

# Your Job Search Strategies



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## Beginning your Job Search

- Define your search by addressing a number of questions:
  - 1) Where do you want to live? Try to establish targeted cities, states, or metro areas. How far are you willing to commute to work? Are you willing to move for your dream job?
  - 2) What issues might impact your search? Do you need to live near family members? Do you have a certain minimum salary requirement based on your living expenses and student loan repayment? What other personal issues might impact your job search?
  - 3) What industries/organizations am I searching for? Narrow your search to a few industries and target specific companies that you may want to work for.
- Alert your network that you are searching for a job and work to expand your list of professional contacts.
  - 1) Before you begin applying for positions, evaluate your current professional network contacts—this includes professors, friends, family members, and others you may know through those people—that you are beginning a search. Provide contacts with information about what you are looking for, and request their help. Don't be afraid to ask network connections if they are willing to provide you with contacts in your desired field for informational interviews or job shadowing opportunities. Encourage them to reach out to you if an opportunity becomes available.
  - 2) Use LinkedIn or other social media sites to expand your current network. Contact Career Services for help with connecting with alumni who will mentor and help students. Also use LinkedIn for finding Central Penn alumni. Join groups related to the industries and organizations that you are interested in working for.

## During your Job Search

- Make sure to follow up. This may be the most important component to the job search process. A follow up phone call or email may be the difference between you and another candidate. Be sure that all follow-up is done in a professional manner. Practice what you will say and use formal writing techniques in all correspondence. Do not be overly persistent (calling every day) and make sure to play by their rules (if they say no phone calls, do not call). Inquiring where the organization is in their search process or contacting them to ensure that they received your materials is a professional and subtle way to get your name across their desk once again. If you get nervous talking to people, script your conversation on paper so that you have a guideline to follow. Use the Interview Tool in our Optimal Online Career Center or practice with a friend. This will help you get comfortable with these professional phone calls.
- Be aware of application timelines for different industries. Government positions often have long timelines and early application deadlines.
- Establish a system for tracking your applications and follow-up. This will help you manage a large volume of applications.
- Do your research before applying for jobs and going to interviews. Be aware of information and trends relevant to the industry and organizations which have positions that interest you.