Job Search Guide
Becker School of Design & Technology

Looking for a new job can be exhilarating and exhausting. Some searches go quickly while others may take an average of around 4-6 months. Being prepared for each and every step of this process will not only save you time and headaches, but it will also make you a smarter, savvier, and more hire-able candidate!

Work Through This Guide To:

1. Define Your Goals
2. Review and Finalize Your Resume and Portfolio
3. Complete a Cover Letter (if Applicable)
4. Take Advantage of ALL Resources
5. Work Your Network
6. Make A Schedule and Stay Organized
7. Follow Up and Solidify Your Communication Strategy
8. Perfect Your Interview Skills
9. Write an Awesome Thank You Letter
10. Nail Your Negotiating

*Don't miss the **Helpful Tips** and be sure to complete each **To Do** checkpoint*

1. Define Your Goals

Before you update your resume for specific game jobs and start applying to open opportunities, you'll need to understand what you're looking for first.

To Do!

Gain a better understanding of what you are looking for by completing the Job Internship Search Guide. This should be a "brain dump" and can be completed as many times as you wish until you feel confident with the result!

2. Review and Finalize Your Resume and Portfolio

The Resume

When a prospective employer looks at your resume, they should instantly understand what type of position you're looking for and how your experience lines up with their needs. They should also be able to easily pick out your greatest accomplishments—you want your resume to tell a compelling story of what you've accomplished and how your experience would translate into a new role.

Although you'll need to update your resume for **each** and **every** role you apply to in order to ensure that you're featuring your most relevant experience, having a solid draft ready to go will make your life much easier when you're in the heart of your search.

To Do!

- Use this Resume Template Guide to template your own. While you're going to need to tailor this for **every** role you apply to, having an initial template or outline prepared will save you time.
- Have your resume reviewed by the Career Lab

The Portfolio

This piece of your application is equally if not more (depending on your track) important than your resume. This is the visual embodiment of you and your work—it is the result of your experiences, project work, courses, skill set, and your brand! While you have a foundational portfolio from your admittance into the program, you should continue to build and develop this throughout your college experience. **DO NOT wait for your capstone courses to work on your portfolio.** Instead view the progression of your portfolio as the progression of your sense of self and educational and professional development. Work on it in increments and be prepared to step into your Senior year with an already strong portfolio.

Helpful Tips:
- A good portfolio showcases quality not quantity. It is okay to have only one or two projects, as long as they are strong
- Go to the Groundswell! Ask for input from friends, faculty, and peers. Share and swap feedback.

3. Complete a Cover Letter (if applicable)

There is some debate around whether or not cover letters are still necessary, but as long as certain prospective employers still require them, you don't want to skip this step. A stellar cover letter can be the difference between landing an interview or landing in the "thanks, but no thanks" pile, so let's make sure you're turning in your A-game.

4. Take Advantage of ALL Resources

Identifying your job-search resources is a crucial step in this process. There are tons of ways to find new opportunities, but the most common ones are job boards, company career pages, recruiting agencies and networking.

Company Career Pages
List companies that you are familiar with or you'd like to work for and go directly to their website or social media page to find new opportunities.

Recruiting Agencies
These are independent firms that match people with openings at their client companies, and can usually be found via LinkedIn. They can add value in having the inside scoop on what the job market looks like and can provide helpful tips on your resume and interview skills.

5. Work Your Network

Your network is probably the most valuable resource that you'll have at your disposal (especially since you graduated from the #2 game school in the world). This includes your friends, family, former professors, and professional connections. It's much more likely that you will land your next job through someone in your network than through an online listing, so it's essential to leverage this invaluable resource.

Helpful Tips: Does your network know the following about you?

- Know that I am looking for a new job as a recent graduate
- Know specifically what type of job I am looking for, and what industry I'm targeting
- Have a list of sample companies I'd like to work for
- Understand how they can help me (I've asked them to introduce me to connections at a target company or refer me to a job with their employer)
- Have a copy of my resume
- Are connected on LinkedIn with my Clark advisor(s), faculty and other staff

To Do!

Don't be shy about reaching out to your network when you are beginning a new search, use the below to help guide these conversations.
- Informational Interviewing Guide
- Tips for Connecting with Alumni

6. Make a Schedule and Stay Organized

Looking for a job can be time consuming, so the more organized you are, the easier this process will be.

Helpful Tips:
- Set up alerts on job boards and schedule time to browse or reach out to prospective employers
- Do not procrastinate and set up an application schedule to make the process routine
- Be wary of quality…more is not always better
- According to LinkedIn, the best day of the week to apply for a new job is Monday, while the worst day of the week to apply is Saturday. When you find an opportunity you're excited about, apply right away!

To Do!

Organize the process of applications by keeping a chart/file for each position you have applied to. This can easily be done via Google Suite applications or use a job tracker like Teal to help manage your job search.

7. Follow Through On Your Communication Strategy

Recruiters receive tons (we're talking hundreds) of applications every single day. Getting on their radar will greatly increase your chances of an interview. Your communication strategy is another important piece of the applicant process. The best way to connect with (and be noticed) is through social media sites such as LinkedIn.

To Do!

Use this after a touch point: Writing a Thank-You Note Guide to help craft your message. Make these messages stand out by infusing your personality and customizing them to demonstrate your genuine interest in the company and how you can be an asset to the company.

8. Perfect Your Interviewing Skills

Feeling well prepared and confident about your interview skills will have a tremendous impact on your success.

To Do!

- Schedule a mock interview with your career advisor through Handshake
- Use these interview prep resources:
    - Phone and Virtual Interview Guide
    - Behavioral Interview Guide
    - Employment Interview Guide

9. Seal The Deal

A great thank you note can make a huge impact, so be sure to ask every person you meet with for his or her contact information, and send them each a follow-up message as soon as possible. Same-day notes tend to have the biggest impact, but sending the next day works, too! Don't go beyond 24 hours and email thank you notes are absolutely ok.

To Do!

Use this After the Interview: Writing a Thank-You Note to help guide this message. This should be sent out to all interviewers within 24 hours post interview. Waiting to hear back? Wait 2 weeks or until the date they gave you for their next step has passed. A polite call or email is best.

10. Nail Your Negotiating

Going in to negotiate an offer armed with an understanding of what is most important to you and what is reasonable to expect will make the process easier and more comfortable for everyone involved. To start, let's take a look at the key components of a job offer:

Salary
Knowing what your skills, expertise, and experience are worth will boost your confidence during a negotiation. Identify the minimum amount that would make you happy, but don't be afraid to ask for more. **Keep in mind that sometimes getting in the door is more important than the ideal salary.**

To Do!

- Use this Negotiating Your Salary Guide to complete the process.
- Research comparable salaries for similar roles in your industry on sites like www.salary.com or www.glassdoor.com to get an educated idea of the industry standard.

Paid Time Off (PTO)

Does the company roll sick and vacation time together into PTO or are they separate? Two to three weeks of time off is pretty standard, but try researching the company's competitors' offerings@to get a feel for the industry standard.

Benefits

Typically, company benefits offered aren't very negotiable, but that doesn't mean that you shouldn't be prepared with a list of expectations. Ask about medical, dental, and vision, 401K, profit sharing, and wellness benefits so that you'll have a full picture of what you'll be getting.

Start Date

Whether you'd like to wrap up a project before leaving your current job or just want to build in a week of time off in between jobs, it's totally acceptable to ask for a delayed start date—within reason. Asking for up to three or four weeks should be fine.

Pre-Planned Vacation

Do you already have a future trip planned? Be sure to have a list of dates you'll need off prepared in advance.

Advocate for Yourself!

Make your total compensation package a reflection of YOUR needs…. Try making a list like the one below and keeping it handy for your next negotiation:

- My ideal salary is
- My minimum salary is
- The standard salary range for this type of role is
- Ideally, I would like at least X weeks of PTO
- The standard amount of PTO for this industry is
- I'm going to need to take the following dates off for pre-planned vacations or commitments
- At minimum, I'll need the following benefits
- Additional "nice to have benefits" would be
- My preferred start date is
- The earliest day I can start is

Need Some Time to Think?

It is perfectly fine to say:

"Thank you for this opportunity. I'm really excited about this offer, and would like to take a couple of days to look everything over in more detail. Would it be possible for me to get back to you on [date]?"