

# Job Search Guide

The job search process can feel daunting and requires preparation and patience. This six step approach with resources will help you get started.

**1. Gain a clear understanding of what you are seeking.** Many believe if you are open to any job, you will have more options. This will have the opposite impact on your search, as many employers look for individuals interested in their industry and company. Ask these questions to help focus your search:

- Do you know what type of position you are seeking?
- What are your geographic preferences? To learn more about a particular city, go to <http://www.bestplaces.net>
- Have you considered work and lifestyle values?
- What are your assets in terms of skills and interests?

The following sites can assist you in researching careers that may be of interest. They give information on job duties, skills and education required, salary, job outlook, and similar careers to consider.

- <http://www.bls.gov/ooh>
- <http://www.onetonline.org>

**Note:** You can take an assessment at the Career Planning Office and/or talk with a counselor to learn more about your career interests and options.

**2. Prepare your materials.** Make sure your resume, cover letter, and list of references are up-to-date. Consider the industry in which you are applying and make sure your marketing materials are ready. It is extremely important that you customize your materials to the specific job to which you are applying. Do not submit a standard resume without considering the skills and qualifications being sought.

**3. Understand the nature of the job market and what it means for your search.** The job market consists of job openings that may or may not be advertised. Approximately 80% of job opportunities at any given time are not advertised. Tapping into these jobs requires job search activities outside of simply searching online postings. Networking is essential!

**4. Identify job opportunities.** Use a multi-method approach to identifying job opportunities. Consider incorporating the following into your search strategy:

- Use job posting sites to search for positions, including SUNY Potsdam's BearTracker job posting site (see next page for more information), idealist.org (for nonprofit), usajobs.gov (government), and other common sites, such as indeed.com, LinkedIn, and more. The Career Planning Office subscribes to job posting sites, such as Job Vacancies and Art Search and provides local job listing resources (username: postdamcareer, password: suny). Go to SUNY Potsdam Career Planning website, on the job search page, for these resources. While you will want to apply to job postings using the above sites, we recommend you use other approaches.
- Identify the organizations you are most interested in working and apply via the organization's website; or better yet, talk to professionals working at those particular organizations. The Career Planning Office subscribes to CareerShift and BuzzFile, which are online directories used to identify organizations. Go to the SUNY Potsdam Career Planning website, on the job and internship search webpage, for these resources.

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## 4. Identify job opportunities (continued):

- Spend time networking with family, friends, professors, doctors, ex-lovers! Don't forget about alumni from SUNY Potsdam. Use professional associations to find professional in your field of interest. Use social media sites, including LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

**Do informational interviews** which are NOT job interviews! Grab coffee or go to person's office (in person always best, if possible) and learn about the career path of a professional that is working in a field of your interest. Show curiosity for the person, not a job! Prepare questions ahead of time and be sure to ask for 2-3 contacts at the end of the conversation. Last, send a thank you note and find excuses to keep in touch! This is one of the most effective ways to build a network.

**5. Research organizations.** Given the competition of most positions, it is the well qualified candidate with the most knowledge of the organization's needs and what he/she can offer them, who gets the job. Answer these questions in both the cover letter and in your interviews, "Why do I want to work for this organization?" and "What do I bring that the organization needs/wants?" Review their website, Google the organization and look for articles to read, talk to people who work there, and more. Glassdoor.com gives employee reviews, salary, potential interview questions, and more.

**5. Submit applications.** Below are some tips for submitting an application:

- Always submit a cover letter and resume tailored to the specific position.
- Contact the company, introduce yourself, and check the status of the application.
- Maintain careful records of your job search.

## Register for BearTracker

The internship and job posting system for SUNY Potsdam students and alumni!

- Login to BearPaws
- Click on Student Services & Financial Aid
- Click on BearTracker at the Bottom of the list
- Click on the link to enter BearTracker
- Click on "Job Search Tab" at the top of the page
- Use "Type of Employment" section to search for, **Campus Jobs, FT & PT Jobs, Internships, and more** (You can select multiple types!)