

KNOWING WHAT YOU WANT

Probably the most fundamental reason why new graduates have trouble finding a meaningful job is that they have not narrowed down what they are after. With vague goals and unclear focus, they are trying to hit a target they cannot see. The more focused you can be, the more likely it is you will find a good job.

IMPORTANT TOOLS AND RESOURCES

The job search process should be an "attack" on every front possible. Check the newspapers, the state department of employment, contact employment agencies, check company websites, use social media,

APPENDIX: INTERVIEWING FOR INFORMATION

An Information Interview is a meeting you request with a professional who has a job or works for a company that interests you. You want to find out what that person does on the job and to gather information for further exploration of that career. It is not a job interview, but puts you in touch with a role model who can provide you with significant information.

Informational interviewing is an invaluable tool that students rarely take full advantage of. It may be an intimidating experience at first, but it is well worth the effort. Most of us do not know what people actually do day-to-day, though we may think we do. This simple activity will clarify your perceptions, give you a "feel" for an occupation, and provide you with important networking contacts for the future.

Some guidelines:

1. Avoid a phone interview if at all possible; there is no substitute for face-to-face contact.
2. If you ask for a half-hour, keep on schedule unless it is clear the individual wants to go longer.
3. Don't put the person on the spot by asking for a job; that shows a lack of integrity.
4. Dress and present yourself as if you were going to a job interview; though that is not the goal, it may end up being just that.
5. Be sure and send a thank-you note the day after the interview.

INFORMATION INTERVIEWING: QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. How did you decide to enter this field and what steps did you take?
2. What are your activities and responsibilities? What is a typical day like?
3. What do you like best about your job?
4. What is challenging about your job or industry?
5. How and by whom are work decisions made that affect you?
6. How much influence do you have over decisions affecting you?
7. If you could try any other job for a day what would it be?
8. Is there any specific advice you would give to someone entering this field?
9. Are there academic programs you would recommend that would be good preparation for entering this field?
10. Can you suggest the names of other people I might speak with?