

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

An effective job search begins with a game plan. Below are some tips to get you started on your hunt.

BEFORE YOU START LOOKING...

DETERMINE THE SPECIFIC TYPE OF POSITION YOU DESIRE.

- Conduct a self-assessment of your interests and skills to develop a specific objective and a focused search.

GAIN EXPERIENCE THROUGH INTERNSHIPS, VOLUNTEER WORK, AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

- Internships, volunteer experiences, and extracurricular activities build your professional skills and enhance your resume and interview, as employers seek candidates who have meaningful experience in their field of study.

DEVELOP EFFECTIVE SKILLS FOR COVER LETTER WRITING, RESUME WRITING AND INTERVIEWING.

- Meet with a career counselor for guidance on marketing your skills and experience in a confident manner to employers.

WHEN YOU START LOOKING...

SEARCH THROUGH JOB-LISTING SITES.

- Conduct a consistently active search for positions on general job-listing sites and those that are tailored to specific career paths or industries, instead of just passively posting your resume on them.
- Job-listing sites are listed on the SXU Career Services webpage.

ATTEND JOB FAIRS.

- Can be a useful networking tool, as long as you know how to effectively market yourself at one.
- Job fair tips are listed on the back side of this document and on the SXU Career Services webpage.
- Upcoming local-area job fairs are posted on the SXU Career Services webpage.

NETWORK.

- Develop a network of contacts through family, friends, faculty, staff, classmates and co-workers, as well as through formal and informal activities.
- Conduct an informational interview with professionals working in your desired career field to acquire valuable insight for entry into specific careers.
- Let others know about your specific career aspirations and that you are currently seeking opportunities.
- Networking tips are listed on the back side of this document and on the SXU Career Services webpage.

AGGRESSIVELY USE AS MANY AVENUES AS POSSIBLE TO APPLY FOR JOBS.

- Don't limit yourself to only a select few job search resources.
- Be sure to initiate follow-up with prospective employers, so that your name remains visible for consideration in recruiters' consciousness.

THE ELEVATOR SPEECH

An elevator speech is a valuable marketing tool. It is a piece of communication that can be delivered in the time it takes to ride from the bottom to the top of a building in an elevator, approximately 30 seconds. It answers two basic interview questions: "What can you tell me about yourself?" and "Why should I hire you?"

Example: "Hi, my name is Chris Smith. I am a senior communications major interested in a career in event planning. As an active member of my college's Service Club, I have been instrumental in helping to coordinate and promote educational events on campus and service projects in the community. This experience has helped me to develop strong skills in communication, teamwork, organization and problem solving. I am interested in learning details about the marketing internship that is offered through your special events department."

JOB FAIR TIPS

BEFORE THE EVENT

- Research the mission and products/services of the participating employers beforehand.
- Dress professionally to establish a favorable first impression.
- Bring enough resumes to hand out to all the employers you want to visit.
- Bring a professional portfolio, paper and pens to stay organized and take notes.

DURING THE EVENT

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX IN YOUR APPROACH.

- Meet with employers from industries that are typically considered outside of your major or that are advertising positions that you are not seeking, because they may still have opportunities for which you qualify. Example: Hospitals hire public relations specialists, human resources generalists, database analysts and accountants, not just medical staff.

HAVE AN INTRODUCTION PREPARED.

- Extend a firm handshake and smile to exude confidence and enthusiasm, and provide an elevator speech that quickly highlights your career goals, unique qualifications, work experiences, internships, extracurricular activities and special skills.
- Have a set of questions ready to ask employers, but do not inquire about salary and benefits.

AFTER THE EVENT

COLLECT BUSINESS CARDS AND SEND FOLLOW-UP CORRESPONDENCE SOON AFTER THE EVENT.

- Recruiters expect you to take the lead in initiating correspondence with them afterward, which entails sending them a thank-you email that includes your resume as a way to express your interest in their opportunities and to keep the lines of communication open.

NETWORKING SKILLS

THE CONCEPT OF NETWORKING.

- Networking is the process of developing contacts and exchanging information with them about careers, organizations, industries, and job opportunities.

YOUR NETWORK.

- Informal Sources/Settings: Friends, family, friends of family, co-workers, alumni, faculty, staff, coaches, your best advocates, your best allies, those who know everybody, those who know your profession, those who have the kinds of jobs you are pursuing
- Formal Sources/Settings: Professional organizations, volunteer groups, extracurricular activities, community centers, chambers of commerce, job fairs, school, community events, workshops, presentations

APPROPRIATE INFORMAL QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN STARTING A CONVERSATION.

- Where are you from originally? Where did you attend school? Do you have any hobbies? Do you like to travel? Do you have any favorite sports teams? What do you think of this event?

RECOMMENDED QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CONDUCTING AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW.

- What sparked your interest in your field, and how did you get started in it? Describe your typical work week. What are the positives and negatives of your job? What skills are required in your position? How has your career changed over the past 5-10 years? Are there any classes, organizations, activities, or experiences that I should look into to make myself more marketable for this field?

FINAL STEPS IN THE NETWORKING PROCESS.

- Provide your business card or resume to your contacts, and thank them for their time and input.
- Follow up with your contacts occasionally, letting them know the status of your search.
- Keep an organized list of your contacts, including details about your interactions with them.

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For more information or to schedule an appointment with Career Services, call (773) 298-3131, email careerservices@sxu.edu, or visit Career Services in the Warde Academic Center, Room L-208.



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