

Effective Job and Internship Search Strategies

Not sure how to go about finding a great job or internship? Tired of searching for jobs online that only lead to dead ends? A successful search requires persistent use of a variety of strategies. The strategies below go well beyond pointing and clicking and students find they are well worth the effort. Want more help, resources and guidance? L&S Students: make an appointment with one of our career advisors. We are available year-round and for a full year after you graduate.

Networking

It is estimated that about 80% of jobs are found through networking and about 6% are found through job boards. Here are some tips to develop a personal network and connect with professionals in your fields of interest:

- **Connect with family**, friends, faculty, volunteering, former and current employers, social groups and alumni. They can be a great resource for job leads. Articulate what you are looking for – develop an “elevator speech”.
- **Arrange brief meetings** with the contact and solicit job advice and information regarding your field of interest. These meetings could be held in person or on the telephone. Mention your career objectives, the type of employment you are seeking, and your qualifications. Ask them to recommend at least two new contacts, as the more contacts you make, the more your network will take shape.
- **Developing relationships** is what networking is all about! Remember to send a thank-you note after making a new contact and create a database of all your contacts for future correspondence. Good follow-up is what builds good contacts. A great resource for staying organized with your contacts and job applications: www.jibberjobber.com
- **Attend Career Fairs and Networking Events** to make contacts with professionals in your field of interest.
- **Contact the UW Alumni Association** and access the many networking opportunities they offer through their career programs including the Badger Career Network. In addition, you can contact UW Alumni Clubs in the locations where you would like to live after graduation. (www.uwalumni.com)
- **Use LinkedIn** (for more on how to sign up and use it, visit learn.linkedin.com/students).
- **For more help**, see the Networking: In-Person & Online page on our website and learn more about Informational Interviewing <http://careers.ls.wisc.edu/job-search-strategies--students.htm>.

Professional Organizations

Every field has at least one professional organization that exists to provide news, career information, and important developments in the field. Most organizations, and their local chapters, are easily found on the internet. Nearly all chapters have regular meetings and membership lists which can be a gateway to meeting professionals and developing contacts. Learn more about current events by reading an organization’s journal or newsletter. Ask your networking contacts what they read to stay informed. One resource for finding professional organizations for a specific occupation is the Occupational Outlook Handbook (stats.bls.gov/oco). Choose the “contacts for more information” at the bottom of any occupation entry. Also: www.quintcareers.com/professional_organizations.html for more links to associations.

On-Campus Recruiting

BuckyNet is a University of Wisconsin online recruiting program designed to assist Letters and Science students in job and internship searches. When you sign up to use BuckyNet, you may then participate in on-campus interviews, search job and internship listings, and access BuckyNet’s national database with hundreds of position listings from employers across the U.S.

To sign up for BuckyNet for free, visit our website (www.careers.ls.wisc.edu). You can access BuckyNet for a year after graduation! After graduation, continue your access through the Wisconsin Alumni Association www.uwalumni.com.

Volunteering

Through volunteer work you can gain first-hand knowledge in your field and establish yourself in a professional network by becoming involved with relevant projects. If your research indicates that you need to gain more related experience, volunteering is an excellent way to accomplish this and to build and apply your skills. Volunteering is also an excellent way to make contacts in your field and find out about job openings before they are posted to the public. Check out the Morgridge Center for Public Service for volunteer opportunities <http://www.morgridge.wisc.edu/>.

Job Fairs and Workshops

Job fairs, career-related events, workshops, and conferences are arranged by universities, professional organizations, and independent groups at different times throughout the year. <http://www.nationalcareerfairs.com> is one searchable resource.

- Career fairs are excellent ways to network, get feedback about your resume, find out more about an industry, and meet many employers at once. Read up on making the best of your career fair networking.
- These events allow candidates and employers to engage in a mutual screening process. By speaking with several employers in your area(s) of interest at a concentrated time, you will get a better sense of the range of positions available, and the qualifications necessary to assume those roles.
- For a list of the UW career fairs check out our event listings: <http://careers.ls.wisc.edu/students.htm>

Employment Agencies

Involving a third party in your job search is another alternative that may be considered. Proceed with caution.

- Employment agencies link candidates to organizations with vacancies both temporary and permanent.
- Since most agencies work on a commission basis, it is best to identify agencies operating on an “employer paid” fee basis. This means that the employer will pay the agency a finder’s fee, with no cost to you, the candidate.

Looking to Work for the State?

Consider taking the State of WI Civil Service Exam. The type of exam you will need to take is indicated in the “How to Apply” section of each job announcement found on <http://wisc.jobs>

Follow-Up: A Strategy For All Strategies

Following up with all professionals with whom you interact is a **very** important step in the job search process. Making "contacts" with no follow-up will most likely lead to dead ends – and may hurt your search. The follow-up strategy most appropriate will depend on how far you have progressed in your job search.

- For example, you may call an employer after your application materials have been sent to an organization, or you may be at a point where you are sending thank-you letters after job interviews
- The follow-up may be with your initial contact, another person in the same organization, or another employer in the field. Since you will be contacting several employers, it is quite possible that you will use several follow-up strategies concurrently.
- As a job searcher, it is important that you take the initiative to make the appropriate contact in a timely manner to demonstrate your appreciation for the time they have invested in you.
- Keep your networking contacts apprised of your progress as you conduct your search. This will keep them thinking of you and also help generate good will toward your endeavor.

Be proactive and persistent in your job/internship search! Job seekers who persistently go beyond applying to posted job listings are almost always more successful more quickly. Use a variety of methods and approach your search as you would a part-time job for best results.