

The Job Search

This handout is written with a few assumptions in mind:

- You know the type(s) of job you seek
- You have an idea about where you want to live/work
- You are ready to start the job search process

Passive vs. Active Job Searching

The Passive Job Seeker:

- Posts her resume on monster.com and waits for someone to contact her
- Sends his resume to a friend or relative and asks to have it sent on to the human resources department of the company
- Submits a general resume and cover letter to a few positions; more on a whim than anything else

The Active Job Seeker:

- Searches for job opportunities using multiple resources
- Contacts her network for informational interviews and referrals
- Writes resumes and cover letters specifically for each position of interest
- Follow up on every job lead and application

TIP: Be an Active Job Seeker!

Job Listings: Advertisements & Referrals

In general, when an employer has a position to fill they choose to advertise the opening or the position is filled through referrals and word of mouth. This handout highlights resources and tools to find both the advertised jobs as well as those filled by referral.

Resources for Advertised Jobs

- **Employer Websites.** As you begin your job search it is important to know who the primary employers are in your field. Which companies (small – large) are likely to have openings in your area of interest? Make a list of these employers and find their websites. Bookmark the “career” section of each website visit it on a regular basis. Carefully follow the application process for each employer.
- **Association Websites.** Professional associations are in the business of promoting and expanding their profession. For that reason, their websites are often very useful for jobs or career information. Do some research and learn which associations are best for your career area. For more assistance, stop by the Center for Career

Development and we can help.

- **Specialized Job Search Websites.** Websites that focus on a specific industry or profession tend to be well utilized by employers and job seekers alike. These sites only list job openings for a certain career area and tend to be more focused than the larger job search websites. Visit www.gettysburg.edu/career for recommendations.
- **Online Classified Ads.** All major newspapers have an online classifieds section. Visit the website of the newspapers in your geographic area and see what their site has to offer. Some newspapers will use an employment super site in addition to their own ads. Another suggestion is to check out www.craigslist.org and the Marketplace section of Facebook.

Get Referred!

Experts agree that about 80% of all jobs are filled without being advertised. These positions are filled by candidates who come to an employer's attention through recommendations from employees, referrals from trusted associates, or direct contact with the candidate.

Successful candidates are able to connect with the employer's network. Does this mean the employer knows them? Not necessarily. But the candidate comes "recommended" by someone the employer trusts. Networking, or using your contacts to connect with the employer's contacts, is the key.

- **Friends, Family, Employer, Faculty, Coach, Advisor, etc.** Your current contacts or those people you meet through your contacts can help you learn about positions, projects, or needs which might not be formally announced. Employers are always on the lookout for suitable candidates to replace departing, retiring or inefficient workers. Connecting with the people you know and the people they know will help you find the employers who seek your skills. Your contacts may help get your resume to the top of the pile.
- **Gettysburg College Alumni.** Previous graduates of Gettysburg can also be very helpful! Talking with people who are in the career field you want to work can get you started on learning where the jobs are. In addition, they can help solidify your resume for that career field. Find out more about talking with alumni of Gettysburg by contacting the Center for Career Development.
- **Professional Organizations.** Meet more people through professional organizations. Professional organizations are a great way to expand your personal network and connect with people interested in the same career fields as you. Attending conferences will allow you to continue to develop your personal network.
- **Direct Contact of Companies.** Review the list of companies that you want to work for and contact them. Call and find out who the hiring person is and send them your cover letter and resume inquiring about potential job opportunities.

Keys to be effective:

- Address your resume and cover letter to the hiring person
- Indicate in your cover letter how you can benefit their company (this will require some research)
- Follow up with a phone call after mailing your resume and cover letter

If the employer does not have an opening at this time, stay in touch. You never know when something may come open. Refer to the local Chamber of Commerce for listings of companies and businesses. Use the phonebook or yellowpages.com to find

companies and do a web search for the geographic area you are exploring.

10 Tips to Advance Your Job Search

1. Have a resume that clearly articulates your experiences, accomplishments, and skills AND how these relate to the position you have applied to.
2. Talk to people you know about your career aspirations.
3. Use several resources to find jobs: internet, personal/professional connections, associations, etc.
4. Arrive at each interview well prepared and knowledgeable about the employer.
5. Have a positive attitude.
6. Look and feel your best at each interview. Sleep well the night before, dress professionally, shine your shoes!
7. Carve out time specifically for your job search. It can take 6-9 months (or more) to secure the right job.
8. Know why an employer should hire you and be able to communicate this verbally.
9. Refine your job search and narrow it down to a couple of types of job you are looking for.
10. Develop a list of potential employers and check their websites on a regular basis.

Back to Basics; Using the Telephone

Relying on the web and email creates less anxiety and is less threatening, but there are more proactive tools. For more direct results, try using the telephone. Use your cover letter and resume for your initial contact, but take control over events by following up with a telephone call. In this way, you will reduce time lags and determine what needs to be accomplished more quickly.

Develop a short, 40-second presentation of yourself, your skills and your abilities. Have your resume in front of you for reference. Write out the answers to the following questions:

- Why am I calling? Are you scheduling a meeting, asking for information or advice, etc.
- What do I want to tell him/her? Think of any special skills that you have, or are you interested in gathering information about the field in which the person works, etc.
- What do I want to ask? Do you hope to schedule a meeting? Ask for information about the company? Obtain the names of other people to contact?
- What if I can't get through to the person? It's a good idea to have a backup plan. You may want to ask for a more convenient time to call. Because company decision makers often work longer hours, try calling before the company workday begins. It may be possible to reach these people more easily at that time.

It is in your best interest to speak with the people responsible for hiring. Often, however, you will reach an administrative assistant or receptionist. Speak with confidence and state your first and last name. If the person you are trying to reach is not available, ask for a more convenient time to call back.

During your telephone call, use the name of the person who referred you (if there is one) and briefly state your 40-second presentation. Some people won't set up an interview until they've seen your resume. If a resume is requested, send it immediately with a cover letter referring to your telephone conversation.

If you are able to set up an interview, be specific about where and when you will meet. If you need directions to the location, be sure to ask at that time. You don't want to have to call back for this information. Also, be sure to take several copies of your resume to the interview.

Tips about telephoning:

- If using a cell phone, always make the call from a private, quiet location, where you have a strong signal.
- Expect to hear rejections. **Don't take these negative responses personally!** Be sure to ask if they are aware of anyone you might contact.
- Do research on the company before you call. At the very least, you will want to know what product or service is provided.
- Pay close attention to the information being provided by the individual you have called. Gaining knowledge is as important as offering facts about yourself.
- Keep a log of all calls made including the name of the person called, their title, telephone number, results of the call, and any follow-up needed.
- Always begin a call by first asking if this is a convenient time to speak. If not, offer to call back at a later time.

Check Yourself!

In a world of MySpace and Facebook, it is smart to do your own reference check and look at yourself from another perspective.

- **Facebook and MySpace** are open to the public. If your profile is available for others to view take a close look at pictures posted (by you or friends), the groups you belong to, wall posts, etc. If anything could be viewed as inappropriate or controversial to an employer you could jeopardize your ability to get a job.
- **Use Google** to see what come up when you search for your name. Taking the time to do this will help you to see what potential employers might know about you before you arrive at an interview.

**GettysburgWorks is our online listing of all jobs and internships.
Access it at www.gettysburg.edu/career.**