

Job Search Guide



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VILLANOVA CAREER SERVICES




THE JOB SEARCH

Career Development is a constant, evolving process...

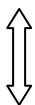
There is more to getting a job of your choice than just having a degree. Your degree will open many doors, but it is up to you to obtain the employment you desire. For most of us, the most difficult part of the job search process is deciding “what I want to be when I grow up.” That is because we are convinced that whatever career we pick we are stuck with it. We are sure there is only one job we are destined for, if only we could figure out what that one job is. ***The job search, however, is a process... one that may not happen linearly. While we have listed the following information in “steps,” the arrows remind you that there is often overlap between the steps and often you may find yourself going back and forth between a few of them.***

Step One: Take a look at yourself...

This is probably the most important part of the job search process! It will help to build confidence in your capabilities and provide you with more direction and focus. Also, your search will be more productive if you know something about yourself. After all, it is easier to convince someone to hire you if you know what you do best! It is your task to articulate what characteristics/talents will make you marketable to employers. Keep in mind also what you are interested in and how this fits with your particular talents.

-  **Assess your values, interests, and talents** in order to determine what you want, what you can do, where you would like to do it, and what other options you might consider.
-  **Ask yourself which skills and what knowledge you want to use and develop further in a position.**
-  **Think about the factors that will determine your personal and job satisfaction.** These may include the size and structure of the organization, the type of industry, personnel policies and salaries, company reputation, training and promotional opportunities, location, challenge, and responsibilities.

Resources that can help: Self Assessment instruments, meeting with a career counselor, mentors, career literature.



Step Two: Prepare Your Resume




Developing your resume can aid in the process of articulating your skills, talents, and interests. *Please see the Resume Writing 101 handout for more information and/or stop into Career Services for help (also available at www.careers.villanova.edu).*




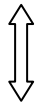
Step Three: Develop a Work Plan

Before launching your job search campaign, you need to develop a work plan. The job search is a time-consuming process. Having a solid work plan and organized records will help ensure that you do not miss deadlines or fail to follow up on a lead, contact or interview. The more committed you are to the job search, the greater the chances of finding a job that you like and is satisfactory to you at this time in your life, paving the way for a rewarding career in the years ahead.


It is often helpful to treat the job search like a class and dedicate a certain amount of time to it per week:

-  Set up a realistic timetable that you will be able to follow.
-  Once a week, review your work plan and check off the tasks you have completed.
-  Maintain accurate records that detail the dates of your contacts and interviews and maintain copies of all correspondence.

 Try and limit your search to a manageable list of targets and career goals. While you do not need to know exactly what you want to do, it is also not advisable to look at everything and anything.





Step Four: Investigating the Job Market & Developing Contacts


 **Everyone has contacts including you!! Broaden those contacts. Utilizing those contacts does not mean you are not getting a job on your own - remember that the majority of available jobs are filled by word of mouth.** You will discover important information about employment opportunities through your personal contacts. Let friends, relatives, faculty, etc., know that you are looking for a job. Career Services staff, VU alumni, and Career Fair employers can also be used for informational and networking purposes. Use these contacts to obtain the name of individuals with whom it might be valuable for you to speak. **Your last question when speaking with someone about career opportunities should be “Can you recommend someone else I should speak with?”**


Note: Networking and utilizing contacts in the field are helpful both for gaining information to determine if a field is right for you as well as seeking a position in that field.


 **Schedule informational interviews.**


 **While informational interviews are not employment interviews, you can use them to explore and investigate the world of work and the variety of different jobs and working environments that are available to you. You can ALSO use informational interviews to get a foot in the door and make some contacts with a company in which you are interested.**

 Be prepared with a list of questions for the interviewer; you will be asking most of the questions, as you are the information seeker.

 This type of interview allows you to familiarize yourself with the vocabulary of a certain industry, industry trends and gain interviewing experience in a non-stressful situation. Alumni are often a great resource for informational interviews. Consult the Online Alumni Directory with the help of Career Services. Always ask the interviewer if they know anyone else with whom you could speak.

 **Always follow up with a thank you letter!** These people are not just contacts for the present, but potential contacts in the future, leave a good impression!

 **Professional Associations** related to the fields you are interested in are also potential networking devices, again, for exploratory and search purposes. To locate such associations utilize search engines and enter key words (i.e. public relations, associations). Most have student rates to join and some have information on the field as well as contact information on their websites.

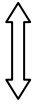
 **Information Gathering:** Once you have identified the career fields you wish to investigate and/or pursue, you should collect information about the organizations that you are applying to and about the field you are entering. Look into the:

Organization's:











History and structure
Recent achievements
Products/Services provided
Training provided to employees
Philosophy/goals
New directions the company is looking to go in
Recent news articles/journal articles

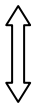
The Career Field's:

Employment outlook
Salary Trends
New technology
Trends
Professional Associations
Trade Journals





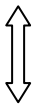
Step Five: Applying For Positions

-  **Utilizing multiple job search strategies work the best** – do not simply rely on one resource (ie Monster.com). For example, use your contacts, CSO resources, professional associations, past internship contacts, various internet sites in addition to pinpointing companies on your own.
-  You may choose to apply for advertised openings on company websites, the web, newspaper or Career Services' Online Joblist. **You can apply to specific employers even if they do not have positions currently advertised.**
-  Mass mailings are often used by students but, unfortunately, they require a lot of effort and often do not reap many benefits. The number of resumes received by an employer can be in the hundreds. Usually a majority of those are screened out. *Whenever mailing out a resume, following up with email or phone calls is critical.* **Though it may be more labor intensive in the short-term, seeking out a specific contact at a company before applying will increase the likelihood of your resume being seen.**
-  Stay updated on developments in your field of interest. For example, pay attention to new companies/organizations that may be coming to your area (i.e. *The Philadelphia Business Journal*).
-  Some job seekers turn to private employment agencies to find positions.
 -  *Be extremely cautious if a contract is involved.* You may have to pay the agency a percentage of your wages if you are placed. There are many employers, however, who will pay if you are placed at that particular company. *CSO does not recommend paying for employment services.*
 -  *Generally, placement agencies are utilized by people with more advanced career experience and expertise than the typical college graduate may have.*
-  **Career Services** is also a resource for job openings through the online job postings as well as the Campus Interview Program. Recruiters from various companies and organizations will come to campus to interview students for available positions throughout the academic year. ****Remember, however that this program represents only a fraction of potential employers!**
-  **Attend CSO programming** such as Career Fairs, Career Conferences, panel discussions etc. that is related to the field you are interested in. Stay apprised of other programs in the area by checking emails from CSO or the students section of our website (www.careers.villanova.edu).
 -  *Take your blinders off!!* Utilize professionals in the field who come to these events to get information about other sectors of that company if you are interested or possibly contacts with similar companies in a different geographic location.



Step Six: Interviewing With a Company





-  Please see Career Services' Interviewing Guidelines handout and consider signing up for a Practice Interview at Career Services to help perfect your technique.
-  **Remember, interviewing is a skill, and skills need to be built! Practice is key!**



Step Seven: Following Up

A Sample Thank You Note handout can be found in the Career Services office or on our website. ****Make sure you personalize the note to the company and position you applied for – mention something from your interview so they know you are truly interested!**

A few final notes to think about...

-  It is important to realize you are being hired not only for what you can contribute today, but for the potential you are exhibiting for tomorrow.
-  Think about how you can contribute to that particular company in that position. *Make a bridge between you and the employer!*
-  If you realize that there are over 25,000 different kinds of jobs and literally thousands of different companies you could possibly work for, *you should not accept a position that does not satisfy your needs.*
-  Although some people think that it is easier to get a job if they say they will “do anything,” this is not the best approach and makes you seem indecisive and unaware of your own talents and interests.

Remember: The Job Search may not necessarily happen in the exact order presented here.

You may find that you complete the first few steps and need to revert back to step 1, or you may find that you are working on 2 of the steps at once. That is normal!



Tips for a Long Distance Job Search:

- ◆ Contact and/or join a local or national chapter of a professional association related to the field you wish to go into. Use the internet or Encyclopedia of Associations to find one! Attend conferences; they often have placement activities.
- ◆ Attend jobs fairs in the geographic area in which you are interested (i.e. New Jersey Collegiate Job Fair).
- ◆ Contact and/or get involved with the local alumni clubs; use the On-Line Alumni Directory and visit the alumni website to find local chapters (i.e. The Boston Alumni Club, or the Alumni Club of San Diego).
- ◆ Look at the Career Services websites of schools in the area you are interested in to see if they have related links and/or job postings geared for that particular area. Letters of Reciprocity can be provided by CSO if required by the school.
- ◆ Review relevant professional and trade journals to get an idea of “up and coming” professionals & organizations in the field. These may include a “classifieds ads” section (i.e. *Advertising Age* for the advertising field).
- ◆ Contact corporation headquarters of companies with branches in other cities.
- ◆ Utilize basic searches on Yahoo and Google (i.e. “art museums, Boston”) to find web resources besides the usual monster.com type sites. Take part in electronic resume/job databases on the web.
- ◆ Utilized Career Fair or Career Conference contacts to see if they have any information or know someone you can speak with in the area in which you are interested.
- ◆ Utilize resources such as the JobBank books according to city, the Book of Lists, Dalton’s, or industry specific directories.



HAVE YOU CONSIDERED ALL OF THESE METHODS OF JOB SEARCHING?

Your chances of securing employment are higher when you utilize as many strategies as possible!

DIRECT CONTACT WITH EMPLOYERS

- Directories of Employers
- Business Articles
- Professional industry publications
- Local Chamber of Commerce
- Career Services Office (VU & other colleges)
- Professional Associations
- Professional meetings
- State Employment Offices
- Alumni of Villanova
- Speak with an employee of a targeted employer from a different department.
- Speak with an employee of a targeted employer from a different location.

NETWORKING

- Personal contacts: friends, family etc.
- Former employers
- Informational interviews
- Career Fairs
- Alumni activities
- Professional organizations
- National Greek Associations
- Faculty, academic offices, internship office
- CSO contacts
- Newspapers/journals/trade publications
- Volunteering

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- On campus recruiting
- CSO job listings
- Part time/ summer jobs
- Internet: basic searches
- Newspaper ads
- Company websites

HOW TO APPROACH A POTENTIAL RESOURCE!!

- Have a plan!
- Express interest and enthusiasm towards the field and/or employer.
 - Do not ask directly for a job!
- Express your goals (i.e. full time, part time, summer position)
- Utilize an effective way of transitioning into expressing your interest in possible resources and /or contacts in the field.
- Appreciation
- Follow up