

Action Plan: Organizing Your Job Search

Track your job search progress by designating your progress on the following tasks using designations:

1) still to do 2) in progress or 3) completed.

GETTING STARTED

<p>DETERMINE WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR: Start by identifying your own values, interests, knowledge, and skills as they relate to meaningful work. Schedule a one-on-one career coaching appointment via Handshake. In these appointments, you can discuss with your coach if a self-assessment such as the Values Cardsort, Strong Interest Inventory, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, or CliftonStrengths would be beneficial for you.</p>	
<p>CREATE A TARGET ORGANIZATION LIST: Research industries and companies you're curious about online using tools such as O*Net, Glassdoor, LinkedIn, and organizations' websites. Curate the list of organizations you're interested in working for in a way that works for you such as an Excel spreadsheet or a bookmarked list.</p>	
<p>OPEN THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION: 85% of jobs are never posted, so it's critical to talk with people so that you are privy to opportunities. To do so, conduct informational interviews with professionals to learn more about industries and occupations. For professionals that you already know but haven't spoken with in a while, now is the time to get back in touch. Explain your current situation (where you are, where you've been, and where you're hoping to go). Ask for advice and not a job to leave room for ongoing communication.</p>	
<p>UPDATE YOUR JOB SEARCH DOCUMENTS: To ensure that you create a strong first impression, update your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile to reflect your most recent experience and expertise. While you will want to customize your resume and cover letter for each application, consider having a master copy of these documents that you can tailor as needed.</p>	
<p>ASK FOR REFERENCES: Reach out to 3-4 people to ask if they would be willing to serve as references for you in the job search. Provide these individuals with a copy of your resume so they feel comfortable speaking about you to prospective employers.</p>	
<p>PRACTICE INTERVIEWING: Review common interview questions. Become comfortable using the STAR (situation, task, action, and result) method to answer behavioral interviewing questions. To get feedback and improve your interview skills, schedule a mock interview with a BEAM career coach through Handshake.</p>	

TAKE ACTION

CREATE A PLAN: Set goals for each week related to your job search. These goals may vary week to week. Ask yourself what you would like to accomplish as it relates to researching, networking, and applying. Determine how you will dedicate your time each week. We recommend: 50% of your job search time for networking, 25% for material preparation and the application process, 15% for online research, and 5% or less on job board sites.

TAILOR YOUR DOCUMENTS: Once you've honed in on specific positions you'd like to apply to, you'll want to customize your resume and cover letter. Consider what is most relevant or important considering the required skillset and industry. In your cover letter, explain what it is about that organization that stands out to you and how you will add value there.

KEEP TRACK: It's easy to forget about applications you've already submitted, or miss an application deadline. Create a system that works for you to track your application status (i.e. date submitted, date followed up, date interviewed) to stay organized.

FOLLOW UP: It's common for applications to get pushed aside in the day-to-day hustle and bustle or work deadlines. Don't take it personally, and follow up with employers if you have not heard back after 2-3 weeks.

MAINTAIN MOMENTUM

SEND THANK YOU NOTES: As you network and interview, you'll want to express your gratitude. Within 24 hours after an interview, send a thank you e-mail to reiterate your enthusiasm for the position and your appreciation for the opportunity to interview. After you meet with individuals in a networking setting, thank them for their time and any help they offered to you. Stay in touch, as these individuals often want to know the outcome of your job search efforts.

CONTINUE NETWORKING: Networking is not a one and done time deal. Continue to meet new people through informational interviews and networking groups as you search, apply, and interview for positions. Remember to ask for advice, not a job. Also, ask for recommendations of other individuals to speak to so that you can continue to grow your network.

STAY MOTIVATED: The average job search takes approximately 3-6 months. Celebrate the steps of your job search as you network, apply, and interview to stay motivated and keep pushing forward.

NEXT STEPS

- List 3 goals you have this month to advance your job search.

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

- What 3 steps will you take this week to reach these goals?

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

- What obstacles will you need to overcome to reach these goals?

- What resources will you use to reach these goals?