

How to Find a Job

A critical piece of the job search process is knowing where and how to search for positions. This handout describes many different ways to find jobs in diverse organizations.

Employer Preferences

According to Richard Bolles, author of *What Color is Your Parachute*, employers look for employees using the following methods, ordered from most preferred to least preferred.

- Inside the Company: Hiring or promoting from within – inside their company, either a present employee or a temp worker, or short-term contract worker, or volunteer, who is already working there
- Colleagues: Asking colleagues about employees, past or present, where those colleagues work
- Referrals: Asking colleagues about employees they might know of, at *other* workplaces
- Drop-Ins w/ Proof: In an interview, initiated by a job-hunter, asking for proof of what he/she can do
- Contacts: Using a friend or business colleague for a direct introduction to prospective employees
- Agencies: Using an agency – private (college placement offices, executive search firms, etc.) or public, federal, state, or local employment agencies, to list a vacancy
- Ads: Placing an ad in a newspaper, or posting it on the Internet
- Resumes: Reading resumes, in order to decide who to invite in, for an interview

Contacts

As you can see, employers like to hire through their contacts! Most people are hired, at least in part, because of who knows them. Various research studies on this topic indicate that 40% - 80% of people get their jobs through contacts. Below are some strategies for making and using contacts.

- Spread the Word
 - It may seem basic, but as soon as you know you will be on the job market, get the word out!
 - Tell your friends, family members, neighbors, classmates, professors, teammates, previous bosses, and others what skills you have and how you are hoping to use them in a job setting.
 - Keep an open mind about who might be helpful because it's a small world!
 - Ask your contacts to keep their ears and eyes open for opportunities that might be a good fit for you – at their company, in their industry, or anywhere.
- Conduct Informational Interviews
 - Find people who work in jobs, organizations, or sectors that sound interesting to you.
 - Request a few minutes of their time, so you can:
 - Ask them questions about what they do.
 - Obtain ideas about how your skills and experiences may be useful in the world of work.
 - Get advice about how you can make yourself marketable and look for related work.
 - Find referrals to others who may be willing to visit with you about your field of interest.

- People generally love to talk about themselves, give advice, and develop relationships with students so most are happy to participate in informational interviews.
- Informational interviews are NOT job interviews. Do not ask interviewees for jobs!
- Utilize Alumni
 - See if your adviser or professors have a list of employers who have hired graduates of your program or a list of alumni who might be willing to provide career guidance.
 - Husky Career Network is a great way to expand your network.
 - It's a searchable worldwide network of nearly 6000 UW alumni volunteers offering networking referrals and information about their field and geographical area.
 - The network is sponsored by the UW Alumni Association (UWAA).
 - Access is free for UW students and free for alumni who pay UWAA dues.
 - <http://www.washington.edu/alumni/careers/careerconnections/>
- Attend Panels & Events
 - The UW Career Center and other campus groups periodically invite alumni and employer representatives to talk to students about careers.
 - These events provide an easy way for students to develop relationships with contacts who might prove helpful in the future.
 - Various career events - <http://careers.washington.edu/students/studenteventscalendar>
 - Career Discovery Week - <http://depts.washington.edu/careerwk/index.php>
- Attend Meetings
 - Organizations and committees provide a wonderful opportunity for you to meet other professionals in your field who might have job openings, know of job openings or referrals, or provide support for your job search process.
 - Here are some resources to help you locate organizations on campus and beyond:
 - Student government - http://depts.washington.edu/sao/about_stugovt.php
 - Campus student groups - <http://depts.washington.edu/sao/rso.php>
 - Seattle organizations - <http://www.iloveseattle.org/>
 - National associations - <http://www.wois.org/use/occs/>
 - International associations - <http://www.ipl.org/div/aon/>
 - Miscellaneous - <http://careers.washington.edu/webresources/>
- Get Connected
 - Consider joining professional networking sites such as LinkedIn, Spoke, Xing, Ecademy, YorZ, Ryze, Zoodango, or others.
 - Be cautious about content you put on social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook because employers often use the sites to conduct research on job applicants.
 - See if employers that interest you have pages on MySpace or Facebook.
- For more information about developing and utilizing contacts, download materials from the UW Career Center homepage:
 - Making Career Connections - <http://careers.washington.edu/students/workshopsandclasses>
 - Building Your Network - <http://careers.washington.edu/gradstudents/strategiesforsuccess>
 - Working the Room - <http://careers.washington.edu/gradstudents/strategiesforsuccess>

Campus Resources

While using your contacts is your best bet for finding a job, utilizing campus resources is also very effective. Employers often like to recruit from targeted schools through various methods.

- **HuskyJobs**
 - HuskyJobs is a job/internship database managed by the UW Career Center.
 - For many positions, applying is as easy as uploading a resume and clicking a button.
 - The system typically contains 1500-1800 current listings.
 - HuskyJobs is also part of NACElink, so students can access thousands of positions worldwide.
 - Many industries, companies, and fields of study are represented.
 - Access is free for students! Alumni access is free during the summer and available for a nominal fee during the academic year.
 - <http://huskyjobs.washington.edu>

- **On-Campus Interviews**
 - A sub-set of the employers who advertise on HuskyJobs conduct the interviews for their advertised positions in our office as part of our campus recruiting program.
 - Each year approximately 300 employers conduct interviews at the UW Career Center to select candidates for career positions, internships or summer jobs.
 - Campus interviews occur during autumn, winter and spring quarters.
 - <http://careers.washington.edu/students/findjobsandinternships>

- **Employer Information Sessions**
 - Representatives from various employers provide potential job applicants with information about available opportunities (and often provide free food).
 - <http://careers.washington.edu/students/calendar>

- **Career Fairs**
 - The UW Career Center hosts multiple career fairs each year.
 - The big, general career fairs are typically held in April and June.
 - We also organize smaller career fairs for specific industries such as finance, consulting, sales, marketing, management, public service, and non-profit.
 - The Society for Women Engineers, the Science and Engineering Business Association, the National Society of Black Engineers, and the Undergraduate Management Consulting Association are a few of the campus groups that host additional career fairs.
 - <http://careers.washington.edu/students/studenteventscalendar>

- **Departments**
 - Employers and alumni often send job listings to trusted colleagues in specific academic units.
 - Add your name to various departmental listserves and read your emails from said listserves.
 - Check to see if your department has its own online job board, binder, bulletin board, etc.
 - Attend departmental networking events, career fairs, and guest speaker sessions.
 - Let your professors, advisors, and classmates know you are on the job market.

Internet

There are thousands of ways to search and apply for jobs using the internet. While spending some time using online job boards is encouraged, do not use these websites to the exclusion of other job search strategies.

- Employer websites
 - Visit the websites of employers that interest you and look for the Jobs / Careers / Employment / Human Resources page.
- Professional associations
 - Visit the job boards on the websites of professional organizations in your field.
 - Members and non-members alike can often access these job boards.
- General job boards
 - Careers with Social Impact - <http://careers.washington.edu/students/findjobsandinternships>
 - Job listings by category - <http://careers.washington.edu/Resources/WebResources>

Agencies

Job seekers sometimes opt to have professionals help them locate open positions. Temp agencies, headhunters, and professional recruiters can be effective in helping you secure employment.

- Be cautious about paying for these services – the employers who are recruiting employees usually pay the recruiting fees.
- Understand that recruiters’ “clients” are the employers who pay their fees – not the job seekers. Therefore, recruiters may be interested in “placing” you in any job, rather than finding you a job that aligns with your goals, skills, etc.
- Be sure recruiters know what types of positions interest you.
- If you decide to use a headhunter or temp agency, continue using other job search methods as well.
- A list of Seattle agencies is available at - <http://www.bridgewaycareer.com/seattle-recruiters.htm>

Resources

- Bolles, R. N. (2007). *What color is your parachute? 2007: A practical manual for job-hunters and career changers*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.
- University of Washington, Alumni Association
<http://www.washington.edu/alumni/careers/careerconnections/>
- University of Chicago, Career and Advising Services
https://caps.uchicago.edu/resourcecenter/handouts/info_interview.pdf
- Stanford University, Career Development Center
<http://cardinalcareers.stanford.edu/networking/tips/>
- University of California – San Diego, Career Services Center
<http://career.ucsd.edu/sa/GPrepareforNonAcademicJobMarket.shtml>