

2024 - Job & Internship Search Action Plan

ACTION PLAN: ORGANIZING YOUR JOB & INTERNSHIP SEARCH

This Job & Internship Search Action Plan walks you through the milestones for a typical search. Searching for a job or internship is not necessarily linear, so there is no need to follow each step sequentially. Track your progress and write notes or questions for your career coach in the Notes column.

GET INFORMED

Task	Notes
GETTING YOUR JOB SEARCH STARTED: Start by identifying your own values, interests, knowledge, and skills as they relate to meaningful work. If you need help, schedule a career coaching appointment on Handshake . In your appointment, you can discuss whether a self-assessment like the Strong Interest Inventory, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, CliftonStrengths, or the Meaningful Work Kit would be helpful for you.	
CREATE A TARGET ORGANIZATION LIST: Research industries and organizations you're curious about online using tools such as Handshake , O*Net , Glassdoor , LinkedIn , and organizations' websites. Organize the list of organizations you're interested in working for in a way that works for you such as an Excel spreadsheet or a bookmarked list.	

EXPAND AND LEVERAGE YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

Task	Notes
BUILD RELATIONSHIPS: Around 85% of jobs are filled through networking, so it's important to talk with professionals to gain access to unposted opportunities (or even have an internship created specifically for you!). Start by conducting informational interviews with professionals to learn more about industries and roles. For professionals you already know but haven't spoken with in a while, get back in touch. Explain your current situation (where you are, where you've been, and where you're hoping to go). By asking for advice, rather than a job, you avoid putting your contacts on the spot.	
ASK FOR REFERENCES: Reach out to 3-4 contacts to ask if they would be willing to serve as references in your search. References can be former employers, high school teachers, Stanford professors, club advisors, and others who know your work well. Provide these professionals with a copy of your resume so they feel comfortable speaking about you to prospective employers.	

CREATE AND TAILOR YOUR RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

Task	Notes
ANALYZE THE JOB AD AND RESEARCH THE ORGANIZATION: Before you start creating our resume, analyze the job ad to understand: Who is this employer and what do they need? Research the company on LinkedIn, Glassdoor, the organization's website, a Google News search, and/or informational interviews with current or past employees.	
WRITE YOUR RESUME AND COVER LETTER: Every time you apply for a new opportunity, write a new version of your resume and cover letter. • Resume: The version you submit is not a list of everything you've ever done; it's a very tailored list of skills and experiences that demonstrate you're qualified for one opportunity at one organization. • Cover Letter: Explain why you're interested in the role/company and tell stories about your past experience related to the skills/experience requested in the job ad.	
CREATE OR UPDATE YOUR LINKEDIN PROFILE: Unlike your resume, your LinkedIn profile is not tailored to one opportunity or industry. It provides a more holistic picture of your skills and experience.	

PRACTICE INTERVIEWING

Task	Notes
PRACTICE INTERVIEWING: • Review the job ad to anticipate questions that the employer might ask, and brainstorm stories that demonstrate your qualifications related to potential interview questions. • Practice answering common interview questions such as "Tell me about yourself" and "What are your strengths and weaknesses?" • Employers will likely ask behavioral interview questions that begin "Tell me about a time when..." Organize your responses using the CAR (challenge, action, result) method.	

- Practice answering interview questions with a friend, using the Big Interview platform, or by recording yourself answering questions on Zoom. To get feedback and improve your interviewing skills, schedule a mock interview with a career coach on Handshake. - Develop a list of questions to ask the employer during your interview. Make sure they are not questions that could easily be answered by doing research.	
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TAKE ACTION

Task	Notes
CREATE A PLAN: Set goals each week related to your internship search. These goals may vary week to week. Ask yourself what you would like to accomplish as it relates to researching, building professional relationships, and applying. We recommend spending about 50% of your time building relationships, 25% preparing your resume/cover letter and applying, 15% for research, and 10% or less searching for posted opportunities.	
KEEP TRACK: It's easy to forget about applications you've already submitted or miss an upcoming application deadline. Create a system that works for you to track your internship applications (i.e., date submitted, date followed up, date interviewed) to stay organized.	
FOLLOW UP: It's common for applications to get pushed aside when employers are busy, so don't take it personally. Follow up with employers if you have not heard back 2-3 weeks after submitting your application.	

MAINTAIN YOUR MOMENTUM

Task	Notes
SEND THANK YOU NOTES: As you expand your network and interview, express your gratitude for professionals' time and expertise. Interviews: Within 24 hours after an interview, send a thank you e-mail to reiterate your enthusiasm for the position and your appreciation for the opportunity to interview.	

• Networking: After you meet with individuals in your network, thank them for their time and any help they offered you. Keep your network informed about the outcome of your internship search.	
CONTINUE EXPANDING YOUR NETWORK: Building professional relationships is not something you do only when you're searching for an opportunity. Continue to meet new people through informational interviews and networking groups as you search, apply, and interview for opportunities (and even after you've accepted an internship). Remember to ask for advice, not a job. You can also ask for recommendations of other professionals to speak to so that you can continue to expand your network.	
STAY MOTIVATED: The average internship search can take from a few weeks to nearly a year. Celebrate the milestones of your internship search as you expand your network, find interesting roles, apply, and interview.	

NEXT STEPS

What do you plan to do this month to advance your internship search?

Goal #1	
Goal #2	
Goal #3	

What do you plan to do this week to advance your internship search?

Goal #1	
Goal #2	
Goal #3	

What obstacles will you need to overcome to reach your goals?

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What resources will you use to reach your goals?

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