

GUIDE TO CONDUCTING A JOB OR INTERNSHIP SEARCH

PREPARING FOR THE JOB/INTERNSHIP SEARCH

Conducting a job or internship search takes a lot of time and effort. Results are going to depend on how much you are willing to put into it. Use a variety of resources and don't get stuck trying the same thing over and over again. You need to tap into many different sources to have the best chance of finding the job you want. Use this guide as a tool to help you conduct an effective, well-rounded job/internship search.

Before you start your job or internship search, make sure you are prepared. Here are a few things you will want to consider:

- **Determine what kind of job or internship you are looking for** – There are a lot of job opportunities out there so it is really going to save you time and energy if you can focus your search. It will also help you as you go through the other areas of preparation to know what type of job/internship you are seeking and why.
- **Update your resume** – While the resume needs to be tailored to the job you are applying for, this doesn't mean you can't have one that is updated with a neat, easy to read format that can be adapted once you find jobs you want to apply for.
- **Practice interviewing** – There is not always much time to prepare for an interview once you are contacted for an interview. This means you need to be comfortable with interviewing when you start the process.
- **Develop realistic expectations** – This includes being realistic with what jobs you are actually qualified for, what salary and perks you can expect with your level of education, experience, and skills as well as how long the whole job/internship process can take.
- **Prepare for rejection** – It is not likely you will get an interview for every job you apply for, let alone be offered every job you interview for; however, don't let this discourage you. This is just part of the job/internship search.

JOB SEARCH WEBSITES

Try a variety of job search sites. Here are just a few ideas to get you started:

- **General job search sites** – Try HireBronchos.com (the UCO Career Development Center job search database), Indeed.com, Monster.com, and CareerBuilder.com. If you are looking for an internship, you can also try sites like Internships.com and Internmatch.com.
- **Search engines** – If you are looking for something more specific, try doing a keyword search in a search engine, such as Google, to find sites where you can job/internship search in a specific industry. For example, Idealist.org is a great site to find job opportunities with non-profit organizations. Higheredjobs.com posts all kinds of positions in higher education.
- **Career Development Center** – You can also check out the UCO Career Development Center website at careers.uco.edu. We have many resources for students and alumni who are searching for jobs, including sections devoted to special populations such as veterans, LGBTQ community, international students, and those with disabilities.
- **What Can I Do With This Major?** – This is a resource on careers.uco.edu designed to help students understand what career options are available within specific majors. For each of the majors, there are often job search website suggestions that go along with the major you are viewing. If you have a major that has similarities with other majors UCO offers, try looking at pages for each of those majors.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Professional organizations often have job boards that post jobs and/or internships in a specific field. Sometimes you may need to be a member of the organization, but often you can use this search tool for free. If you aren't sure what professional organizations are in your industry, try talking to faculty in your department for organizations they would recommend. You can also check out "What Can I Do With This Major?" for this purpose as well. These documents list

professional organizations that relate to majors.

COMPANY WEBSITES

If there is a company you are interested in working for, go to their website. Companies typically have a careers section where you can look for openings. If you aren't sure what companies are in your industry, try looking at Reference USA. Both the UCO library as well as our website, careers.uco.edu, have this database available where you can search for companies in an industry or even search for jobs that are currently available.

NETWORKING

They often say it's not what you know, it's who you know. While that is not completely true, (what you know is also very important) it can be helpful when it comes to learning about job opportunities. Make sure you are utilizing your current network, as well as making an effort to develop additional contacts. Networking can happen anywhere, but here are some suggestions to get you started on building up your network:

- **Clubs and organizations** – Participating in on and off-campus clubs and organizations is a great way to meet other people who share your interests. You also may have the opportunity to meet professionals already working in your field of interest. Try finding major specific organizations, special interest organizations and/or local chapters of industry specific professional organizations that you can get involved with.
- **On-campus events** – Attend events on campus where you might have opportunities to make a connection. Try presentations from an established community member that works in the same industry you would like to work in or any campus event where you might interact with faculty and staff on campus. For example, the Career Development Center hosts many events, such as Career Chats and career fairs, that give you an opportunity to network with recruiters.
- **Volunteering** – This can also be a great opportunity to network. Not only are you doing something that benefits the community and can be very personally satisfying, but it also gives you an opportunity to meet other socially conscious people who you can connect with.
- **Conferences** – If you have an opportunity to attend a conference in your field, this is also a great way to meet other professionals in your field of interest.
- **Employer information sessions** – Departments on campus, including the UCO Career Development Center, often host employer information sessions or tables where you can learn more about a particular company or about an open position. This is a great chance to talk with a recruiter about opportunities. Check out the calendar on careers.uco.edu for upcoming employer visits.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is not just for keeping in touch with friends. It's also a great way to look for jobs or internships; however, it is important to make sure your own social media sites are set up for the job search. Some employers do use social media when making hiring decisions, both for rejecting and for hiring new employees, so it can hurt or help you during your job search. Here are some tips on using social media professionally for your job/internship search:

- **Remove unprofessional content** – Remove any posts or pictures that could put you in a negative light and avoid putting new information out there that might come across as unprofessional. Don't be fooled by privacy settings. There is no such thing as privacy on the internet!
- **Get untagged** – Ask friends to take down pictures of you or, at the very least, remove tags of you in pictures or posts that might be considered inappropriate to a potential employer, such as you drinking alcohol at a party.
- **Use social media sites to your advantage** – Show what a conscientious and professional person you are through what posts and pictures you do share.
- **Get a LinkedIn page** – This site is all about professional connections. Put a professional picture in your profile and make sure to enter information from your resume so people know what your skills and experience are. This site even has a job search option so you can look for employment opportunities.
- **Follow companies you like** – If there are companies you would like to work for, follow them on Twitter or "like" them on Facebook so you can keep up-to-date on newsworthy information about the company and to track any job openings they might advertise.

CAREER AND INTERNSHIP FAIRS AND SPECIALTY FORUMS

The Career Development Center hosts a variety of fairs and forums to assist you with finding a job/internship. These opportunities range from general fairs, which are attended by employers from all different industries who are looking to hire for various positions at their companies, to specialty forums focusing on very specific industries such as accounting and public service. These are great opportunities to put in your resume for a job or internship and/or network depending on where you are in your job and internship search. Check out our website to keep updated on upcoming events.

Other organizations also host local career fairs. The Edmond Chamber of Commerce hosts the Greater Grads Fair every spring and the State of Oklahoma has their own fair as well. Keep your eyes and ears open for industry specific fairs. Try browsing a newspaper occasionally in case an event is posted.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Go old school. Jobs are still posted in classified ads. Buy a paper or look up a newspaper online. You never know, you might find just the right opportunity.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR SEARCH DOESN'T SEEM TO BE WORKING

If you seem to be struggling with finding opportunities or getting interviews, assess where in the process you seem to be having issues. Are you having a hard time finding jobs you are qualified for or that fit your interests? Maybe you are having trouble finding jobs, period. Are you finding jobs to apply for, but you aren't getting interviews? Maybe you are getting interviews, but not getting a job offer.

Trouble Finding Jobs

If you are having trouble finding jobs or the right kind of jobs, make sure you aren't limiting yourself to just one or two search methods. Variety can be the key to finding the right opportunity. You might hear about an opportunity from the friend of a friend who works for a company that is hiring for a position that you want or it could be a job search website that has several positions you would want to apply for. You also might need to reflect on the level of experience you have at the moment. If you don't have experience relevant to your field, you can try volunteering or finding a part-time job to gain additional experience. You also may need to re-evaluate your expectations.

Not Getting Interviews

If you aren't getting interviews, are you applying for jobs you are actually qualified for? Check the skills and qualifications section to make sure you actually have those skills and qualifications. This does not mean you feel that you could do them if given a chance. It means you actually have the experience and/or skills now.

Is your resume tailored to the jobs you are applying for? Is it neat, organized, and concise with only relevant information listed? Are there typos or grammatical errors?

Do you have a cover letter that summarizes necessary qualifications? Is it showing clear communication and writing skills?

Not Getting Job Offers

Are you comfortable interviewing? Do you exude confidence when you answer questions? Are you providing enough details to demonstrate your skills, knowledge, and experience? Are you choosing examples that best represent your abilities? Are you dressed professionally? Could you be dressed more professionally? Are you doing research on the company and understanding how you would fit into the organization?

If you assess and aren't finding any red flags, or if you are and aren't sure how to fix them, schedule an appointment at the Career Development Center to speak with a career development specialist who can further assist you with this process. They can talk with you more about the job search process and what you have been doing so far, look over your resume and cover letter, and even conduct a mock interview to provide you with some feedback on your interview skills. Remember that the job and internship process takes time and that it is okay to ask for help when you need it.

