Job Search Guide

How People Look for Work

1. Direct Employer Contact
2. Word of Mouth
3. Placement Agencies
4. Employment Agencies
5. Want Ads & Internet

How Employers Look for Applicants

1. Want Ads & Internet
2. Placement Agencies
3. External Networks
4. Job Postings
5. Internal Networks

Utilized Least

Utilized Most

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The Ideal Job Search Strategy

1. Conduct a thorough self-assessment to identify your interests, skills, values, and personality preferences along with careers that might be a good match for you.
2. Conduct research on occupations to understand options, narrow your choices, and learn job entrance requirements.
3. Complete educational requirements or a training program to gain the skills and knowledge necessary for your career.
4. Obtain practical experience in your desired career field through an internship, co-op, practicum, part-time job, or volunteer work experience.
5. Become familiar with the job search process to establish reasonable expectations about how long your search will take - 3 to 6 months is typical, but some searches could take over a year.
6. Budget your finances and time so that you are prepared to enter a job search with adequate resources and support.
7. Research employers, entry-level job descriptions, and salary levels in your field of interest.
8. Learn as much as you can about resume writing, cover letter writing, networking and interviewing.
9. Prepare a targeted résumé, cover letter, and other job search materials.
10. Plan your job search campaign - identify strategies and resources you will use and employers you will target.
11. Mark out time in your schedule each week to devote to your job search.
12. Network!
13. Pursue advertised and unadvertised job opportunities.
14. Contact references for recommendations.
15. Prepare thoroughly for interviews.
16. Keep at it and stay positive.
17. Reevaluate your strategy from time to time.
18. Learn as much as you can about negotiating the job offer.
19. Prepare counteroffer statements in advance.
20. Use your support system to help you stay positive until you land a great job.

The Desperate Job Search Strategy

1. Determine your immediate financial, personal, and other needs.
2. Identify your current, marketable knowledge and skills.
3. Identify three or four positions that you are already qualified for and will search for.
4. Review job descriptions and average salary levels for these jobs to develop realistic expectations.
5. Create up to three or four versions of your résumé targeted towards specific positions.
6. Have a professional review your résumé(s).
7. Make your job search your number one priority - carve out time in your schedule each day to devote to your search.
8. Identify employers that might be hiring for the positions you are applying for.
9. Dress professionally and visit targeted employers - politely ask if they are hiring for the positions you are seeking.
10. Prepare a script and call targeted employers to see if they are hiring.
11. Tell everyone you possibly can that you are looking for a job and ask if they know of anyone hiring for the jobs you want.
12. Ask faculty, classmates, roommates, family, friends, etc. for job leads.
13. Read local newspapers and trade journals to see if any positions are advertised.
14. Check the Career Planning and Placement or Student Employment Office job boards each week for advertised jobs.
15. Use online job search resources to search for more advertised jobs.
16. Follow proper procedures to apply for advertised jobs.
17. Use your local Career Opportunities center, temporary staffing firms, and placement agencies to find more job leads.
18. Practice your interviewing skills and be as prepared as possible for each interview.
19. Keep at it and stay positive.
20. Seek out support from friends, family, career counselors, and other resources.

★ Plan ahead so that you can do an ideal job search next time.
Get Ready

Preparing for a job search is essential to success.
Do you have the following necessary supplies?

___ A goal or job objective
What kind of job are you looking for? Are you applying for a job as a Bank Teller or a Medical Assistant? If you have more than three to five job titles you may want to spend time narrowing your goal. Are you looking for a part-time or full-time position? How far are you able to commute? What hours are you available to work? If you are having difficulty defining your goal, please make an appointment with a career counselor in Career Planning and Placement.

___ A résumé
Have a well-written one page résumé that clearly communicates your qualifications for the position you are applying for. Read the Résumé Writing packet or make an appointment at Career Planning and Placement to have your résumé reviewed.

___ A cover letter template
A cover letter should escort each résumé you send to an employer. Have a template prepared that you can personalize for each of the jobs you apply for.

___ Paper supplies
Type your résumé and cover letters on professional résumé or bond paper. Mail them in matching envelopes. Don’t forget the stamps!

___ Professional references
Contact your former employers, colleagues or faculty members and ask if you can use them as a professional reference. Obtain their correct contact information and compile it into a single page.

___ Internet and library access
Conduct research to identify potential employers and job opportunities. The Internet, library, and even your local phone book can be helpful resources.

___ "Elevator Speech"
Prepare and practice the script you will use to introduce yourself to employers.

___ Interview Questions and Responses
Prepare and practice questions and answers for job interviews. The Interviewing Guide has sample questions. A mock interview can also be arranged at Career Planning and Placement.

___ Proper Attire
Buy or borrow two professional suits for interviews. Make sure you have shoes and appropriate accessories to make an outstanding first impression. Read the Interviewing Guide for tips.

___ Time
The average job search can last anywhere from two months to two years. Use a pen to mark out several hours during your daily or weekly calendar that you will devote to your job search.

___ Persistence
A positive attitude, patience, determination, and a thick skin are necessary to help you persist with your job search. You will experience emotional highs and lows. You will feel frustrated during long waits, after getting numerous rejections, and upon realizing the various imperfections inherent in today's hiring systems. You will need to tap into your inner strength, give yourself pep talks, keep going despite obstacles.
Searching for a job is an active process that you will need to initiate and persevere through. It requires lots of time and energy. The first step is to locate employment opportunities. You can do this through a variety of effective job search strategies. A list of possible job search strategies is below. Carve out time in your schedule to implement effective strategies each week.

Utilizing multiple strategies simultaneously does increase your chances for success, but only up to a certain point. Research has shown that job seekers who use four different job search methods are most effective. Once a job hunter begins using five or more methods the quality of each method becomes sacrificed in exchange for quantity and the results are the same or less effective. So, to make the most of your time and energy, select four job search strategies and begin your search.

**Job Search Strategies**

1. **Browse job postings on campus bulletin boards.**
   - The Student Employment Office posts **part-time and seasonal** jobs on bulletin boards in the cafeteria and on the first floor of the South building. To contact an employer visit the Student Employment Office on the second floor of the South Building in room 215.
   - Career Planning and Placement posts **full-time jobs** on the second floor of the Grossman Commons building.
   - **Co-op jobs** are also posted on the second floor of the Grossman Commons Building.

2. **Browse online job listings** at [www.capecod.edu/career](http://www.capecod.edu/career) or link to other job listings from this site. Also, try searching for jobs online at some of the following web sites:
   - Monster.com [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com) (partnered with) [www.bostonworks.com](http://www.bostonworks.com)
   - America’s Career Info Net/America’s Job Bank [www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org)
   - Cape Cod Times/Cape Cod Works [www.capecodworks.com](http://www.capecodworks.com)
   - South of Boston [www.SouthOfBoston.com](http://www.SouthOfBoston.com)
   - Martha’s Vineyard papers [www.mvtimes.com](http://www.mvtimes.com) and [www.mvgazette.com/classifieds](http://www.mvgazette.com/classifieds)
   - Cape Cod Employer.com [www.capecodemployer.com](http://www.capecodemployer.com)
   - Cape and Islands Help Wanted.com [www.capecandislandshelpwanted.com](http://www.capecandislandshelpwanted.com)
   - Commonwealth Employment Opportunities (State jobs) [www.mass.gov/?pageID=mg2subtopic&L=4&L0=Home&L1=Resident&L2=Labor+%26+Employment&L3=Find+State+Jobs&sid=massgov2](http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=mg2subtopic&L=4&L0=Home&L1=Resident&L2=Labor+%26+Employment&L3=Find+State+Jobs&sid=massgov2)
   - Career Builder [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)
   - Flipdog.com [www.flipdog.com](http://www.flipdog.com)
   - College Recruiter [www.collegerecruiter.com](http://www.collegerecruiter.com)
   - AboutJobs.com [www.aboutjobs.com](http://www.aboutjobs.com)
   - Cape Cod Healthcare [www.capecodhealth.com/body.cfm?id=169](http://www.capecodhealth.com/body.cfm?id=169)
   - Jordan’s Hospital [www.jordan.org](http://www.jordan.org)
   - South Coast Health Systems [www.southcoast.org](http://www.southcoast.org)
   - Cape Cod Technology Council [www.cctechcouncil.org/jobs](http://www.cctechcouncil.org/jobs)
   - Company web sites

3. **Contact Employers.** Use the phone book, library, and internet to research companies or organizations in your field that you are interested in working for. Make a list of companies, research them, and send them a targeted résumé and cover letter (see next page) indicating the position you are seeking and how you can contribute to their organization. Do this regardless of whether or not they are currently advertising for the position you are interested in. Most jobs are not advertised. For some entry-level positions it may be appropriate to dress professionally; visit the company, with your résumé in hand, and ask if they are hiring.
34 Viking Drive  
Wareham, MA 02571  

June 21, 2007  

Samuel P. Keeting  
Director, Plant Operations  
Wetland Environmental Laboratory  
Harwich, MA 02645  

Dear Mr. Keeting:  

The June 19th CTS News Feature Report on wetland protection highlighted Wetland Environmental Laboratory’s commitment to harbor restoration. Obtaining a senior research position in the field of harbor restoration is my career goal. Please consider my candidacy for current and future employment opportunities at Wetland Environmental Laboratory.  

For the last six years I have conducted oceanographic research at Bio-Labs in Freetown. My original research focus on the environmental effects of marine vehicle engines, has led to my fervent interest in Cape Cod and Boston Harbors. As my enclosed résumé indicates, my extensive research background, education, and experience with Geographical Information Systems will be an asset to your research team.  

Should my background match your research employment opportunities, I would be interested in meeting with you. I can be reached by telephone at (508) 555-9984 or by e-mail at frdia@hitmail.com. Thank you.  

Sincerely,  

Francis R. Diamond  

Enclosures
4. **Use a Placement Agency.** Use the phone book, library, and internet to identify and research placement agencies (headhunters, executive recruiters, employment agencies, executive search firms, staffing and personnel agencies) for your line of work. Be sure to research the company and inquire about the employers that utilize their services. A professional interview or skills test may be required for some agencies. Select three or four companies you are comfortable with to obtain job leads or placement.

5. **Attend a Job Fair.** A career fair is held at the Hyannis Center in the spring and Career Planning and Placement hosts employers on campus throughout the year at the recruiting table in the Connector Hallway between the North and South buildings. Additionally, the Career Opportunities Center also holds career fairs throughout the year on Cape Cod. To find out about upcoming events visit their web site at [www.capejobs.com](http://www.capejobs.com). CCCC students are also encouraged to attend other local or national career fairs. The following web sites are just some of the resources available to help you locate job fairs:

- [http://bostonworks.boston.com/events/job_fairs/](http://bostonworks.boston.com/events/job_fairs/)
- [www.carouselexpo.com](http://www.carouselexpo.com)
- [www.idealista.org/fairs.html](http://www.idealista.org/fairs.html)
- [www.eop.com/careerfair.html](http://www.eop.com/careerfair.html)
- [www.careerconferences.com](http://www.careerconferences.com)

Before attending a job fair, do your homework. Research the attending employers, their open positions, and prepare a succinct statement of how your skills and qualifications are a great match for the employer. Always **dress professionally** when attending a job fair! Be sure to bring several copies of your résumé. At the job fair, target specific employers that you have previously researched. Listen to employers speaking with other candidates and take notes about the questions asked, responses, and the employer’s reaction to those responses. Read the company’s literature. Then, introduce yourself, state the position you are applying for and highlight your qualifications.

6. **Post your résumé online.** Research has shown that this is one of the least effective job search strategies, so don’t expect great results from this strategy alone, but follow some of the tips below to maximize your chances for success:

- Limit posting your résumé to just one or two major job boards and a couple of targeted, local sites. Don’t get overexposed; you don’t want to look desperate.

- Check out the sites where you choose to post your résumé. Ask the following:
  - How many employers/recruiters visit this site?
  - What fields are the most jobs in?
  - How many jobs that fit your qualifications do they typically receive?
  - Do they charge applicants, employers, both, or neither?
  - How will you know if an employer views your résumé?
  - How can you update your résumé?

- If you don’t get a response after four weeks, remove your résumé from the site and post it somewhere else. The audience you are targeting may not be looking where you are posting.

- After applying for a job online, follow up by calling the company and speak with the person doing the hiring. State your interest in the position and inquire about the length of time anticipated for the search.

7. **Take the Civil Service Exam.** To be considered for some positions, particularly in protective services fields, this is a prerequisite for employment and your results will determine your eligibility for certain jobs or waiting lists. To find out about the Civil Service Exam go to the Human Resources Division of the State of Massachusetts web site at [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov).
8. **Network!** The Department of Labor reports that 63% of all jobs are found informally—through leads and referrals of other people. Networking is simply using several pairs of eyes and ears to locate jobs instead of just one. It also means asking for suggestions on where else you can look for a job, increasing your ability to locate job opportunities, and getting the word out that you are seeking employment. Networking is NOT expecting other people to find a job for you, asking others to hand out your résumé, begging, vying for sympathy, venting your job search frustrations on others, or asking for recommendations. Ask for help, but be sure not to burden other people with your job search.

**Networking**

Who can you network with? A contact is anyone who can tell you of a job opening, refer you to someone who can arrange an interview or read your résumé, give your name to someone who might be hiring, or offer you a job. You already know quite a few people. Start with them. Who are your current contacts?

- Relatives
- Friends
- Current/former co-workers (if conducting a confidential search, be selective)
- Colleagues you know at other businesses/organizations
- Members of the professional organizations you have joined
- Club/team members (sports, student clubs, civic organizations, athletic clubs, etc.)
- Current/former professors/teachers
- Classmates
- Alumni
- Roommates
- Neighbors
- People you meet at parties, conferences, or trade shows
- Professionals you see regularly (i.e. doctors, clergy, bank tellers, hairdresser, etc.)

To use your current network effectively, contact each of the people on your list. Connect with them either casually or formally; in person, by phone, via email, or through snail mail. Explain that you are seeking employment. Identify the exact type of positions you are interested in and briefly explain your qualifications. Ask for any suggestions they may have to help your search or if they know of any possible openings. Make it easy for your contacts to get back in touch with you should an opportunity come to their mind or attention.

Once you have utilized your existing network, you will want to expand your network. Try the following:

- **Join professional associations related to your field of interest.** Professional organizations are a great way to network and keep up with the most current information pertaining to your field. Faculty members and the Internet are great resources to find out about professional development organizations related to your field. You can also link to resources such as the Occupational Outlook Handbook, which often lists professional organizations under specific career choices via the Research Careers section of the Career Planning and Placement web site at www.capecod.edu/career. Inexpensive student memberships are usually available through most organizations. As a member you’ll usually receive professional newsletters and bulletins, conferences or trade shows invitations, job opening notifications and other materials. Get involved - attend meetings and join a committee to maximize your contacts.

- **Do volunteer work in your chosen field.** Volunteering can pay off big by getting your foot in the door, learning new skills, meeting the people who can hire you, impressing the people you want to work with, and getting valuable experience to add to your résumé.

- **Come to Career Planning and Placement and use the Alumni Connections Network.** This network notebook contains a list of alumni who are willing to speak with you about their career and career paths. They might know people in your field who are hiring.
• Conduct Informational Interviews. Ask professionals in the field(s) you are interested in if you can meet with them to discuss their job, the current hiring practices, effective strategies for getting hired, and what to expect once you get into the field.

Informational Interviewing

Q: What is informational interviewing?
A: Informational interviewing is the act of meeting with a professional employed in the field you are interested in to gather information about the field, details about the job you want, tips for effective job searching, and any other information they can share with you.

Q: Why should I do informational interviews?
A: For three reasons: first, to meet more people in your chosen field (networking), to learn more about the field and the job you desire, and to practice interviewing.

Q: How can I find people to informational interview with?
A: Use your network contacts. Relatives, friends, faculty, classmates, etc. can help refer you to people in your field of interest. Call companies or organizations that you are interested in working for and ask for the name and extension of the person in the position you are seeking or the person who could hire you for the position you want. Contact article authors or professionals mentioned in an article you read about the field. Professional organizations can also be great resources for contacts.

Q: How do you approach the person you want to interview?
A: Email or call the person directly. Introduce yourself, express your desire to get into this field, and ask to meet with them for no more than 30 minutes for an informational interview. Emphasize that this will be strictly informational in nature. If they agree, stick strictly to the time limit!

Q: How should I dress for an informational interview?
A: Professionally. Dress as though you are going to a formal interview. A suit is appropriate. Make sure you look well groomed, clean, and neat. Keep jewelry and cologne/perfume to a minimum. If unsure, err on the side of being too formal and conservative.

Q: Should I bring my résumé to an informational interview?
A: Yes. You should bring your résumé to the interview, but don’t expect the person you are interviewing to hand it out for you later. Ask the person to review your résumé and make suggestions for improvement. If you are speaking with the person who could hire you, ask if s/he will keep your résumé on file.

Q: What questions should I ask the person I’m interviewing?
A: Here are some suggestions:

• How did you become interested in this field?
• What do you like most about your job?
• What aspects of your job do you wish you could change?
• What surprised you about this job/field when you first started working?
• How does this organization rank within the industry?
• What is special about your product/services?
• Who are your major competitors?
• What are the biggest challenges for you in this position?
• What are your supervisor’s biggest challenges?
• How do you describe the culture of this organization?
• What are the working conditions for this position/field? i.e., how much time do you spend at work?
• How often do you work evenings, weekends, or holidays?
• Can you describe a typical workday or work cycle for me?
• What qualities and skills are required to be successful in this position/field?
• How is this organization growing or changing?
· How often does this organization hire from the outside or promote from the inside?
· How long have chief executives been with this organization?
· How does this organization support the professional development of its employees?
· What is the organizational structure here? What are the lines of authority?
· How do you rate communications within this organization?
· How did you get into this job?
· What job search methods seem to be most effective for getting hired in this company or this field?
· What professional organizations do you belong to?
· What trade journals do you read?
· If you were going to look for a job in this field, where would you look?
· What entry-level jobs most often lead to getting hired for higher-level positions?
· What are some careers that people in your position eventually move on to?
· What are some occupations that are closely related to this one?
· What are the future projections for this field/career?
· Do you have any other information or advice for newcomers to this field?
· Do you know of anyone else in this field that might be willing to speak with me?

Don’t be afraid to think up some of your own too!

**TIP** Always send a thank you letter to the person you interviewed.

Be sure to send thank you letters to anyone who helps you with your job search, even if it does not lead to a job. Be sure to contact everyone in your network to inform him or her when you have accepted a new position, so they know you are no longer looking.

“Elevator Speech”

Networking will entail introducing yourself to potential employers and contacts. In recent years it has become common practice to develop a 30 second to one minute “elevator speech,” sound bite, commercial or script that you can use to quickly and effectively introduce yourself.

Components of an effective elevator speech:

1. **Your name**
   example: Hi my name is Ned Peters.

2. **Your degree or academic program**
   example: I will graduate from the Water Supply certificate program at Cape Cod Community College in May.

3. **Current career aspiration**
   example: I am experienced at collecting and analyzing water samples and am seeking a position as a Drinking Water Technician.

4. **A hook to capture the listener’s attention and make a favorable, memorable impression**
   example: Maximum Contaminant Levels are my passion.

5. **A request for action**
   Examples: Do you have any advice for securing a position?
   Can leave a copy of my résumé with you?
   Do you know of any employers who might currently be hiring?
Sample elevator speeches:

"You're Judy Gateley. It is a pleasure to meet you. I recently read your article about the benefits of massage therapy in the Cape Cod Times. My name is James Skinner and I just graduated from the Massage Therapy certificate program at Cape Cod Community College. I am proud to say that I received the Massage Therapy Foundation's Student Case Report Award. I am looking for a full-time position as a massage therapist. Would it be possible to set up a 30-minute informational interview with you?"

"Hi my name is Gia Chang. I have an Associate’s degree in Information Technology, Administrative Assistant and a certificate in Customer Service from Cape Cod Community College. I am seeking a full-time position as an administrative assistant where I can apply my skills; particularly my computer skills and fluency in Portuguese. May I leave a copy of my resume with you?"

GO!

Once you have prepared for your job search, it is time to get going. Start implementing some of the effective job search methods you just learned about.

Learn From Mistakes Along the Way

If you are finding that a particular job search strategy is not working for you, change it! If you have not received any invitations for interviews, have a career counselor review your résumé and cover letter to see if these documents effectively represent your skills and experience. If employers are not calling you back for second interviews, meet with a career counselor to work on improving your interviewing skills. You can also contact employers you’ve interviewed with to politely ask for feedback so that you can improve your interviewing skills. The worst thing they can say is “No.” Some people have actually been reconsidered for positions after doing this, but don’t count on it. Just use it as a way to improve interviewing skills.

Sometimes there is nothing for you to learn other than that the process we use today to look for jobs and find candidates to fill positions is flawed. Often the best candidate is not hired for a variety of reasons. Don’t take everything personally. Keep your spirits up and keep going!
Q: Unsure of where you are going?

Undecided?  Career?
Transferring?  Major?
Joint Admissions?  Your Future?

A: Come see us...we can help!

Mary Olenick  Kristina Ierardi
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Grossman Student Commons 2nd Floor
Looking For A Job?

We can help

Full-time Jobs

Career Planning & Placement

Kristina Ierardi, MA
Coordinator

Grossman Commons
2nd floor - C206E
508-362-2131 x4688

* Full-time job listings on the 2nd floor of the Grossman Student Commons building

* Online job listings posted at www.capecod.edu/career

* Annual Job Fair

* Individual career planning assistance by appointment

Part-time Jobs

Student Employment Office

Theresa Bowse
Job Developer

Dawn Harney
Job Developer

South Building
2nd floor
Room 215
508-362-2131 x4336
Hours are posted

* Part-time and seasonal job postings on bulletin boards on the 1st floor of the South Building and in the Cafeteria

* Call or stop by the office to obtain the contact information for listed positions

* Assistance is available on a drop-in basis during office hours