

# Developing a Job Search Plan

The typical job search takes 6-9 months...

Start yours early!

## How should I plan for my job search?

**Know yourself and what you have to offer**

*You are more than your major*

**Determine your job targets**

*A focused job search yields the best results*

**Identify a list and learn about potential employers**

*It's up to you to find employers "right" for you*

**Create your resume and cover letter, and prepare for interviews**

*Practice makes a better performance*

**Initiate your search**

*Success doesn't come to you, you go to it*

**Follow up appropriately**

*First impressions count, and so does follow-up*

**Stay focused and monitor your progress**

*Having a plan will keep you on track to success*

**Evaluate and negotiate offers**

*Make sure the job is a good fit*

**Find out more inside this packet.**

Visit our website:  
[www.sc.edu/career](http://www.sc.edu/career)

## KNOW YOURSELF AND WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Consult a staff member to decide if you should begin with career assessments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Identify and list all academic and non-academic experiences:
  - a. List all college education, related coursework, certifications, and specialized training.
  - b. List all your work, student organization, and community service experiences.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Complete the Career Center's **Identify Your Transferable Skills** tip sheet to identify the skills you have demonstrated in the past.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Complete the **Identify Your Personal Qualities** tip sheet to identify words that describe you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Complete the **Work Values** tip sheet to prioritize your top ten working conditions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Meet with a staff member to review all of your assessment results.



### KNOW YOURSELF—RESOURCES

## DEFINE DESIRED JOB TASKS AND EMPLOYER TARGETS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Define your geographic targets.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Complete the **Identify Your Desired Work Tasks** tip sheet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Complete the **Identify Sectors & Industries** tip sheet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Explore jobs you can pursue with your major.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Research market trends to identify which jobs are in great demand.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Meet with a staff member if you need assistance.



### JOB AND EMPLOYER TARGETS—RESOURCES

## LEARN MORE ABOUT POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Develop an initial list of employers that interest you:
  - a. Use the Career Center Library and web resources to identify employers in your area of interest, including **JobMate**, our electronic job posting board.
  - b. Consult with a Career Center staff member about job shadowing, information interviewing, and other forms of networking to learn more.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Prioritize your list of potential employers:
  - a. Use the **Company/Organization Information** tip sheet to research employer targets.
  - b. Thoroughly research each employer's website to learn about its culture, values, and hiring process.



## CREATE YOUR RESUME AND COVER LETTER AND PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Prepare your resume and cover letter:
  - a. Use the Career Center's **Resume Writing** tip sheet and **OptimalResume** program to develop a draft of your resume.
  - b. Using what you've learned about yourself and your potential employers, tailor your resume and cover letter to each job to which you apply.
  - c. Meet with a Career Center staff member to review your resume and cover letter.
  - d. Obtain resume approval for use in **JobMate**, our electronic job posting board.
  - e. Create a separate document using your resume header for your reference list..
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Learn how to present yourself professionally to employers:
  - a. Update email addresses and voicemail messages to portray a professional image.
  - b. Acquire appropriate attire (business suit) for recruitment events and interviews.
  - c. Learn about general professional etiquette to make a positive first impression.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Prepare for the interviewing process:
  - a. Review the Career Center's tip sheets on interviewing.
  - b. Improve answers to potential interview questions by using the Career Center's practice interviewing software.
  - c. Schedule a mock interview with the Career Center to evaluate your performance.



### RESUME, COVER LETTER, AND INTERVIEWING—RESOURCES

## INITIATE YOUR SEARCH

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Consult with a Career Center staff member to identify the most appropriate strategies for finding job openings. Examples include:
  - a. **JobMate**, our electronic job posting board.
  - b. Career Center Library and web resources.
  - c. Classified ads, professional organizations' websites and publications.
  - d. Employer information sessions (please see JobMate for upcoming sessions).
  - e. Job fairs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Consult the Career Center Library resources for additional job searching strategies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Develop a network:
  - a. Brainstorm a list of people who work or know someone in the industry you are targeting: i.e., parents, relatives, neighbors, friends, faculty, former and current employers, social group members and alumni.
  - b. Create your sales pitch: a 20-30 second message to let the employer know your related interests and what makes you a highly desirable candidate.
  - c. Schedule informational interviews with people who may be able to assist you.
  - d. Persevere – it may take 10-12 contacts before you find someone who can help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Establish direct contact with employers through emails, telephone calls, or letters:
  - a. Evaluate employer interactions and identify ways to improve your techniques.



### INITIATE SEARCH—RESOURCES

## FOLLOW UP AFTER INTERVIEWS, CORRESPONDENCES AND CONTACTS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Send thank you letters or emails within 24 hours: review samples in Career Center Library.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Provide requested information (transcripts, references, etc.) in a reasonable timeframe.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Devise a process to keep track of your commitments and follow up with your contacts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Note any hiring timelines and employment cycles for your preferred employers.



### FOLLOW-UP—RESOURCES

## STAY FOCUSED AND MONITOR YOUR PROGRESS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Demonstrate flexibility in your job search and adapt your plan to new job leads.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Develop realistic goals that need to be completed each week.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Document all job search activities and organize information such as contact names, phone numbers, email addresses and important dates.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Accept “dead ends,” learn from your mistakes, and maintain your momentum until you have accepted a job offer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Consult with a Career Center staff member if you are not making progress.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Once you have accepted an offer, remove yourself from other consideration.



### STAY FOCUSED—RESOURCES

## EVALUATE AND NEGOTIATE OFFERS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Refer back to your **Work Values** tip sheet (Part I) to consider the factors most important to you in a position.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Read the Career Center’s **Successful Salary Negotiations** tip sheet and follow up with a Career Center staff member if you have questions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Determine when, what and how to negotiate (keeping benefit packages in mind).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Obtain accurate salary data using the Career Center library and web resources.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Draft and rehearse a script to assist you in the negotiation process.



### EVALUATE AND NEGOTIATE—RESOURCES