and job posting service.
2. <http://www.monster.com>
3. [www.flipdog.com](http://www.flipdog.com)
4. <http://www.careerbuilder.com>
5. <http://www.collegegrad.com>
6. <http://www.ajb.org> - America's Job Bank
7. [www.howardjoblink.com/splash.html](http://www.howardjoblink.com/splash.html)
8. [www.maryland.jobopenings.net/](http://www.maryland.jobopenings.net/)
9. [www.statejobs.com/md.html](http://www.statejobs.com/md.html)
10. [www.portaltomaryland.com/jobs.htm](http://www.portaltomaryland.com/jobs.htm)

Keep the following points in mind when posting your resume online or sending it via e-mail:

- Format your resume as text only (ending in ".txt" in the "save as type" box).
- Use keywords (nouns) contained in the job announcement and common industry phrases.
- Do not use graphics, shading, italics, boxes, or lines. Use capital letters or boldface to emphasize important information and use the asterisk (\*) instead of bullets.
- If you send your resume via e-mail, include the resume in the text of the e-mail as opposed to an attachment, unless requested otherwise. Employers may be suspicious of viruses in attachments. Include the job title and/or number in the subject line of the e-mail.
- Send a copy to your e-mail address to check its appearance before sending it to an employer's e-mail.
- Keep a log of where and when you post your resume.
- For more information about searching online and formatting an electronic resume, go to: <http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/16/webjobs.html> and <http://www.eresumes.com/>

## EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES AND EXECUTIVE RECRUITERS

Employment agencies typically fill clerical, administrative or labor positions for companies on a temporary or permanent basis, and executive recruiters (headhunters) typically recruit for executive, professional, or technical positions. Using employment agencies is one way of becoming familiar with the employers in an area and gaining work experience, and temporary assignments offer flexibility and variety and sometimes lead to permanent employment with the host company. However, if you rely solely on agencies, you are putting others in charge of your job search rather than conducting it yourself. Most of the time, the employer pays a fee to the agency or headhunter for their services, but before signing on with a firm, make sure you understand who is responsible for the fee. Headhunting firms and agencies cannot guarantee you a placement, even if you pay a fee, because the employer makes the final hiring decision.

### **Part Three: Where do I want to work?**

Keeping your options open to all possible job leads is important, but targeting specific organizations or industries can help you find jobs that might be known only by people in your network or advertised on a company's web page. To help you target your search, think about:

1. The industries that interest you
  - Non-profit       For profit       Government       Hi-Tech
  - Medical       Education       Community       Other \_\_\_\_\_
2. Size of company and location you prefer
  - Small       Large       Medium
  - Downtown       Suburb       Maximum commute from home \_\_\_\_\_

Listed below are resources to help you target and research specific companies or industries:

#### **Internet Resources:**

- [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)
- [www.vault.com](http://www.vault.com)
- [www.glassdoor.com](http://www.glassdoor.com)
- <http://www.fortune.com> - Profiles of fortune 500 companies
- [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) - Keyword search of the company or industry (e.g., the telecommunications industry)
- <http://www.youtube.com> - Search YouTube by company name for videos on job opportunities, interviewing, working at a company, company culture, and benefits
- <http://www.bls.gov> – Under the Publications tab, click Career Guides and then Career Guide to Industries
- <http://www.wetfeet.com>
- [www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com)
- [www.rileyguide.com](http://www.rileyguide.com)

#### **Publications:**

- Washington Job Bank: Addresses & general information on metro area employers
- The Encyclopedia of Associations: Names, addresses, phone numbers & information on trade associations. Useful for professional networking.
- Annual reports from the company or library.
- Book of Lists* – Published annually for major metropolitan cities by Business Journal Publications. Found at public libraries and career centers or purchased at newsstands or via the Internet at [www.bizjournals.com/bookoflists/](http://www.bizjournals.com/bookoflists/).

#### **What to look for:**

##### Company Research

- 1) Mission, product and industry
- 2) Key players, especially those related to your job function
- 3) Reputation and financial status
- 4) Size and revenue source and budget

##### Industry Research

- 1) Key people or companies in the industry
- 2) Employment trends, opportunities and challenges
- 3) Projected growth rate of the industry
- 4) Occupations in the industry

APPENDIX  
SAMPLE INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Select 5-7 of the sample questions below for conducting an informational interview:

1. What do you do on a typical day in this position?
2. What training or education is required for this type of work?
3. What personal qualities or abilities are important for being successful in this job?
4. What part of this job do you find most satisfying? Most challenging?
5. How did you get your job?
6. What opportunities for advancement are there in this field?
7. How do you see jobs in this field changing in the future?
8. What is the projected future demand for people in this occupation?
9. What advice would you give a person entering this field?
10. Which professional journals and organizations would help me learn more about this field?
11. What do you think of the experience I've had so far in terms of entering this field?
12. From your perspective, what are the problems you see working in this field?
13. If you could do things all over again, would you choose the same path for yourself? Why?  
What would you change?
14. What do you think of my resume? Do you see any problem areas? How would you suggest I change it?
15. Who do you know that I should talk to next? When I call him/her, may I use your name?