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## **JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES FOR SENIORS AND RECENT GRADUATES**

Most job seekers find that it takes many months of preparation, research, making contacts, and interviewing before they secure their first job. Career Services is here to help you get started and to guide you every step of the way. Just call and set up an appointment with one of our counselors.

### **THE FACTS**

Who does the hiring? (from the Bureau of Labor Statistics)

- Large businesses (500+) 21%
- Medium companies (100 – 499) 24%
- Small companies (<100) 55%

Most successful job search methods

- Networking
- Direct contact with companies
- Career center website
- Job fairs

### **THE STEPS**

**Self-assessment** – will help you focus on appropriate jobs, write a strong resume and interview effectively.

- Identify your skills, strengths and interests.
- Know what motivates you – your values and preferences.
- Create a list of what you’ve done in the past. Include all academic, work, extra-curricular and volunteer experiences. Think about the skills you developed in those settings.
- Make an appointment with career services to complete formal or informal self-assessment instruments.

**Research & Networking** – helps you learn about the field, develop contacts and hear about the opportunities that go unadvertised.

- Conduct an informational interview with a professional in your field of interest. Identify potential contacts by talking to everyone in your network of family and friends.  
For tips on conducting an informational interview go to: <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/career/tutorials.cfm>
- Tap into the Alumni Online Community where you can search for Clark alumni by occupation, job title, company name, location, etc. <http://www.clarku.edu/alumnicommunity> or use a professional networking site such as <http://www.linkedin.com>
- Be sure to read our handout on the etiquette involved in connecting with alumni and other professionals. <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/career/tutorials.cfm>
- Develop a “30 second commercial” about yourself to use as an introduction at an informational interview, a career fair, or an informal networking opportunity. Include your degree or academic preparation, area of interest, particular strengths, and goals.

**Use All Job Search Methods Available** – don't focus exclusively on one or two approaches.

- Leads from networking contacts – often people “on the inside” have the best scoop.
- Professional Associations – great resource for industry information, professional contacts and job listings. Look at the “What Can I Do with this Major” and “Spotlight on Careers” sections of the Career Services website for ideas. <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/career/webresources.cfm>
- Clark Recruiter – Clark's on-line database of employer contacts, jobs and internships. Go to <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/career> then click on the Clark Recruiter logo.
- Targeted websites – skip the huge websites that attempt to cover every career field in favor of those specific to the type of job you are seeking (e.g. [www.graduatejobs.com](http://www.graduatejobs.com); click on Subscribers).
- Career Search – an extensive database that allows you to search for organizations by industry, location, and keyword. <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/career/webresources.cfm>
- Career Fairs – attend fairs on campus, through the Consortium of Worcester Colleges, at other schools and through professional organizations.
- Placement agencies – can be a useful complement to your other job search strategies.

*To obtain usernames and passwords for the resources listed above, contact Career Services.*

**Write Effective Application Materials** – Your resume and cover letter need to make a positive first impression.

- Create a resume and cover letter targeted to the specific job and organization to which you are applying.
- Have your materials critiqued by Career Services staff during drop-in hours (15 minute first-come first-served time slots every afternoon from 1 to 3 p.m.), an individual appointment, or our 48-hour critique service.

**Practice Interviewing** – even before you have an interview scheduled, come in to Career Services to talk about how best to present yourself. Follow this up with a mock interview.

- Check out our interviewing tips at: <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/career/tutorials.cfm>

**Follow-up** – Always send a thank you note to those who assist you in your search as well as the employers with whom you interview. Keep in touch with networking contacts. Offer to help them whenever possible so that your relationship becomes mutually beneficial. Follow up with employers by phone if you do not hear back within the stated time frame.

- Go to tips on writing thank you notes (part of the interviewing tutorial): <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/career/tutorials.cfm>

**Negotiate and Assess Offers** – Get all of the details of a job offer in writing including the job title, description, start date, location, compensation package, benefits and reply deadline. Graciously ask for a couple of days to consider the offer before responding.

- Salary websites: <http://www.salary.com> or <http://www.payscale.com>
- Finally, be sure to read the Life After Clark handout with tips on compensation and benefits, credit/debt, apartments, and budgeting. <http://www.clarku.edu/offices/career/tutorials.cfm>