



# Job Search: New Grad Roadmap

Step-by-step instructions to help you find your first job.

As a new or soon-to-be grad seeking employment, you may be facing your first job search. If you didn't start actively looking at least three months before graduation, or are uncertain about how to reach your job destination, the following will help you map out your job search and the journey ahead.

## Step #1: Make job searching a full-time job

Job searches take time. You need to refine your résumé and interviewing skills, make industry connections, follow up on applications, and more. Plan to dedicate a full day, each day to finding a job.

## Step #2: Find jobs that work for you

Have some idea of the direction you want to take. Not every job posted on the Internet is going to be a fit for you as a new grad. Focus your time on a few jobs that are a good match for your skills rather than apply to every job you come across. First, learn how to correctly read job postings. "Entry-level," "new grad," or "1-3" years of experience means the company is seeking someone still relatively new to the working world. Next, if any of the daily tasks listed in the job description matches your internships or classroom projects, you'll have a better chance of being called in for an interview. While it's absolutely fine to apply for jobs outside of your major, you will likely be a better fit for those that align with your field of study or interest.

## Step #3: Research

Identifying the right jobs for you involves finding the right organizations and industries. Research online business journals, industry publications, even your local paper, to learn about companies that might be a fit. Look into career paths and what type of profession you may want to pursue.

## Step #4: Tailor your application

Once you have identified jobs that match your background, create a customized résumé for each posting, directly matching your skills to the individual application. And, tailor each cover letter you write to target that role.

## Step #5: Pitch professionally

After you have identified the companies, industries, and jobs that interest you, determine how to present yourself as a "good fit." Start by developing an "elevator pitch," a three or four sentence summary of your candidacy. Include your skills and what career(s) interests you. Practice this pitch with friends, family, and faculty until you have it down pat. In addition, obtain feedback on your professional appearance. Introducing yourself, eye contact, shaking hands, body language are all a part of the interview process. Practice answering interview questions, as well as how to best showcase your skills to an audience.

## Step #6: Create a professional online profile

Your virtual presence should be equally professional in appearance. Expect recruiters to search for you online; you want them to like what they see. Create an online portfolio at CollegeCentral.com and professional social media profile that match your résumé. Eliminate any content or photos that might be construed as negative or unprofessional.

## Step #7: Meet people in person

Finally, connect with people in your industry. Networking is an effective tool when looking for a job. In fact, most openings are found through personal connections. Look for local trade shows, professional organizations, and alumni events where you can get to know people in your future field. Your contacts may even include classmates who secured jobs a semester before graduation. Also, visit your school's career office for guidance and resources. And volunteer. It's a great way to stay active and become involved with your local community while you are looking for work. A new connection might lead to your next interview.



### **i** n a nutshell:

New grads, take your job search seriously and be proactive:

- **Treat your job search like a full-time job**
- **Identify your interests and what aligns with your skills**
- **Research organizations and industries to identify jobs**
- **Tailor your résumés, cover letters, and elevator pitch**
- **Create a professional online profile**
- **Network and connect with professionals**

As a graduate job seeker, use your newfound freedom and time wisely to fast-track your job search. Identify what you want and need, and go for it!