Chapter 4 - Job Search Strategies

The job search process is a job itself. An effective job search will incorporate a variety of strategies. Look over the list below for tips on how to best navigate each approach.

Checklist for an Effective Job Search

• Use a Job Search Tracking Sheet to keep track of important information including resume submissions, interviews, networking contacts, and follow-up notes. Download this Excel file at career.ucla.edu/CareerGuide in the Supplemental Materials section.

• Determine how much time you will spend on your job search each week, block off your schedule and be sure to follow through.

• Complete the On-Campus Recruitment (OCR) Orientation to gain access to on-campus interviews with top companies.

Searching Online

• Utilize the UCLA Career Center’s online resources including BruinView™, On-Campus Recruitment and Opportunity Lists.

• Use various general and industry-specific Job Search Websites to search and apply for open positions.

  > Use search agents or job alerts in order for websites to automatically send you new job postings.

• Conduct a targeted search.

  > Utilizing various Company & Industry Research Resources, identify the types of organizations you would like to work for, develop a targeted list, and research companies.

  > Look directly on the employers’ sites for open job and internship postings.

• Social Media

  > Actively use LinkedIn and social media to effectively brand and market yourself.

  > See our Social Media Do’s and Don’ts in the Job Search on this page.

  > View LinkedIn for Students tutorials to ensure you are leveraging LinkedIn to its full capacity!

Take it Offline

• Attend Career Fairs. See the current schedule at BruinView™ > Fairs. Review the How to Prepare for a Career Fair Checklist on page 15.

• Information Sessions: Attend company presentations to learn more about companies of interest, their opportunities for students and to make individual connections with company representatives. Check BruinView™ > Info Sessions for the current schedule.

• Join Professional Associations and Student Organizations

  > Professional associations are groups of people who currently work in a given profession. They often host conferences, workshops, and networking events and are a great way to learn more about a career and meet people who may be able to help guide you. There is often a discounted membership rate for students.

  > Find a list of professional associations at www.weddles.com

  > Search for UCLA student organizations at www.studentgroups.ucla.edu. Filter by “Professional” category to find groups relevant to your career interests.

• Volunteer to gain experience and expand your network.

• Leverage your network: Identify, list and prioritize your current contacts using the My Personal Network Worksheet. Download this PDF file at career.ucla.edu/CareerGuide in the Supplemental Materials section.

• Utilize LinkedIn to discover your hidden network.

• Reach out to contacts to schedule informational interviews (see page 11).

Social Media in the Job Search: Do’s and Don’ts

DO:

• Take inventory of your current social media use. Revisit platforms that may be inactive and be sure to keep all profiles up-to-date and delete anything that is questionable.

• Be consistent. Make sure all of your social media accounts show the same job and education history.

• Use social media to expand your network and to show interest in the field you are entering by sharing articles and actively participating in discussions.

• Create or enhance your existing LinkedIn account. Not sure where to begin? Check out https://university.linkedin.com/linkedin-for-students for resources to help students learn how to utilize LinkedIn effectively.
• Join and participate in LinkedIn groups related to your career interests. Initiate and participate in discussions. Be sure to check your spelling, grammar and use professional courtesy when doing so.

• Follow companies in your industry in order to learn more and show your interest.

• Use your social media account to connect with people who can refer you to the jobs that you desire. Connect with recruiters you met at career fairs, hiring managers you have interviewed with in the past, or peers who work in similar positions.

• Express your interest in a new position and ask for their help. If you have an interview lined up, get insightful information about the company from an insider.

DON’T:

• Post anything you will regret later. There is a chance it may be seen by prospective employers, colleague, former boss, etc. Think twice before posting questionable photos, potentially offensive comments, or criticisms against current or former employers.

• Use poor grammar or spelling in your profile or when sending a message to contacts. Also, avoid sending generic messages; always customize your message for each person and position.

• Be passive. It is called social media for a reason. Show your passion and interests by engaging with other users, professional groups, or brands.

• Wear inappropriate clothing in profile photos. You don’t have to wear a 3-piece suit in your photos, however, a business casual outfit is recommended.

• Assume your information is private. Check your privacy settings for all social media platforms. With new updates and constant changes to privacy policies, double-check to see what is visible on your public profile.

• Spend too much time on social media. As you take control of your online persona, go out and live it!

How to Prepare for a Career Fair

Reasons to Attend

• Access recruiters from national and international companies in a convenient campus location.

• Increase your chances of receiving an interview by making a personal connection instead of relying solely on your resume.

• Explore different fields, industries, company cultures, and career opportunities.

• Gain valuable employment information and job search advice from seasoned professionals.

• Find out about available positions and submit your resume in person to company recruiters.

• Expand your network of contacts.

Before the Event

• Look up the list of participating employers in advance to strategize which companies you would like to meet. The list of participating employers can be found in the Fairs section of BruinView™.

• Research companies to create a targeted list of companies you are interested in approaching. Use the Career Fair Action Plan to keep track of your research so you can have an informed and relevant conversation at the Fair.

> What should you research?

Company website | Company mission and basic information | Products | Competitors |
Current news topics related to them (i.e. Google News) | What internships/positions they are seeking to fill on their website or Bruinview™ | Application instructions in case you have questions | Check Glassdoor.com to read company review information from employees

• Prepare your 30 second Elevator Pitch! Practice with your roommate, parents, and friends or prepare your pitch with a career counselor during an appointment (see worksheet on page 16).

• Dress appropriately. “Business Casual” or “Business Professional” depending upon the culture of the industries/companies you are interested in. When in doubt, dress in professional attire. Visit our website for specific examples: career.ucla.edu/DressForSuccess

What to Bring

• Copies of resume in a folder or leather portfolio.

• Allow adequate time, come as early as possible.

• A list of employers by preferred companies and plan to visit and approach as many as possible.

• Prepare a Career Fair Action Plan – a prioritized list of companies you plan to visit, including relevant research, questions for them and space to take notes. Access the Career Fair Action Plan at career.ucla.edu/CareerGuide

During the Event

• Map targeted employers using the map given to students upon entering.

• Be ready to introduce yourself (see Elevator Pitch Worksheet on page 16).

• Be flexible and wait your turn to talk to employers or speakers.

• Respect their materials and ask before taking anything off their table.

• Be courteous, friendly, and polite.
• Between speaking with representatives, take breaks to take notes with a fresh mind.

• Visit the Career Center Table if you have any questions, need tips, or advice.

• What are employers looking for?
  Enthusiasm | Motivation | Teamwork | Initiative Commitment | Leadership | Communication Knowledge of field or organization | Problem-solving ability

• At the end of the conversation:
  > Ask what the next step will be.
  > Leave them with a copy of your resume, and ask them how they prefer to be contacted.
  > Ask them for their business card so that you can follow-up.
  > THANK them for their time and for the information they provided you.

• Before leaving make the necessary notes on your action plan for follow-up.

After the Event

• Within 24 hours, follow-up with the recruiters you met via email or LinkedIn connection request. Send a customized message reminding them of who you are, what you discussed, and reinforcing that you are interested in an opportunity with their company.

• If they gave you any instructions on how to apply for their position, or directed you to any resources, let them know that you have followed through on their advice and are looking forward to the next step.

• Ask them when you should expect to hear from them regarding next steps in the process.

• Check Bruinview™ to see which companies are scheduled for Information Sessions. Attend as many as you are interested in, even for companies you already met at the fair – you are more likely to make an impact and be remembered if they meet you multiple times!

Elevator Pitch Worksheet

How to Introduce Yourself in 30 Seconds

• Smile + Handshake + Enthusiasm

Step 1) Introduction / Headline – What do you want them to remember about you?
  > Your Name
  > Year in School
  > Major
  > What type of position you are seeking or future career goals

Step 2) Value Proposition – Major achievements and transferable skills targeted to the person/company/industry. Incorporate your story so you are memorable.
  > Relevant skills and experiences
  > Why you are interested in this company

Step 3) The Ask – What do you want from this interaction?
  > Build upon your existing knowledge of the company and position
  > Demonstrate your curiosity and sincere interest in their opportunities
  > Establish a connection with the person
  > Here are some sample questions to get you started:
    • I am very interested in your ____ position because ____. Can you tell me what you look for in a successful candidate?
    • I noticed on your company website that _____. Can you tell me more about that and how it might impact the work of the person in this position?
    • What training opportunities are available for new employees?
    • What challenges and opportunities are associated with the position?
    • What is the typical career path for people who start in this position?
    • How do you see the jobs in this field changing over the next five years? What can I do to prepare myself for such changes?
    • What are the backgrounds of other employees in your company or department?
    • How would you describe the company culture?
  > Make sure you respond to their answers with relevant information about yourself and/or ask follow-up questions that demonstrate that you are listening and engaged in the conversation.