

# THE JOB SEARCH

Issue 4 in Series



Your job search begins the moment you start thinking about life after **Garrett College** and continues until you have accepted a job offer. Even then, however, it doesn't end, as our ever-changing economy requires workers to constantly be planning for their next job. Over your life span, you are likely to go through the Job Search process several times. On average, you can expect to change jobs 10 times and change careers 3-5 times, if not more.

## HOW MUCH TIME DOES A JOB SEARCH TAKE?

In general, job finding success is directly proportional to the amount of time you are willing to spend in your search and the number of strategies you use to identify potential openings. Experts suggest that you...

1. Be prepared for a long job search, approximately 3-6 months.
2. Spend at least 20 hours per week (if not 40 hours) on your job search.
3. Use all job search techniques that fit your job search goal.
4. Have an alternative plan... be on the lookout for a "bridge" position, one that can take care of basic financial and other needs while you look for a job that better matches your career plans.

Your perseverance will eventually pay off. A valuable resource is having a support system of family and friends to help you when you are feeling discouraged.

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*"It is not our abilities but persistence that ultimately leads us to our greatest achievements." – Apoorve Dubey*

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## WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW BEFORE I BEGIN MY SEARCH?

There is no magic answer when it comes to finding a job. It is hard work, takes ample time and energy, and frequently becomes boring or frustrating. It will require all your skills in planning and follow-through, but when done faithfully, it also pays the ultimate reward... a satisfying job! Rejection is a normal part of job hunting. Rather than letting rejection discourage you, let each instance be an opportunity to improve your job search skills for your next interaction with an employer.

Remember, your job search is your responsibility! You are the one who has to get out there and make things happen... no one can do it for you! The main

strategy in effective job seeking is to be proactive. That is, the next step in the process (and there is always a next step! Is your responsibility. Simply being reactive when news of an opening comes to you will guarantee that you spend a lot of time just waiting for the phone to ring. **So, get out there!!**

## SHOULD I KEEP A RECORD OF MY SEARCH?

Absolutely! Develop a file system in order to keep track of resumes, cover letters, job leads and other job search materials. Keep track of the names, mailing addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers of your contacts and prospects. Use a calendar to record every contact you make and every follow-up deadline that you set.

The key is to stay organized so that information is readily available to you and no deadline is missed.



## WHAT ARE THE STEPS OF THE JOB SEARCH PROCESS?

Below are a list of job searching steps, the order of which may vary depending on your specific needs and goals.

### 1. SELF-ASSESSMENT

The first step is self-assessment, the process of turning inward and assessing your interests, values, and abilities. Before looking for a specific job, ask yourself the following questions:

- a. *What captures my attention and excites me (interests)?*
- b. *What is important to me and is needed in order for me to be happy and productive at work (values)?*
- c. *What can I do well and truly enjoy doing (abilities)?*
- d. *What have I learned from my academic, paid, and volunteer experiences?*
- e. *Where do I want to live?*
- f. *What kind of lifestyle do I envision for myself?*

The AASC has an online career assessment program for GC students – contact the center to get access.

### 2. EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE

Having a clear idea about who you are, what you want to do, what you can do, and in what environment you want to do it will enable you to develop a clear, concrete job objective. Whether or not this objective is eventually included on your resume, you must be able to clearly articulate what kind of job you are looking for. This will enable employers to better know how to evaluate you for the best job match.

### 3. RESUME AND COVER LETTER

These are the two most basic self-marketing tools for your job search. Often they are a prospective employers first opportunity to evaluate you and are always your chance to really sell yourself. Remember, first impressions are important, so developing an effective resume and a strong, targeted cover letter is essential. See additional documents for help with developing these two items.

### 4. JOB SEARCH PLAN OF ACTION

The successful job search requires a definite and well-developed strategy. How will you develop a list of potential employers and other contacts? How will you contact them and what will you say? What portion of your day and/or week can you commit to job search activities? These and other questions need to be answered in planning your job search strategy. Failing to do so will cost you in terms of time, money, and missed opportunities.

### 5. INTERVIEWS

Getting an interview is the goal of all the above steps. It is common, however, for the job seeker to be so intent on getting interviews that they neglect to prepare for them. Being well prepared for an interview includes researching the organization, being prepared to communicate what you can contribute to that specific organization, and being ready with strong answers to questions that are typically asked of employers. Also, send a thank you note after the interview.

### 6. JOB OFFER

“You’ve got the job!” are the four words job seekers most want to hear. But, then what? You must be prepared to evaluate the offer to see if it matches your interests, values, and abilities as well as your short-term and long-term career goals. Also, it is important to evaluate whether or not the salary offered is sufficient to your situation.

## WHAT JOB SEARCH TECHNIQUES SHOULD I CONSIDER?

Your job search plan of action needs to include a variety of techniques in order to be effective. Again, a key is to be as proactive as possible and to rely less on the reactive methods. Consider these:

TECHNIQUE	INFORMATION	TIPS
<b>Garrett College Advising &amp; Academic Success Center</b>	Assistance available for career planning and changing, exploring careers and majors, developing job hunting strategies, and connecting with employers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not expect Garrett College to “place” you in a job.</li> <li>Take advantage of all the services offered by GC, but do not rely on this source alone.</li> </ul>
<b>Networking</b>	Essentially letting as many people as possible know that you are looking for a job – including family, friends, faculty, health care providers, church members, high school teachers, business owners, neighbors, anyone! Very effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a 30-second script that highlights what you are looking for and your strengths.</li> <li>Ask people for referrals to other people that may be helpful in your search.</li> <li>Attend group gatherings to make additional contacts.</li> </ul>
<b>Cold Calls / Walk-Ins</b>	This technique involves making unsolicited phone calls or visits to organizations inquiring about possible openings, allowing you to demonstrate enthusiasm and make a favorable impression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carefully research the company by reviewing its website.</li> <li>Have a solid self-marketing pitch that emphasizes your strengths and qualifications.</li> <li>Dress and speak professionally.</li> </ul>
<b>Field Specific Listings</b>	These are job announcements found in professional journals, newsletters, and websites – targeted to the field you are seeking to enter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider joining a professional association related to your field; student membership may be reduced.</li> <li>Bookmark field specific websites and use them regularly.</li> </ul>
<b>Direct Mailing</b>	Sending out a large number of resumes and cover letters, without any prior contact with the organization or knowledge of job opening – a common but passive and ineffective strategy. For every 100 resumes you send, expect 11 replies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid using “To Whom It May Concern” on cover letters, research and find the appropriate contact name and title. N</li> <li>Follow-up by phone to determine appropriate next steps.</li> </ul>
<b>Newspaper Want Ads</b>	Want ads do not always yield a high positive return, although some fields and organizations use them more regularly than others. Widely used, yet reactive and only allows access to 10-20% of available openings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subscribe to a paper in the location you desire to relocate; may be available online.</li> <li>Use listings to identify required skills and related action verbs to target your resume.</li> <li>Use as a tool to research salary and hiring trends.</li> </ul>
<b>Employer Websites</b>	Often, companies will list their available job openings on their website – look for Career, Employment, and/or Job icon on the company homepage. You may also be able to apply online.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a search engine to locate.</li> <li>Bookmark and refer to them often.</li> <li>Use the website to research a targeted company.</li> </ul>
<b>Internet Search Engines</b>	Allows you to locate a wide variety of resources that may not be readily available elsewhere. Requires patience and perseverance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find helpful sites by searching on terms specific to your targeted field.</li> <li>Review carefully, check “last updated” dates.</li> <li>Beware sites that market products and require sign-up fees.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Employment Agencies</b>	In Garrett County, the One-Stop Career Center is located at 221 South Third Street in Oakland (301-334-3972). Every state has a public employment agency, free for residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is your responsibility to stay in touch with the One-Stop, not the other way around.</li> <li>Many jobs may not be targeted to college students.</li> <li>Job listings for any state can be found at <a href="http://www.aib.org">www.aib.org</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Private Employment Agencies / Recruiters</b>	Using a private or third party agency may present options unavailable under other circumstances, although it should never replace other proactive strategies. Helpful for temporary or contractual positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always ask about fees and read all contacts carefully. Avoid recruiters that charge you a fee.</li> <li>Be aware of pressure to accept jobs that are not a match to your objective and expertise.</li> </ul>
<b>Luck and Chance</b>	Don’t underestimate the power of the fortuitous circumstances. Luck, however, is most often not something that just happens. Lucky people are those who work to make their job search goals known to others, pay attention to their environment and the possibilities present in it, and actively take advantage of every possibility. Being lucky takes hard work!	

## SAMPLE DAILY JOB SEARCH SCHEDULE

- 8:00 a.m. Get Ready!**  
Needed equipment includes... a clean and quiet area to work without interruptions, a phone, newspaper want-ads, internet access, network contact list, list of companies and jobs researched, paper and pen, calendar, telephone script.
- 9:00 a.m. Gather New Leads.**  
Aim for 10-15 new job leads gathered from various resources.
- 9:15 a.m. Check on Old Leads.**  
Follow-up on calls previously placed, resumes sent, interviews.
- 9:45 a.m. Take a Quick Break!**
- 10:00 a.m. Take Action.**  
Start making phone calls, and plan appointments on your calendar. Write down all actions taken, all appointments scheduled, and all dates on which follow-up calls need to be placed.
- 11:00 a.m. Send Resumes.**  
Mail out resumes and cover letters in response to ads and as promised.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch!**  
Use this time to get ready to make your best in-person impression.
- 1:00 p.m. Continue Job Search, Inside or Out!**
1. Go to any interview appointments and/or drop off your resume and cover letters at the post office.
  2. Apply in person and fill out at least 3 applications.
  3. Set-up informational interviewing appointments
  4. Explore volunteer possibilities.
  5. Check in with the Advising & Academic Success Center and the Maryland Job Service Office.
- 4:00 p.m. Write Thank You Notes.**  
Write and send thank you notes to employers with whom you have interviewed, contacts with whom you have informational interviewed, and people from your networking list with whom you have spoken today.
- 5:00 p.m. Good Job! You're Done for the Day!**  
Pat yourself on the back for a productive job search day! Don't worry... it WILL pay off!!

## Contact Us

Advising & Academic Success  
Center of Garrett College  
Room 519  
301-387-3715  
career@garrettcollege.edu  
www.garrettcollege.edu/aasc

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*“Change can be scary, but you know what’s scarier? Allowing fear to stop you from growing, evolving, and progressing.” –*  
*Mandy Hale*

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## HELPFUL WEBSITES

### [www.mwejobs.maryland.gov](http://www.mwejobs.maryland.gov)

Maryland Workforce Exchange is Maryland’s one-stop on the internet for information and services if you are a job seeker looking for or developing a career plan.

### [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)

Search over 800,000 jobs, build and post your resume and access thousands of pages of career info and advice.

### [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)

The nation’s leading online job network with more than 15 million unique visitors and over 600,000 jobs.

### [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)

The official job site of the United States Federal Government. It is provided at no cost and offers information on more than 14,000 U.S. government job opportunities worldwide.

### [www.rileyguide.com](http://www.rileyguide.com)

One of the most comprehensive listings of employment opportunities and job resources on the internet.

### [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

The world’s largest professional network with 300 million members in over 200 countries and territories around the globe. Connect with professionals in your field.