THE JOB SEARCH PROCESS
For the New Economy

You need to start long before you ever fill out the first application!
The earlier you start, the more successful you’ll be. This means starting as soon as you know what your major
is. The job search is all about who you know, and you want to make those connections early. Once you start
actively looking for jobs, it can take many months for you to land one, especially in the current economy.

• Early in college: Begin with the end in mind. Start preparing for your job search by doing internships,
building a professional network, joining professional organizations, and learning job search skills.
• At least a year before you graduate: Explore potential opportunities and identify target companies.
• By the start of your final semester: Your job search should be in full swing.

Getting a job is a full-time job. At least, it is if you want to do it effectively. Expect it to be a lot of work, and
plan accordingly. Your success will be directly related to the amount of time and effort you put into your search!

There are only 2 ways to look for a job:
1. The employer looks for you (the Advertised Job Market).
2. You look for the employer (the Unadvertised Job Market). Over 80% of jobs are found here!

THE ADVERTISED JOB MARKET
The Advertised Job Market consists of official job openings that employers are actively trying to fill.

What are my chances of getting a job in the Advertised Job Market?
Not good, even though this is where most people are looking. Even in a normal economy, the advertised job
market only represented about 20% of the jobs out there. Now, that number is even smaller. There are so
many people looking for work, employers don’t need to post jobs because they have people coming to them
before they have a chance to post. Since everyone sees these jobs, when a position is posted, the company
will often get hundreds of resumes in a matter of days. This means tons of competition for you. You shouldn’t
rule out advertised jobs, but you also shouldn’t rely on looking at posted openings as your only search method.

Finding advertised jobs:
Besides checking job posting sites, develop a strategy and look in more targeted places. Check BroncoJobs
for employers looking to hire new BSU grads. Target companies and look on their websites. Join professional
organizations in your field and search their job postings.

Some Job Posting Websites:
• BroncoJobs: http://career.boisestate.edu (click on BroncoJobs link)
• Career Builder (includes Idaho Statesman classifieds): http://www.careerbuilder.com
• Idaho Department of Labor: http://labor.idaho.gov
• Federal government jobs: http://www.usajobs.gov
• Idaho state government jobs: http://www.dhr.idaho.gov
• Boise Idaho Jobs: http://www.boiseidahojobs.com
• Twitter Job Search: http://www.twitterjobsearch.com
• Linkedin: http://www.linkedin.com
• Craigslist: http://www.craigslist.org
• Indeed: http://www.indeed.com
• Dice (tech jobs): http://www.dice.com

Tips for applying for Advertised jobs:
• Your other job search skills (resume and cover letter writing, interviewing, etc.) must be exceptional.
• Targeting your resume is essential- remember, this is all you have to compete with initially.
• Check as many different places as possible, as often as possible.
• Be strategic in your search. Know what you’re looking for and best places to find those jobs.
• Keep an organized record of the jobs you’ve applied for, the application materials you sent, who the
contact person is, etc., and save copy of the job description. You will need all of this later!
• Follow-up on your applications, don’t just click “send” and hope you hear something someday. The
more contact you can make with an employer (without becoming annoying), the better.
THE UNADVERTISED (HIDDEN) JOB MARKET

The Unadvertised or Hidden Job Market consists of jobs that haven’t yet been advertised, and jobs that don’t yet exist- jobs that are created for a particular person. By far, more jobs are in the Hidden Job Market.

You find these jobs through networking. Remember the saying, “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know” (and who knows YOU!)

HOW TO NETWORK

What is a network? Simply, your network is the people you know (also called your “contacts”).

The basic idea of networking to get a job:

• You have a network.
• Your potential employer has a network.
• Your goal is to use your network to connect to the employer’s network.

In other words, you use the people you know to connect to people the employer knows, resulting in you being connected with the employer.

Forming a network: You already have a network. It consists of your friends, family, past and present coworkers, classmates, professors, etc. When you’re looking for a professional job, you need to build a strong network of people in your career field. Use the people you already know, but strategically make contacts by:

• Doing internships or volunteering
• Joining professional and student organizations related to your career field
• Taking any opportunity you get to meet people in your field, like attending conferences or other events
• Getting to know your professors- they often have good connections
• Getting to know your classmates that have similar career goals as you
• Doing informational interviews (This is when you sit down with someone and ask them questions to get information about their job, field, company, etc. This can be a way to get to talk to someone you haven’t been able to connect to otherwise.)

Using your network to build your network: Leads can be difficult to find. If you only focus on finding leads within your current contacts, you’re likely to hit a dead end quickly. Instead, focus initially on collecting names and expanding your network. The basic process is simple. Start with your current contacts. Tell them all that you’re looking for a job, as well as a little about what you’d like to do, and the skills that you have. Ask them if they know anybody you could talk to that might be able to help you. Collect names. Meet with the people your contacts referred you to. Ask them for leads or referrals. Collect names. Meet with those people, and so on. Every time you talk with someone, always end the conversation by asking if there is anyone else they would recommend you talk to.

Get referred! An employer would much rather hire someone who has been referred to them by someone they trust than to take a chance on someone they don’t know much of anything about. A referral can get you an unadvertised job, or it can move you to the top of the pile of resumes submitted for an advertised job. It’s not just important to KNOW people, but to form good relationships, so that people think of you when they hear of an opening, and believe that you will excel at the job. Your best contacts are the ones who are familiar with your abilities and your performance, and are impressed enough by you to want to recommend you to others!

Strategic Networking: In order to get a job in this economy, the random networking people once did (telling everyone you know you’re looking for a job and hoping someone comes up with something for you) may not be sufficient. Strategic networking means having a plan and connecting to people intentionally. To start, you have to do your research, which will include things like identifying organizations you’re interested in, figuring out who works there, and who you need to talk to if you want to get a job there. Next, you will need to formulate a plan for how to reach those people. There are now several online tools that can help you strategically network. For more information on these, turn to the next page.
SOCIAL MEDIA, STRATEGIC NETWORKING, and PERSONAL BRANDING
a.k.a. the NEW Job Search!

Since the economy has changed, so has the job search process. With so many people looking for a job, and fewer jobs out there to find, how do you set yourself apart from all your competition? It can be simply described as 3 basic steps:

1. Have a plan.
2. Get out there.
3. Make a name for yourself.

**Personal Branding:** Remember, you are marketing yourself to potential employers. This means that in order to successfully sell yourself to an employer (a.k.a. get a job), you have to think like a marketing professional trying to promote any other type of product. Part of this is creating your own personal brand, or in other words, creating a name and reputation for yourself in your field. As previously mentioned, employers want a known commodity, not a mystery candidate. You need to make yourself visible to employers in your field as someone with a lot of relevant knowledge and skills.

**Social Media:** There has recently been a huge boom in the use of “social media” websites for job searching because of the ways in which they lend themselves to strategic networking and personal branding. Below you will find a brief description of how 3 different social media sites can help you conduct a more effective search.

**LinkedIn:** LinkedIn was created as a professional networking site, and is now one of the top sites for job searching. It is populated by professionals, job seekers, and recruiters alike. The basic idea is similar to Facebook- staying in contact with others, but with a professional focus. You start by sending requests to people you know on LinkedIn for them to join your professional network. These people are your 1st degree connections. Your network also consists of 2nd and 3rd degree connections- people who your connections are connected to, and who their connections are connected to. The content of your profile is like a resume, including things like education and experience. Having a LinkedIn profile can help you establish a professional online image, and it is often one of the first search results displayed by Google. You can also brand yourself by joining groups related to your field and participating in relevant discussions. LinkedIn has a job search tool which not only allows you to search for advertised jobs, but also strategically network by seeing who you are connected to at the company that is hiring. You can then intentionally contact your friend who is connected to the person at Company X, and ask for an introduction. You can also just search for companies you are targeting and see how you can use your connections strategically.

**Facebook:** Facebook is a social networking site, which was not designed for job searching, but just for keeping in touch with friends. You can use it strategically, though, to stay in touch with friends who might be able to help you in your search, and to keep your network frequently updated regarding your search.

**Twitter:** Unlike Facebook, which is designed for keeping in touch with people you already know, Twitter is designed to help you build relationships with and spread information among people you don’t already know. Since Twitter is relatively new, and wasn’t designed to be a job search tool, its various job search functionalities are still being explored and developed, but here are some current strategies:

- On Twitter, you can “follow” anybody you want, without them having to approve you. Both people and organizations are on Twitter. Target companies you’re interested in and follow them. Target professionals in your field, follow them, and follow who they’re following. Often people/companies will follow you back just because you’re following them. Now you have the ability to make yourself visible to them, which you can take advantage of by “tweeting” info relevant to your field, and joining in relevant conversations. Twitter is another excellent tool for personal branding (so make sure to keep everything you put out there professional and appropriate!). You also have the ability to contact people directly through Twitter without needing an introduction.
- Many companies have started “tweeting” job openings. Follow companies of interest, and use Twitterjobsearch.com to search through jobs that have been tweeted.

Potential employers will Google you and search your profiles, so make sure to clean them up!

*Follow the Career Center on Twitter (BSUCareerCenter), and join our groups on LinkedIn and Facebook!*
SUGGESTED PLAN OF ACTION

1. **Assess yourself.** This is always the necessary first step to a successful job search.
   - What type of work do you want to do?
   - What type of company do you want to work for?
   - What do you need in a job? (i.e. certain income, flexible hours, interaction with people, etc.)
   - What do you want in a job, and how do you prioritize the things you want?
   - What are you good at? What are you experienced in? What skills do you have?
   - What unique contribution could you make to a company?

2. **Research what’s out there.**
   1) **Locate companies** in the area you’re interested in by:
      - Visiting local Chamber of Commerce websites
      - Attending BSU’s Career Fairs
      - Searching the job posting websites listed on the first page
      - Networking with professors, classmates, and professionals, in person and online
      - Using resources available through professional organizations
   2) **Research companies** you’re interested in by:
      - Visiting their website
      - Searching online for articles or other information about them, and following them on Twitter
      - Conducting informational interviews
   3) **Identify needs** that you could potentially fill based on your qualifications and interests.

3. **Formulate a plan.**
   - Identify who you need to get connected to at the organizations you’re interested in.
   - Use tools like LinkedIn to determine how to use your network to reach those people.
   - Develop a plan for how to create new professional connections (getting involved with organizations, interning or volunteering, attending networking events, strategically using social media, etc.).
   - Based on your qualifications and professional goals, decide what your professional image needs to be (your personal brand).

4. **Build your brand** using the tools and strategies described on the previous page.

5. **Look for opportunities.**
   - Look for posted openings by using the sources and strategies listed on the first page.
   - **Network!**
     - Tell everyone you talk to that you’re looking for a job.
     - Follow the instructions on forming and building a network.
     - Strategically use your network to identify unadvertised opportunities.

6. **Make yourself an impressive applicant.**
   - **Develop the skills** to write effective, targeted resumes and cover letters.
     - For advertised jobs, create separate resumes targeted to each particular opening and employer.
     - For networking, create a more general resume targeted to your intended career field that you can give to contacts when you don’t have time to create a more specific resume. Also consider having personal “business cards” made up with the URL for your LinkedIn profile that you can hand out.
     - For contacting companies without posted openings, create resumes targeted to the particular employer, that address how you could fill their needs that you’ve identified.
   - **Always send a targeted cover letter** with your resume when applying for jobs.
   - **Always dress professionally** when meeting with anyone, even if it’s not an actual interview.
   - **Perfect your interviewing skills.**

The Career Center can help advise you in the job search process, as well as help with your resumes, cover letters, and interviewing skills! Call to set up an appointment!
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