

Let's See What Is Out There

Four Tips for Starting a Job or Internship Search

Getting ready to graduate? Looking for your first job or to make a career change? Looking for a way to learn industry-specific skills while earning some extra cash this summer? No matter where you are in your job search journey here are four tips you can use to help you land your dream job or internship.

Tip #1: Start with You

Looking for a new job takes a lot of time. I have found the old saying “looking for a job is a full-time job” to be true. Since you are about to dedicate a large portion of your time to looking for a job, it is important to outline elements you want to find in your future work and employer prior to initiating your search. Self-reflect and think about what skills, strengths, and interests you would like to include in your next position. Also think about your new employer and what values you hope to share with the organization. Examples of values could include work-life balance, community engagement, or a positive culture. If you happen to be someone who is looking for a new career, use online resources such as [O*Net](#) or [The Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) to help you research your future career. When you take the time to write down exactly what you are looking for it creates a compass that will guide your search and ensure you do not apply for jobs that do not meet your new standards.

Tip #2: Word Search

When you begin your search think beyond your previous job title(s). Different companies might use different titles for the same job. For example, I am a career coach. My job title could also be career adviser, career counselor, career specialist. If you are only searching for one title, you will not unlock all the possible job opportunities that are out there. Use resources like [O*Net](#) and your own network to help you learn more about synonyms for job titles to search. Let us imagine you are not sure what kind of job you are looking for, but you know you want creative writing to be a large part of what you do. Using Google to help you learn more about jobs that involve creative writing will inform your search. This is not rocket science. Simply type “jobs that involve creative writing” into Google and see what you learn. After you discover a few new job titles, you could also use O*Net to learn more about each job’s requirements, determine if you would like that kind of work, and boom – you’ve made tangible progress in your job search! Now you understand why looking for a job is truly a full-time job.

Tip #3: Create a Target Employer List

Remember Tip #1? Start with you. You should also start creating a list of employers that YOU want to work for. This list might only have three employers on it, and that is sufficient. At this stage in your career you do not want to blindly apply for the first open position you find. Instead, think about the qualities you want your future employer to have and then create a list that includes organizations with those specific attributes. If you apply to work for an employer who actually shares your thoughts, values, and passions, it will be easy for you to convey your interest in a cover letter, when you are networking, and during an interview. You can read more about creating a target employer list by reading my blog [Creating a Target Employer List](#).

Tip #4: Get Your Application Materials Ready

It is always good to update and fine tune your personal marketing materials such as your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile. Ensuring these marketing tools are up to date will afford you more time to align each document with a unique job description during the application phase. Yes, this means you will have to write a resume and cover letter for each job you apply for. Your LinkedIn profile will not be edited with every application. However, if you are noticing key words or phrases that are present across multiple job descriptions, you should consider adding this verbiage to your profile to make it more attractive to recruiters. And, yes, don't forget to make your LinkedIn profile visible to recruiters at this stage in the process. You are putting so much effort into this job search. Let your profile do some work for you 😊.

Follow these four tips and your job search will be off to a good start. Happy hunting!