

How do I plan for my job search?

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1. Know yourself

You have unique interests, skills, strengths and experiences. You are more than your major!

2. Set career goals and identify job targets

Having an unclear job target, can lengthen your job search. Employers prefer candidates with clear goals and career plans.

3. Create your cover letter, resume, and prepare for interviews

Your cover letter and resume reflects you: Your accomplishments, experiences and style.

4. Begin your search!

Success doesn't come to you, you go to it.

5. Follow up, follow up, follow up

Be proactive.

6. Stay focused and monitor your progress

Having a plan will keep you on track to success.

7. Evaluate and negotiate offers

Make sure the job is a good fit.

The typical job search takes 3-6 months... start yours early!

CEHD Career Services

360 Education Sciences Building | 612-625-3339 | www.cehd.umn.edu/career

The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer. This material is available in alternative formats upon request.

Know yourself

_____ Complete a career assessment to clarify your interests and meet with a career counselor.

_____ Identify and compile all academic and non-academic experiences:

- List college education, related coursework, certifications, and specialized training.
- List all your work, student, and community experiences (paid and unpaid).

_____ Identify and list the transferable skills you have developed and demonstrated in the past.

_____ Consider your strengths. List your top 10 strengths and personal qualities.

_____ Consider what is most important to you. List your top 5 work values.

- Meet with a career counselor if you need assistance clarifying your values, identifying your skills or determining your strengths.

Set career goals and identify job targets

_____ Investigate what jobs you can do with your major.

- Use the ETC Services website to explore what you can do with your major.

_____ Determine where you want to live and define geographic location.

- Are you open to relocating, or do you have a very specific location in mind? If you have a specific location(s) identify companies and organizations in those areas. <http://www.findyourspot.com/>

_____ Learn about job sectors and industries.

_____ Research market trends in your field to identify job demand and salary.

_____ Identify clear and concise career goals.

- Specific goals give your job search plan a focus and direction.
- Establish sequenced action steps and activities that support your goals.

_____ Identify potential employers that interest you and are best suited to your talents and values.

- Conduct informational interviews and network with people in the professions you are considering.
- Join professional associations to get a list of members and where they are employed.

Learn more about potential employers.

- Use directories to research employers.
 - Million Dollar Directory <http://busref.lib.umn.edu>
 - Minnesota Non profit Directory <http://www.mncn.org/>
- Research each employer's website to learn about its culture, values, and hiring process.
- Consider the size of the organization, organizational culture, management style, professional development and other issues of importance to you.

Prioritize your list of potential employers.

Create your cover letter, resume, and prepare for interviews

Prepare your resume and cover letter

- Use ETC Services resources to develop a draft of your resume and cover letter.
- Tailor your resume and cover letter to each position to which you apply.
- Meet with a career counselor to review your resume and cover letter.
- Determine who you will use for references; ask permission to add them to your reference list.

Learn how to present yourself professionally to employers.

- Update e-mail addresses and voicemail messages to portray a professional image.
- Acquire appropriate attire for job fairs and interviews.
- Make a good first impression. Learn about professional etiquette.

Prepare for the interviewing process.

- Use ETC services resources and website to learn more about the interview process and get helpful tips.
- Brainstorm and practice interview questions likely to be asked in your field.

Start your search!

Identify the job search strategies most appropriate for your field. Examples include:

- GoldPass <http://www.goldpass.umn.edu> and LandIt! <http://www.landit.org/> both electronic job posting systems.
- Job fairs
- Professional organizations' websites
- Company websites
- Internet job sites
- Networking

- Classified ads

Develop a network.

- Brainstorm a list of people who work or know someone in the career areas you are targeting.
- Create your sales pitch: a 20-30 second message to let the employer know your interest in a position and how you can contribute to their organization.
- Schedule informational interviews with people who may be able to assist you.

Begin contacting potential employers.

- Send resumes and cover letters to people in your network.
- Respond to job postings

Follow up, follow up, follow up

Follow up all your contacts with employers, either by phone or by mail.

Send thank you letters or e-mails within 24 hours after an interview.

- Review samples on the ETC Services website
<http://www.education.umn.edu/ETCS/career/advanced/>.

Provide requested information (transcripts, references, etc.) in a reasonable timeframe.

Keep a log.

- Include the name of the organization, contact person, method of application, date and status.

Note any hiring timelines and employment cycles for your preferred employers.

Stay focused and monitor your progress

Demonstrate flexibility in your job search and adapt your plan to new job leads.

Remain focused on your career goals and action stops. Don't give up!

Update your log and continue to document all job search activities and information.

Learn from your mistakes and maintain momentum until you have accepted a job offer.

Once you have accepted an offer, remove yourself from other consideration.

Evaluate and negotiate offers

_____ Refer back to your work values to consider the factors most important to you in a position when making decisions.

_____ Use ETC resources and website to learn about successful salary negotiations and follow up with a career counselor if you have questions.

- The key to successful salary negotiation is knowledge. Do your homework by learning the salary ranges for that particular company, salary ranges in the industry, and typical benefit packages.

_____ Determine when, what and how to negotiate (keep benefit packages in mind).

_____ Draft and rehearse a script to assist you in the negotiation process.