

Job Search Strategies

Your Starter Kit

Why is it important to plan and conduct an effective job search?

Whether you are looking for an internship or job or making a career change, the principles and the process of conducting a successful job search are the same. Finding a job that is a good match for you and will contribute to your overall career development is a process that takes multiple steps and involves many decisions. An effective job search requires a whole lot more than simply applying to vacancies you find online.

This handout is built to help you on your job search journey using four pillars that are the following: skills, goals, strategy and resources.

Identifying Your Skills

The more you know about yourself, the more power you have to envision a career that will suit you. There are a number of resources you can use to learn about yourself. A good first step can be brainstorming answers to these questions:

- What do YOU **care** about?
- What are you good at (skills, competencies)?
- What do you enjoy doing?
- What experiences have shaped you personally and professionally?
- What have you enjoyed studying?
- What are your **values**?
- What are your **constraints**?

Please see the self-assessment exercises in the 'Handout' section, e.g. Achievement Stories, Career Focus Reflection Boxes, Skills Inventory.

Defining Your Goals

Setting career development goals will definitely make a difference. Clearly-defined goals can be a great driving force, helping you structure your efforts and spend your energy wisely. Setting goals requires reflection and facing questions that may feel complex. For example:

- How do you get “there” when you don’t know where “there” is?
- Dream job: Where do you want to be in five years? How can you identify the steps you need to take to get there? What is the role of internships / traineeships in this process?
- Dream doctoral program: Where is it? Who are the faculty? What research are current PhD students doing? What jobs are graduates getting?
- Friendly environments: Where do you thrive?
- Reality check: How much do you need to earn to take care of yourself and cover your financial obligations?
- Location: Where would you like to be? Where are you sure you can be?
- Timing: How much time can comfortably pass between graduation and when you start work? How much time do you need to invest in PhD applications and what is your back-up?
- Available resources: What information and opportunities can you access through your affiliations and networks?

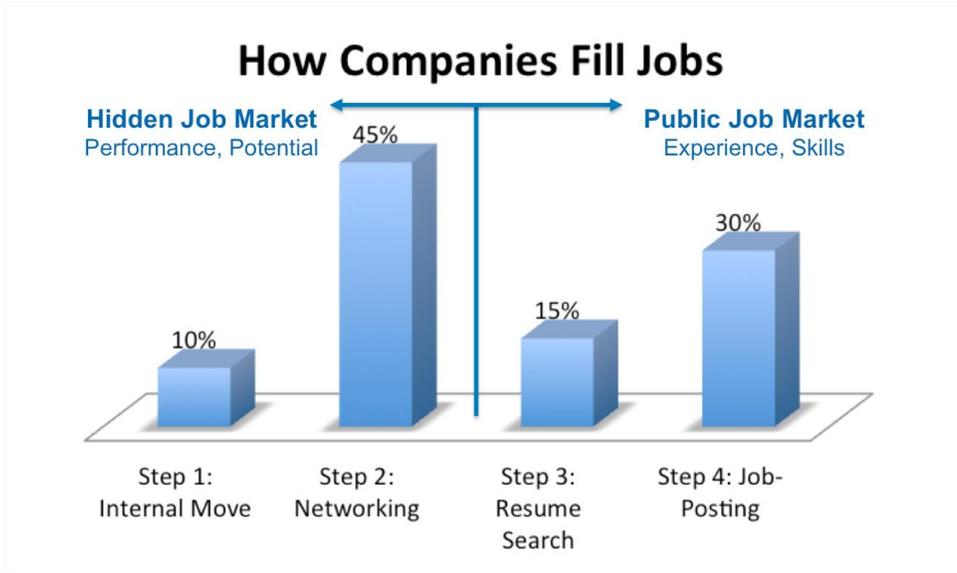
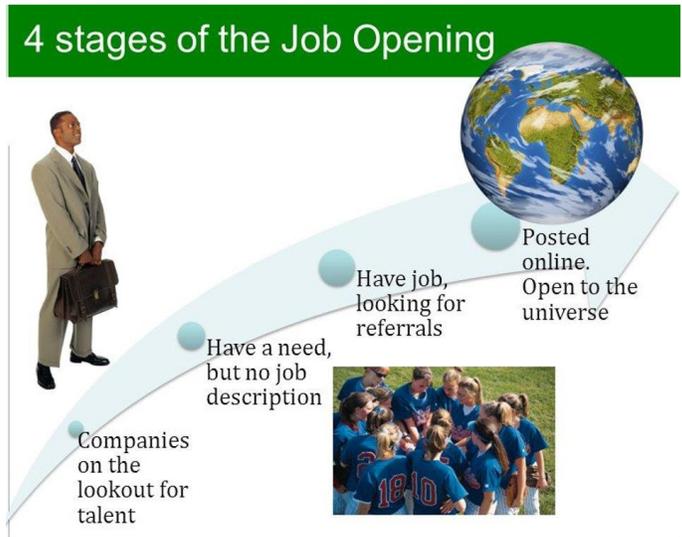
TIP: Consider meeting with your Program Liaison/Career Advisor to discuss this aspect.

Strategy – Reactive vs Proactive Job Search

Many job seekers start out by relying on the passive job search strategy: looking online for open vacancies and applying when they find something they think is relevant to their interests, qualification/s and experiences. Is this enough to find a job or internship that takes you closer to your career development goals? You can flip the script and be proactive about your job search. What does this mean exactly?

- Understanding

Understanding how the job market works can be a great starting point in your proactive job search. Below, you can see two visuals on how job openings emerge and how companies fill jobs. An interesting, oft-cited fact is that 70% of the process belongs to the so-called hidden job market, which means that positions are either filled by an internal employee, through networking or the company searches for a suitable candidate before they open the vacancy for the public.



- Mapping

Making a map can be especially useful when you are looking for a job. This also requires some brainstorming, research and coming up with a list. You can use the following questions as a guide:

- What organizations are doing really cool stuff?
- What are the jobs in these organizations?
- Who works there? What are their career paths? ANALYZE
- What are the pathways you need to follow to get in?
- What are the funding sources? (especially for non-profits / social justice)
- What do you need to learn / know / do?
- Who can you talk to?

- Taking Action

Once you're finished with your map, you can start taking concrete actions. One of the ways to start engaging with organizations/companies or with professionals whose career paths you're interested in is to ask for an Informational Interview. If you cannot seem to find an open position at the organizations/companies you're looking at, don't be discouraged, another way could be to send open applications to them.

- Connecting/Networking

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of networking. You can start networking online using platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter where you can also join online communities and professional networks. For in-person networking you can consider attending events, conferences related to your field of interest or joining professional groups in order to meet people working on the field face-to-face.

Resources

Where can you start and what resources are there to help you? Please see a few suggestions below.

career>next

CEU students and alumni have access to CEU's exclusive career platform, [career>next](#), where you can browse for relevant job and internship/traineeship/fellowship vacancies. The content on this page is curated by the Career Services Team. Furthermore, the platform has a separate '[Resources](#)' section, where you can filter on a number of categories such as job boards, international organizations career pages, internship, career advice etc. We suggest you register and start your job search with this excellent resource.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn has many cool features that you can make use of, for example tapping into the CEU's diverse Alumni Network. Go to Central European University's LinkedIn page and click on the [Alumni section](#). You can filter on Location, Organization, Sector, Studies, Skills and how you are connected.

A number of other resources you can start looking at:

- [GlassDoor](#)
- [Mladiinfo](#)
- [ImpactPool](#)
- [International Development Jobs for Young Professionals - Facebook Group](#)
- [Human Rights Careers](#)
- [EuroBrussels](#)
- [Int.Jobs](#)
- [ReliefWeb](#)
- [DEVEX](#)