

HOW **2** guide: *Job Search*

Before we begin our discussion on the job search, it is important to note that this guide is a “primer” and is somewhat general in nature. The job search strategy you use may depend heavily on the career or field you are pursuing. Every field – whether it is public relations, hospitality, education, health care, law enforcement, or sales – has aspects of the recruitment process that are specific to that industry. Part of your preparation for the job search will be to become more knowledgeable in your field’s recruitment process. Also, please keep in mind that this guide is intended to be a “quick and easy” resource. There are entire books dedicated to job search strategies. We encourage you to speak with the FGCU Career Center staff for further explanation of the intricacies of the job search and get all your questions answered.

Step One – Establish Timeframes

One aspect of the job search that most upcoming graduates don’t realize is that it can take, depending on the field, between 3 – 6 months of active searching (more than 15 hours per week) to find and obtain the job they want. It can be even longer in a tight job market, which we are currently in. With that in mind, here is one way to plan your time:

- *One year from graduation* – experience stage - concentrate on gaining related experience through internships, part-time jobs, service learning, volunteering, or involvement in the student club for your field. Start building your network and developing references.
- *Six months from graduation* – research stage - make a list of the companies you want to work for and become familiar with them; start assembling the resources (such as websites) you plan to use for your job search; if you are thinking about moving to another part of the country, conduct in-depth web research on the companies in that city. Start reading trade magazines and newsletters for your field. Talk to people in the field to learn the most effective ways to break into it. Keep building your network.
- *Three months from graduation* – application stage – start applying to active job postings and sending out prospecting letters. Start using and keep building your network.

Step Two – Preparation

- The most effective and efficient job searches are those that have a particular goal in mind. What do you want to do or what industry do you want to work in? If you don’t know the answer, consider meeting with an FGCU career advisor to clarify your goals. Consider conducting “informational interviews” to learn more about different careers and determine whether it is a “fit” for you.
- Get all your job search “tools” in order – resume, cover letter, interviewing skills, etc. FGCU Career Development Services has sample resumes and cover letters, as well as “How 2 Guides” on numerous job search topics. To access these printable guides, check out our Online Resource Center at <http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/Careers/handouts.asp>
- Have your resume and a version of your cover letter reviewed by our staff. You can even have a “mock interview” to ensure you are effectively answering questions and marketing yourself.

Step Three – Implement Strategy

Most job searches involve utilizing a combination of web-based resources, including employer websites and commercial job listing sites. Please keep in mind, however, that while commercial job posting sites like CareerBuilder and Monster can be helpful and are easy to use, in most cases, **they should not be the only strategy you use. These sites represent only a portion of the job openings available.** We encourage you to make an appointment with one of the FGCU Career Center staff so we can help you formulate a more comprehensive strategy and connect you to resources you may not know are available. To make an appointment, use the contact information at the top of this page.