

# **JOB SEARCHING STRATEGIES**

## CASCADE STUDENT EMPLOYMENT – CAREER SERVICES

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### **“I think, therefore I am...EMPLOYABLE” -- Descartes, on the job hunt** **Friendly words of encouragement from the CAPITAL Career Center**

Although for many people it seems that finding a job is a matter of being in the right place at the right time, the most effective method of job searching incorporates a variety of strategies. The first goal is to generate or find job openings for which to apply. Some obvious places to start include the newspaper classified ads and the job binders in the Resource Room. For starters visit Career Connections, PCC’s on line job posting page <https://www.ecampusrecruiter3.com/pcc>, or the Employment Department web pages [www.workinginoregon.org](http://www.workinginoregon.org) or [www.olmis.org](http://www.olmis.org). Posted jobs are accessible to anyone; beyond these the real work begins. Identifying job openings in the hidden market is your challenge. Some of the best jobs are never advertised.

#### **I. IDENTIFYING EMPLOYERS**

One of the most effective ways of finding a job is to apply directly to an employer. A good way to identify prospective employers is to use a combination of directories that are relevant. For the Portland area, some useful directories include:

- *How To Get A Job In Seattle/Portland*
- *Pacific Northwest Job Seekers Sourcebook*
- *The Business Journal: A Snapshot of Portland-Metro Public Companies*
- *Human Service Directories (by County)*

When inquiring about unsolicited job openings, you may choose to conduct a telephone search or to send a letter of inquiry with your resume to the prospective employers.

#### **II. NETWORKING**

Another very effective way of finding a job is through networking. This is a process of gathering information through personal contacts. If you have done informational interviews, you have already begun a list of contacts. Additional resources to add to your personal network include:

- Relatives and Family Friends
- CAPITAL Center Staff, Instructors, Participants
- Professional Associations
- Internship and Work Supervisors
- Community Members
- Social Organizations

A good rule of thumb is to tell everyone you know that you are looking for a job. Keep in contact with these people on an on-going basis. Many opportunities slip by when a person falls out of touch.

#### **III. JOB SEARCH CLUBS & ON LINE NETWORKING**

You may want to discuss how to use this resource in your job search with your Employment Specialist. Review the calendar in the business section of the Oregonian for clubs in the community. Note there is typically a charge for the community clubs. [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) and <http://www.60secondnetworking.com> are 2 online professional networking sites to check out.

#### **IV. PLACEMENT ORGANIZATIONS**

A third strategy to obtain employment is the use of placement organizations. Although people in these organizations may have an “inside track” on some jobs, it is important to weigh the cost of these services in your search efforts. Most private placement agencies do not have the time to appropriately identify the skills and abilities of an individual. It is up to you to know your skills to secure appropriate referrals, or will be referred to jobs for which you are over or under qualified. If you choose to use an employment agency, be sure it is “employer-paid fee” so you are not paying to find your job. Read any contracts carefully, or you could find yourself owing the company money even if you find a job on your own. Also, don’t forget about your state’s employment office, their job posting services are free to users and employers.

#### **V. JOB HUNTING FACTS AND ADVICE**

There is no magic way to find a position. Simply put, job hunting is a full-time job, and it is hard work. At times it will be boring and frustrating. It is a task that will require all of your skills in planning and follow-through, but when done correctly, it will also pay the ultimate reward: the right job for you.

A normal part of job hunting is receiving multiple rejections, so do not be discouraged by them. Use them as a learning tool. Follow them up with phone calls to the employers to get feedback as to why you were not offered the job. Save your rejection letters for your next job hunt. You will have the names and addresses of prospective employers and will be one step ahead in the game.

Be aggressive. You must take and maintain the initiative during each step of the job-hunting process. Do not sit back and wait for someone else to make the contacts. Those lucky folks who just fall into jobs have probably been very busy keeping in touch with employers and network contacts. Be prepared to send out 50-100 targeted resumes. Your job hunt has not really started until you have sent out 30 resumes. Set a goal to send out a specific number of resumes each week (whatever is comfortable and manageable for you).

Allow yourself four to six months to find a professional position. The level of sophistication in the hiring process is quite a dramatic change from part-time, temp or survival positions. Organizations will conduct a more thorough search and take more time in selecting candidates. Be prepared for at least 2 interviews before you are made an offer.

Be clear with yourself and the employer about the type of work you are looking for. Being “open to anything” communicates to the employer that you lack focus. See a career counselor if you are having difficulty at this stage.

Evaluate your progress as you continue your job search. Four things to watch out for include:

- Not enough contacts being made
- Resume is not getting you interviews
- Interviews are not resulting in job offers
- Lack of knowledge about the company/organization

Any variety of factors may be affecting these critical stages of your job search. Again, see a career counselor to assess challenges you face and to develop new approaches.

Remember to take care of yourself. A job search can be stressful, so build into your routine breaks and satisfying activities to prevent burnout. Additionally, volunteering a couple of hours a week at an organization which you support will provide you with an opportunity to contribute to something valuable as well as provide you with a current reference.

## Job Search Essentials

Many people find the task of looking for a job overwhelming at first. To assist you in your job hunt, the following materials are included for organizing and planning your search.

The list below provides a systematic method for assessing your readiness to undertake a job search. Before you begin looking for work, make certain you are equipped with the essentials. When you have checked off all the items, you are ready to take the plunge.

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- Identified job target with knowledge of Labor Market.
- Participated in the appropriate workshops and have developed job-seeking skills.
- Completed resume (copy as needed to allow for changes) & Master Application.
- Stationery, envelopes, and postage stamps assembled.
- Located public access to computer, typewriter, fax and copy machines.
- Tailored cover letters for targeted mailings. Draft a sample thank you letter.
- Prepared copies of typed list of job references.
- Practiced Mock Interview and completed work sample/ portfolio (if appropriate).
- Contacted references and informed of job search and given a copy of your resume.
- Designated and organized work area with a calendar near the telephone.
- Designated record-keeping system (job search notebook, calendar, and task schedule).
- Purchased or borrowed - two interviewing outfits.
- Developed, four- to six-month plan with primary and secondary goals.
- Prepared six-month budget.
- Prepared prioritized list of potential employers.
- Identified two personal support people specifically for job search.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Job Search Record

In establishing a list of potential employers, it is important to keep accurate records. As you begin arranging interviews, you will want to record for quick reference important facts about each organization you contact. Use this chart as an original, and copy as needed.

Date	Organization	Name of Contact	Telephone	Address	Result of Call	Follow-up Date	Mileage/ Expenses

