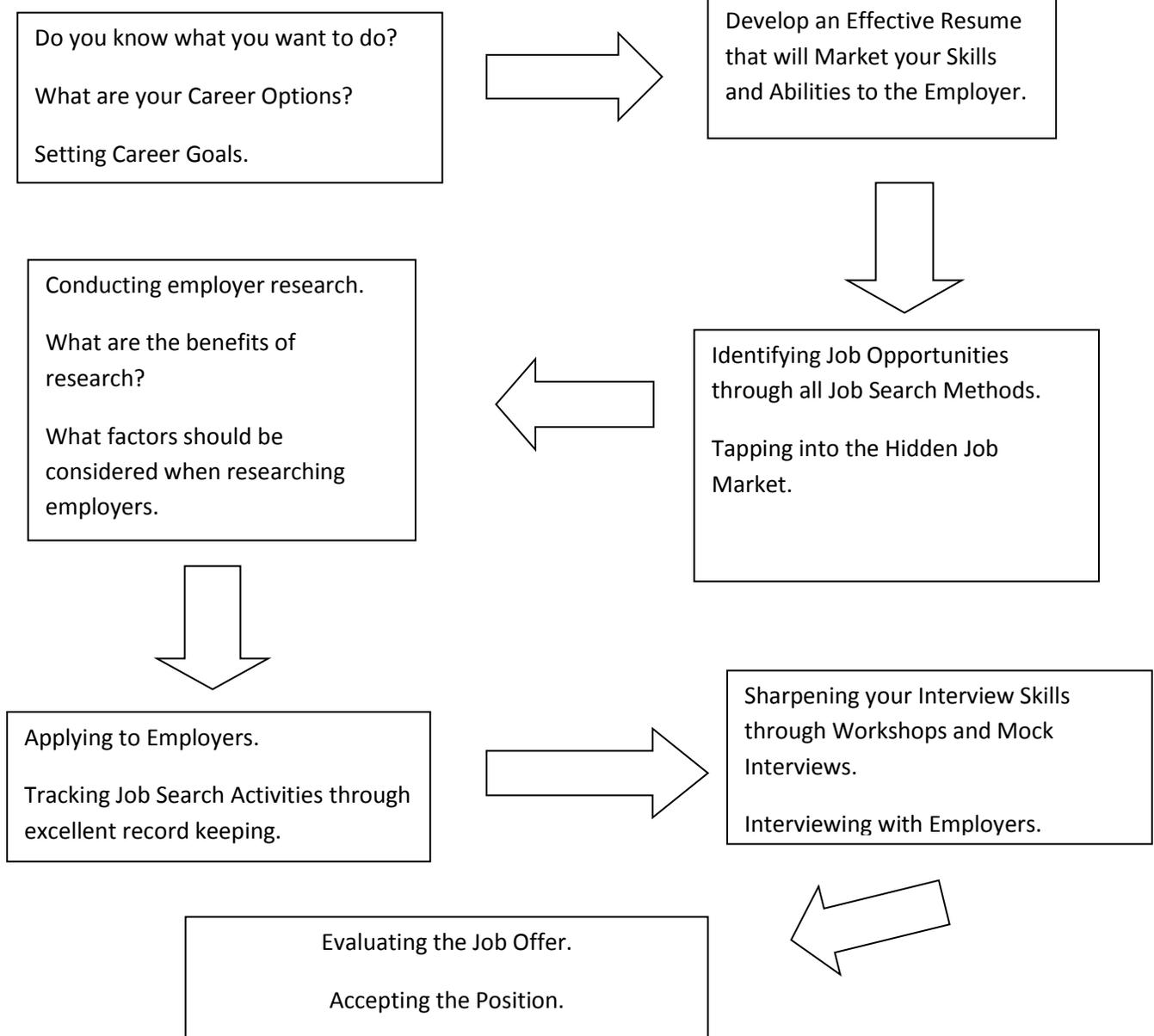




Office of Career Opportunities Job Search: The Whole Story

“Understanding the Process and Developing Strategies for Success”

Finding the job you want takes many steps and involves just as many decisions. This handout will educate you on the job search process and introduce you to strategies for obtaining employment.



Job Search: The Whole Story, Part I - Where do I Start?

Do you know what you want to do?

Do you have Career Goals?

- Did you answer yes to the above questions? Move on to Job Search, Part 2.
- Did you answer no to the above questions? Read below for further assistance.

Here's Help for Discovering your Interests and Developing Career Goals?

- ***Career Exploration – Know Yourself!***

The Career Opportunities Office can assist you with exploring your interests, skills, values, and personality preferences as it relates to careers. Call the office to make an individual appointment.

- ***Career Exploration – Visit the Career Opportunities Library.***

Yes, books still exist. The Career Opportunities Library has over 300 books on careers and college majors.

- ***Career Exploration – Resources on the Web.***

Occupational Outlook Handbook – www.bls.gov/oco

America's Career Infonet – www.careerinfonet.org

O*Net (formerly the Dictionary of Occupational Titles) – www.onetonline.org

Job Search: The Whole Story, Part II - Resume 101 (Your Advertisement)

Is your Resume an Advertisement or an Autobiography?

What's the Difference?

- An Advertisement markets your CURRENT skills and abilities.
- An Autobiography describes what you've done in the past.

Need Help?

Review resume resources in the Career Opportunities Office, have your resume critiqued by a career counselor or attend a Resume Workshop if you have never created a resume.

Note: If seeking employment in a variety of areas, you may have more than one resume.

Points to Remember

DO	DON'T
Provide information that is positive and relevant to the job objective.	Provide the reader with your life history or negative information that is not required.
Make use of spacing, bold, capitalization, italics, and indentation to make the resume visually appealing.	Overuse different fonts, graphics, etc. in a way that becomes distracting.
Try to limit to one or two pages. The employer will not take the time to read your resume word for word and is not likely to glance at it if it is too lengthy.	Include information that is irrelevant simply to fill space. Also, the resume is not a confessional. Do not include information that might be construed negatively if it is not required.
Use correct terminology related to the industry you are interested in.	Misuse words simply because it sounds impressive. Also, do not abbreviate terms even when used correctly.
Print resume on 8 ½" X 11" paper. White is preferred but neutral colors are acceptable. Also, do not print in colored ink.	Use paper of an unusual size or color. Fluorescent colors, dark paper, and colored ink are not viewed as professional.
PROOFREAD!!! Check your resume for grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Ask others to critique it.	Assume that the computer spell check will catch every mistake.
Leave out information regarding ethnicity, religion, marital status, and age.	Include a photograph or physical description of yourself.

Job Search: The Whole Story, Part III – Job Seeking

*Where are the job opportunities?
Signed Sincerely,
A Frustrated Internet Job Searcher.*

Are you only seeking job opportunities through internet job listing sites and classified print ads? If so, you are probably a frustrated job seeker.

What is the Hidden Job Market? Great Question!

The hidden job market consists of jobs that have never been advertised and will probably never be advertised.

Uncovering and Discovering the Hidden Job Market

Strategies for breaking into the hidden job market include applying directly to the employer and networking.

Direct Employer Contact: Research organizations of interest and apply directly to the employer. How do they want you to apply? Send a cover letter/resume or apply at their website. Try to make contact with the person who has the authority to hire you.

Networking: Basically, let everyone know that you are seeking employment. Networks include family, friends, professors, fellow students, past employers, etc. Everyone is a potential network possibility.

Note: Have your resume ready and be prepared to explain the type of work that you are seeking. If not sure, review Part I again of this handout.

Other Job Search Methods

Temporary Employment Agencies: Many organizations today are filling entry-level jobs through temp agencies. Remember: you are only interested in positions where the employer is paying the agency's fee. The last thing you want to do is to pay someone to find you a job.

University Career Opportunities Office: Use the resources available to you from your career opportunities office. Services include resume referral to employers, career fairs, on-campus interviews, and job listings.

Classified Ads (Print/Internet): Although the majority of jobs are filled through the hidden job market, it is still a good idea to review job listings on a weekly basis with both print and internet job listings.

Internet Job Listings and Recruiting Sites

A. Electronic Classifieds

Job announcements are listed on a variety of websites.

College Central Network (<http://www.collegecentral.com/valdosta>) College Central Network allows VSU students and alumni to deposit their resumes into a database for resume referral by Career Opportunities and resume review by approved employers. First, complete the registration section, and when your registration is approved, then upload your resume. Students will be able to review job listings as well.

Indeed (<http://www.indeed.com>) allows an individual to search by job title and location.

B. Targeted Industries & Services

Specific sites serve a particular industry, occupation, or skill set. These sites provide information for membership, professional development, conferences, and job listings. **NOTE:** Job listings are not provided by all industry sites.

Idealist.org (www.idealist.org) features a variety of job listings and employment information for opportunities in the non-profit sector.

Public Relations Society of America (www.prsa.org) features industry information for public relations professionals.

Society for Human Resources (www.shrm.org) features industry information for human resources professionals.

Teach Georgia (www.teachgeorgia.org) is a service of the Georgia Department of Education. This features salary information, job listings, and certification information.

C. Employer Websites

Many private and government organizations provide job listings on their websites. Do a web search by name for private organizations. For government listings view the links section on the Career Opportunities website (www.valdosta.edu/career)

Job Search: The Whole Story, Part IV – Employer Research

You have started identifying employers through the various job search methods so why is it important to research the employer before applying?

What are the Benefits of Researching an Employer

Help in selecting Prospective Employers
More Effective Interviews

Better Cover Letters and Resumes
Informed Employment Decisions

What Factors should be considered when researching an Employer

Location
Company/Organization Size & History
Financial Data

Facilities
Products and/or Services
Industry Outlook

Where to Find the Information you Need

Career Opportunities Office
Faculty & Advisors

Libraries – Campus & Public
Direct Employer Contact/Employer
Website

Hard Copy Research Guides available in the Career Opportunities Office

Headquarters USA
Hoover's Handbook of American
Business
Hoover's Handbook of Emerging
Companies

Georgia Business Directory
Hoover's Handbook of Private Companies
Hoover's Handbook of World Business

Off-line and On-line Job SearchCover Your Bases!

A. Job Leads

Off-line: Newspaper Classifieds, Job Bank Books, Professional Journals, Employer Directories, Employer Literature, etc...

On-line: Job Banks, Recruiters, Professional Journals, Associations, Employer Websites, Social Media, etc...

B. Researching and Contacting Employers

Off-line: Business Directories, Print Telephone Books, Employer Literature, Industry Directories.

On-line: Telephone Directories, Business Directories, Association Links, Industry Sites, Employer Websites, etc...

C. Networking

Off-line: Family & Friends, Professors, Past Employers, Professional Association Meetings.

On-line: Social Media, Mailing Lists, Chat Forums.

D. Resume Distribution

Off-line: Have a critiqued copy of your resume ready to mail or present on demand.

On-line: Have a plain text copy of your resume ready to post or email on demand.

Job Search: The Whole Story, Part V – Organization

Track Your Work!

When researching employers and applying for job opportunities, it is very important to keep track of your work. Many job seekers find it efficient to organize their work in a notebook or binder divided into the following sections: **A-D, E-K, L-R, and S-Z**. View the Employer Contact Summary below for a sample layout:

Prospective Employer Contact Summary

Company Name/Contact Person	Address/Phone Number	Company Information	Date Resume was mailed	Interview Time	Follow-up, Thank You Note

PLEASE NOTE!

While researching and applying to a multitude of employers on a weekly basis, it is good to be organized so you can retrieve information quickly when an employer calls you to schedule an interview. If you store your data electronically, be sure to have a hard copy as well.

Job Search: The Whole Story, Part VI – Interviewing

Do you know Yourself, the Position and the Organization?

Just because someone calls you in for an interview is no guarantee that you have the job. You must sell your interest in the position and qualifications throughout the interview.

This is why Part I and Part IV of this handout is such a vital part of the job search process.

The Career Opportunities Office provides workshops and a mock interview program to assist you with preparing for an interview.

Job Search: The Whole Story, Part VII – Accepting the Position

Factors to Consider when Evaluating a Job Offer

Career Goals Salary	Training Interests	Advancement Organization's Values
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Salary information is available in the Career Opportunities Office and online at the following sites: www.salary.com, www.bls.gov/oco, and www.careerinfonet.org.

Please Note, consider all factors when evaluating a job offer. Many students will only consider salary but career goals/interests, training, advancement, and the organization's values are just as important.

Also, review the attached job search correspondence to be knowledgeable of how to communicate with the employer throughout the process.

**One last thought to consider when evaluating a job offer
A Bird in the Hand is Better than Two in a Bush**

Job Search Correspondence

There are several types of letters which one may use in a job campaign. These may be divided into two broad categories: (1) letters of application; and (2) follow-up letters of various kinds. All letters you write should be in good form, carefully planned, and contain the desired information. **The following basic rules should be observed regardless of the type of letter.**

- 1. Use resume paper, and matching envelope, of the usual business correspondence size, (8 ½" x 11").**
- 2. Always use a typewriter or word processor for your correspondence, and type only on one side of the paper.**
- 3. The letter should be neat in appearance and proofread carefully for form, spelling, punctuation and English usage. The letter is the applicant's personal representative.**
- 4. Keep the letter brief and to the point. Employers will lose interest if they are required to read through irrelevant information.**
- 5. Candidates should define the objectives of their letters and then attempt to determine how these objectives can best be met.**
- 6. In all letters avoid such things as negative approaches, boastfulness, exaggeration, insincerity, and inconsistency.**

Every resume you send will need an accompanying cover letter, which can be used to inquire about possible job openings in your field or to apply for known vacancies. The main function of a cover letter is to entice the employer's interest in you so s/he will read your resume.

The letter should be concise; you should be able to tell your story on one page. You

can go into details in the interview, should you get one.

You may develop one basic letter that can be changed slightly for the different positions for which you are applying. It is essential, however, that you type each letter individually. Mass-produced letters are usually recognized as such and connote a lack of sincere interest in the organization to which you have written.

While your letter should follow a standard business format, try to make it as personal as possible. Identify the individual who will be in a position to say "you're hired," and direct your correspondence to him/her.

In order to personalize your letter, obtain information about the business, industry, agency, or school in which you are interested and refer to this knowledge in your letter. Your letter is often the first contact between you and a prospective employer and your research will leave a good impression.

LETTER OF APPLICATION

Identify the position for which you are applying and the way in which you learned about it. If the letter is unsolicited, identifying the position for which you are applying is all that is necessary.

Indicate why you are applying for this particular position. Keep in mind that the potential employer presumes you are a qualified applicant. Indicate your main qualifications. Keep the letter sales-orientated. Refer the reader to your enclosed resume.

Request action! Under no circumstances should you adopt a subservient attitude.

THANK YOU LETTER

After an interview, it is advisable to send a thank you letter to the recruiter, both as a professional courtesy and as a method of establishing communication with the company. The letter should be mailed within one or two days of your interview.

The letter need only be two or three paragraphs in length. State the date and place you had your interview and reiterate your strongest selling points.

If you interviewed with more than one person, send the thank you letter to either the main contact person or the individual who will make the hiring decision (or both, if you feel it is appropriate).

LETTER OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Plant Visit Invitation

Acknowledge it and, if interested, state what dates would be convenient for you, avoiding weekends and holidays. Do not delay. Procrastination makes a bad impression.

Offers of Employment

Acknowledge receipt of offer, restating title of position and salary and expressing your appreciation. Indicate the date you will let the company know your decision and be sure to act before that date.

LETTER OF REFUSAL

In declining the offer of employment, express your appreciation for the offer and for the company's interest in you.

LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

Indicate your acceptance of the offer of employment; restate position classification, compensation offered, and the starting date if previously established. Refer to the date of the original offer letter.

Indicate your travel plans and anticipated arrival date if the initial assignment is at a considerable distance from your home. Express your appreciation.

Remember that your letters represent you! Therefore, good letter writing is a skill worth developing...a skill that can be most helpful to you in the years ahead.

**See samples on
next pages!**

Components of a Cover Letter

Your Street Address
City, State, Zip
Today's Date

Ms. Ann Jones
Vice President, Marketing
Wigetts, Inc.
123 Grand Avenue
Houston, TX 70890

Dear Ms. James:

The opening paragraph should arouse the interest of the employer. State why you are writing and give information to show your interest in this specific organization. If it is a letter of application, name the position you are applying for and how you heard of it.

The middle paragraphs should create a desire on the part of the employer to know more about you. Explain why you are interested in working for this employer. Point out your achievements or qualifications in this field, especially those that meet the job description or requirements.

Refer the reader to your general qualifications on your enclosed resume. Highlight important points from the resume. Also highlight points that will be of particular interest to this specific organization.

The closing paragraph should pave the way for the interview by asking for an appointment, or by offering to call the employer in the near future, or by some similar suggestions to facilitate an immediate and favorable reply.

Sincerely,

(Sign Here)

Karen E. Jones

Enclosure (You are notating that you have enclosed your resume)

Letter of Inquiry

18240 Magnolia Place
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
April 1, 20xx

Mr. John Sampson
Vice President
ABC, Inc.
2301 Walnut Grove Lane
Raleigh, NC 27695

Dear Mr. Sampson:

Identify objective

I am seeking a position in materials evaluation at high technology company such as yours. I am aware from researching your firm that you have a training program for physicists and engineers.

*Refer to resume...
point out
qualifications
and special interests*

As you will note from the enclosed resume, I have majored in physics and have participated in significant research. This background, as well as several business courses, has prepared me to combine an interest in motivating people with a desire to work in a technical environment.

*Arrange for an
Interview*

I would like to learn more about your trainee position, and I will contact your office the week of April 15th to arrange an appointment at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Karen E. Jones

Karen E. Jones

Enclosure

Letter of Application

000 Lakeland Ave.
New Rochelle, NY 10077
April 11, 20xx

*Note spacing and
Arrangement*

Ms. Mary Richards
Director of Campus Relations
XYZ Corporation
54 West Third Street
Albany, NY 10056

*Use name whenever
possible*

Dear Ms. Richards:

identify position

I am interested in applying for the sales representative position recently advertised in the New York Times. The skills I have developed from my work experience and academic background support my strong interest in a sales career.

*refer to resume...
point out
qualifications
and relevant
background*

As you can see from my resume, the internship I had with ABC Corporation provided an opportunity for me to gain practical experience with account maintenance and cold-calling new accounts. In addition, I have worked as a waiter for the past four years, learning first hand how to effectively deal with customers and their demands. I have been formally commended by the management several times, being named "Employee of the Month."

Since I decided to pursue a sales career, XYZ Corporation has been at the top of my list of prospective employers. The strides your company has taken in the computer software market, namely the development of packages for use by pharmacies and hospitals, makes XYZ a leader in the industry.

*arrange for an
interview*

I would very much like an opportunity to speak with you regarding the sales representative position. I will call you late next week to discuss my qualifications for the position or you can reach me in the meantime at (718) 555-0000. Thank you for considering me for this position.

Sincerely,

John A. Alberts

*note that you
have enclosed
your resume*

John K. Alberts

Enclosure

Letter of Acceptance

18240 Magnolia Place
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
May 16, 20xx

Mr. John Sampson
Vice President
ABC, Inc.
2301 Walnut Grove Lane
Raleigh, NC 27695

Dear Mr. Sampson

*note offer and
how you learned
of it*

I am writing to confirm receipt of your letter offering me a position ABC's technical training program at an annual salary of \$30,000. I am very pleased to accept this offer, and I am proud to have been selected for the program.

*Arrange next
communication*

I will contact your office for more details, such as when the training sessions begin. Thank you for the offer and for your consideration throughout the past few weeks.

Sincerely,

Karen E. Jones

Karen E. Jones

Components of a Thank you Letter

Your Address
City, State, ZIP
Date

Name and title of interviewer
Address
City, State, ZIP

Dear Mr. / Mrs. Last Name:

Thank you for the interview on (date) at (location or university). I am very interested in the (position, kind of work) and hope that the interest is mutual.

I am enthusiastic about the prospect of joining your organization. (Describe what about the organization is sparking your interest.) My (name your background, skills, or education emphasis) would enable me to make the transition to a position in your firm with relative ease.

OPTIONAL PARAGRAPH:

Enclosed is (anything which would strengthen your candidacy for the position). (Tell why you are enclosing this item and how it relates.)

If you have any questions, please call me at (area code/phone number). I look forward to the opportunity to discuss further (name opportunities) at (name of employer).

Sincerely,

Enclosure(s) (Include if appropriate)

Thank you Letter

3701 Old Mill Road
Decatur, GA 30214
April 6, 20xx

Ms. Yuni Kim
Executive Vice President
Worldwide Automation & Control, Inc.
1127 Nelson Drive
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Ms. Kim:

Thank you for taking the time to interview me at Georgia Tech on April 5. I enjoyed talking with you and learning about the mechanical design position with WorldWide.

As you recall from our interview, I have had experience as an intern with Honeywell IAC. I have also taken advanced classes in material engineering at Georgia Tech. I greatly enjoy this career field and wish to apply my interest and knowledge to Worldwide Automation & Control.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to interview with you. I look forward to speaking with you again soon.

Sincerely,

James Davis

James Davis

