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Preface

I've been in the full-time work force for just under twenty years and my partner just under thirty. We've both seen incredible job markets, where people were getting multiple offers sometimes with little effort on their part. We've also seen slow markets or, in the case of the last few years, exceptionally difficult ones, where even experienced, well-educated people couldn't find or keep jobs. I've heard many people blame these up-and-down job markets on the economy or other external forces. This book is not about the economy or any theoretical discussion of why the job market may be robust or weak.

This book is a practical discussion of actionable steps (six of them) that you can take to land a job regardless of the market. Whether the estimate is 25 percent unemployment (which, in the thick of the recession, I've seen cited in the media as the real unemployment rate for certain demographics) or single-digit unemployment, that number doesn't apply to you. For any individual, the unemployment rate is 0 percent or 100 percent. You either have a job or you don't. You either want the job you have or you don't. When you are looking for a job and there is 10 percent unemployment, you just want to be one of the nine people that has a job.

Still, you might think even that one job is beyond your grasp. You think you don't have the right degree. Your school is in a different location than where you'd like to work. Not enough jobs are listed or employers are not visiting your campus. This type of thinking cedes control of your search to outside forces. It is not up to your professors, your school, your career services support, or recruiters to get you a job. This book is about the proactive things that you can do to get yourself a job.

In the first chapter, we'll mention the different types of job searches you'll find yourself conducting: full-time job after graduation, internship, return to workforce, career change, and relocation. The rest of the book is about how, regardless of the type of job search or overall market, you can be proactive and successfully land a job. You don't need any one specific degree or major. You don't need special research ability, although research is one of the steps in our process, as you'll see in Chapter 6 "Step 3: Conduct In-Depth Research". You don't need special technology, though social media and other technology-related tools are also a critical component of the job search, and we'll discuss this throughout and specifically in Chapter 11 "Social Media and the Job Search". What you need to land a job is a structured approach, actionable steps, and the willingness to see this through.

Six Steps to Job Search Success provides that structure with six steps anyone can take to

1. identify the types of jobs they'd like (Step 1: Identify Your Target);
2. position themselves for these jobs (Step 2: Create A Compelling Marketing Campaign);
3. figure out what employers are looking for (Step 3: Research);
4. develop relationships with prospective employers (Step 4: Network and Interview);
5. stay connected throughout the decision-making process and fix any problems that might arise (Stay 5: Stay Motivated; Organized and Troubleshoot Your Search); and
6. complete their search (Step 6: Negotiate and Close the Offer).

Chapter 1: Your Life Dictates Your Job Search, Not the Reverse

If you've picked up this book, you are looking for a job. You might be launching a job search at this exact moment for many reasons:

You are a student:

- You are a student who is graduating into the workforce full time.
- You are a student looking for an internship for next semester or the summer.

You have experience:

- You lost your job or took time off and are looking to reenter the workforce.
- You have a job but want to move into a different industry or have a different role.
- You want to relocate, and your current employer doesn't have an office where you will be moving.

The reason you are looking for a job is important because it changes what you need to find in your next job, as illustrated in Table 1.1 "Reasons You Are Looking for a Job".

Table 1.1 Reasons You Are Looking for a Job

Why You Are Looking	What You Need from Your Next Job
Student: Graduating from school	Create a foundation for your career by gaining solid experience and developing skills Become financially self-sufficient
Student: Looking for an internship	Earn credit for a class or earn money for school Gain experience in anticipation of a full-time job search Convert your internship into a full-time job
Experienced candidate: Returning to workforce	Close the gap in your employment history Catch up on current skills, expertise, and network Create financial stability
Experienced candidate: Changing careers	Get a chance to try a different industry or function Find a role that transitions nicely from what you did before to what you want to do going forward

Why You Are Looking	What You Need from Your Next Job
Experienced candidate: Relocating	Get to your new desired location with little disruption to your career from the move

Why you look for a job also influences the constraints you face when you look:

Timing and deadlines. On one extreme, you have the internship search with a tight, inflexible time frame. If you need an internship for credit next semester, you either get the job by the time of registration or do not. You may need to relocate by a certain date. Your savings may be running out, so you may need to return to the workforce within a definite timetable.

On the other hand, you may have a job that is secure, so you can take your time with your search. You may be an ambitious freshman or sophomore with several years before you graduate and need that full-time job.

Access to resources. When you are in school, you most likely have a dedicated career services office. If you have graduated and have been out of the workforce for some time, you may have little contact with a professional network or support system. You can join an industry association, participate in networking groups, or hire acareer coach to help you create that professional network and support system. Your options for job search support will be different depending on where you live and how much you can invest in your search. People in busy urban areas can more easily find a chapter of a professional organization that matches their interests, like-minded people with whom to network, and career coaches and other professional support resources for hire. In a less-populated geography, you may have to rely on virtual access to professional organizations, networks, and resources. Similarly, your level of financial investment dictates which and how many organizations and networks you can join and what outside resources you can hire. Free or low-cost guidance is available from alumni associations, government agencies focused on workforce issues, and online job boards or career sites that offer guidance and expertise.

Emotional constraints. Certain industries, such as banking and consulting, have very regimented and competitive campus recruiting seasons. Pressure is high as soon as you hit the campus. Someone returning to the workforce after a gap may feel more anxiety or fear than a job seeker with continuous employment. A career changer may feel frustrated at having to break through to a new industry or

function. Table 1.2 "Job Search Considerations" summarizes each of these considerations as it applies both to students and experienced candidates.

Table 1.2 Job Search Considerations

Considerations	Students	Experienced Candidates
Timing and deadlines	Internships have tight deadlines that must be adhered to, often with no room for vacation days or personal plans You may have to relocate for your internship, which can conflict with dorm room requirements Your savings may dictate that you find a summer job, versus an internship, especially if that internship is nonpaid (you may or may not receive school credit) On the other hand, you may be a student who has a financial cushion, and you need not rush into a job just for the compensation it provides	When reentering the workforce, having as few gaps as possible is helpful and requires less explaining and messaging Relocating adds time to a job search, in addition to expense. Traveling to the desired location is both time consuming and expensive Savings may dictate the length of your search and when timing is tight, you may have fewer options to consider Candidates should always consider their "financial cushion," which can provide more options in a search
Access to resources	When in school, you have access to career services, which can function as a career coach of sorts Perhaps your school does not have extensive career services offerings. Perhaps it's best to enlist the services of a professional career coach Investing in a career coach may yield exceptional results that can be paid for using a fraction of your first paycheck	Where you live and how much you choose to invest change your options for job search guidance. Metro areas are more likely to have professional associations and networking groups in your area of interest Free or low-cost guidance is available from alumni associations, government agencies focused on workforce issues, and online job boards or career sites that offer guidance and expertise

Considerations	Students	Experienced Candidates
Emotional constraints	Certain industries have inflexible time constraints (e.g., investment banking, management consulting), so the time pressure is significant Other industries are more flexible and hire throughout the year (e.g., media, communications, technology), but there is still the pressure of networking events, interviews, and follow-ups Some industries (e.g., education, health care) may not come on campus at all, so you would have to manage the entire calendar yourself	When seeking to reenter the workforce, you need to craft a message to explain timing and reasons, which can sometimes be emotional. Harnessing emotion can help develop rapport but it also needs to be balanced with remaining professional Career changers can feel a great amount of frustration trying to break into a new area

It is important that you understand your life situation and how it might influence your search before you begin any job search. The mechanics of a job search are similar across the different scenarios, and we begin the six-step job search process in the next chapter. In this chapter, we outline the impact of your life situation on your job search:

- How your job search changes depending on your specific life situation
- How you can maximize your inherent advantages
- How you can minimize any constraints

1.1 Students: Graduating from School

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand exactly what you need to do to secure a full-time job, if you are a senior who either had or did not have a summer internship prior to graduation.
2. Determine a potential career path if you are a senior with a liberal arts degree, or any type of degree, and you haven't a clue as to what you want to do when you graduate.

Your ability to enjoy your senior year in college can be directly correlated to whether or not you have a full-time job waiting for you when you graduate. You will have four possible scenarios in your senior year:

- **Scenario 1**. You had a summer internship, and you received a full-time offer.
- **Scenario 2**. You had a summer internship, and you have not received a full-time offer.
- **Scenario 3**. You did not have a summer internship, and you need a full-time job.
- **Scenario 4**. You did not have a summer internship, and you do not need a full-time job.

Let's explore each scenario to consider what your next steps should be.

Scenario 1: You Had a Summer Internship, and You Received a Full-Time Offer

If you had a summer internship and have received a full-time offer, you are in a great position. Hopefully, you enjoyed your summer internship and you will accept the offer you've received. If you will choose not to accept that offer, you'll be in a great position to explore other options. But don't waste time, as you'll have a deadline to accept the first offer extended to you.

Next Steps

If you decide to accept your summer offer, your next steps will be to ensure that you complete all of your new hire paper work and that you have all the details necessary to begin working full time. In addition, you should continue to learn more about the company, the industry, the function, and the department in which you will work. Focus on increasing your network. Find other classmates at your school who might be involved in the same function and department as yours, and perhaps some who are joining the same industry. Join a LinkedIn Group that focuses on your industry and your function and start a discussion. Conduct a Google Alert on your job, your industry, and your company so you are more knowledgeable about them.

Ask about entry-level training if it is offered. If it is, perhaps you can prepare ahead of time for what you will be taught. Some companies not only administer entry-level training but also grade your performance

and then share your grades with your manager. You will make the best impression possible if you are ranked at the very top of your class after training.

If you choose not to accept this offer, quickly launch into a search for a full-time job. Your summer internship should have let you know exactly what you liked and did not like about the company you worked with. Use that information to move your job search forward and find the company and industry you are most interested in.

It is rare that a student will decline an offer if they don't have another, but that does happen. If that is the case, Table 1.3 "On-Campus Recruiting Calendar: Seniors and Advanced Degree Students" outlines the recruiting calendar for seniors and advanced-degree students in this position. Also make sure to consult career services or a trusted advisor, taking into account all potential next steps.

Table 1.3 On-Campus Recruiting Calendar: Seniors and Advanced Degree Students

School Calendar		On-Campus Recruiting for Full-Time Opportunities: Seniors Only
Aug.	School begins	Seniors receive or do not receive a full-time offer from summer employers
Sept.	Semester in full swing	Seniors without offers participate in full-time marketing events
Oct.	Midterms	Seniors without offers participate in full-time interviewing
Nov.	Preparation for end of semester; finals next month	Seniors must accept or decline full-time offers
Dec.	Semester ends; winter break begins	
Jan.	Winter break, classes begin mid- to late Jan.	Interviewing for full-time positions begins
Feb.	Semester in full swing	Interviewing for full-time positions are in full swing
Mar.	Midterms	Some interviewing takes place
Apr.	Semester winding down; finals next month	New hire paper work sent to future employees
May	Classes end; some internships begin	New hire paper work due

School Calendar		On-Campus Recruiting for Full-Time Opportunities: Seniors Only
June	Summer internships begin and are soon in full swing	
July	Summer internships in full swing, ending early Aug.	Full-time job begins
Note: Calendar includes general time frames. Consult with your career services office and employers regarding specific dates/months.		

Scenario 2: You Had a Summer Internship, and You Have Not Received a Full-Time Offer

You've strengthened your résumé with a solid internship, but unfortunately, that internship did not convert to a full-time job. This is not necessarily a reflection of your internship performance. Many companies can't predict hiring needs so far in advance that they can offer a job to a student who isn't graduating until months or even a year into the future. It's not the end of the world; you can still achieve your goal of receiving a full-time offer.

Next Steps

The most important thing to know at this point is why you did not receive an offer. Ask for feedback, and ask that it be specific. Recruiters and hiring managers rarely give you interview feedback because our society is litigious, but your past employer should give you very specific feedback. Perhaps you need to ramp up a particular skill. Perhaps you need to be more well read on a particular topic. Troubleshooting to address any feedback you receive will help in the long run.

Check with your career services office. Ensure you know exactly which companies are coming on campus during the year. Research those companies and attend their marketing events. Talk to everyone you can about opportunities and be focused on exactly what you want to do.

Conduct an off-campus job search. Conducting both an on-campus and off-campus job search ensures that you consider all of the companies in the employable universe. Remember, of course, to focus sharply on your target.

When you interview for a full-time position, the interviewer may ask about your prior summer and why you did not get an offer. While answering, always speak very positively about the experience and

emphasize your contributions. Given that, you need to be honest about why you did not get an offer yet at the same time not harm your candidacy. Perhaps it was not the best fit because the company focuses on a market or product outside your areas of interest. For example, perhaps you were a research intern assigned to analyze the technology industry, but you now want to focus on health care. Perhaps your internship was in the right industry but you'd rather do something else within that interest. For example, you were a talent scout, and you now want to be more involved in the technology side of moviemaking. Think of something that enhances your candidacy with the organizations you are targeting now, especially if that something is not relevant to your summer employer.

If you get stuck on this issue, speak to career services or a professional career coach. This could be a tricky situation and you want to avoid losing an opportunity because you didn't have a well-thought-out response.

Scenario 3: You Did Not Have a Summer Internship, and You Need a Full-Time Job

You didn't have a summer internship, but did you do any of the following?

- Did you have a job of any kind during the summer (painting houses, lawn care, working in a retail store, etc.)? Did you volunteer or do any unpaid work? If so, how did you help your employer or organization achieve their objectives? Were you recognized for special achievements, or did you reach any milestones?
- Did you take an interesting class (that pertains to your major?) or did you work on learning another language?
- Did you do an independent project for a professor?

Represent what you did do on your résumé, listing results-oriented achievements.

Next Steps

Determine what you want to do when you graduate. If you do not know, work with career services to identify potential careers.

If you are a liberal arts major, your area of concentration may not translate to a specific job (e.g., philosophy to philosopher), so you may not be sure about your next career step.

A liberal arts education offers much to employers, including communication, research, critical thinking skills, teamwork and leadership skills, flexibility, a global focus, and many, many other skills and strengths. All of these skills can be applied to industries such as advertising, education, health care,

manufacturing, media and entertainment, even areas associated with the business majors (financial services, accounting, consulting, and so forth).

If you've studied English, history, religion, philosophy, or psychology, you have honed your critical thinking skills (for example, comparative literature), you have been innovative in your learning (for example, art history, East meets West), and your writing skills are advanced because many of these courses require extensive research reports.

If you've studied the arts, you could be innovative, have strong presentation skills, be flexible in your thinking, and have an eye for design and graphics.

If you've studied languages, political science, or international relations, your focus is global and you can appreciate the juxtaposition and convergence of the profit and nonprofit sectors.

Economics and technical sciences test your analytical and quantitative skills, in addition to teamwork because many of the courses require group projects.

Although they are not considered "majors," extracurricular activities enhance many of the just-noted skills—creativity, communication and presentation, working with different people and cultures, and teamwork—along with a competitive winning spirit and drive, organization, and dedication.

Table 1.4 "Translating Your College Major to Potential Jobs" may help identify exactly what you want to do.

Table 1.4 Translating Your College Major to Potential Jobs

Major	Your Strategy	Your Ability and Your Focus
English, history, religion, philosophy, psychology	Promote the soft skills and critical thinking that are the hallmark of liberal arts	Research, communication skills, context, critical thinking
Dance, art, music, theater	Demonstrate your creativity and the value of creativity in the workplace	Innovation, flexibility, importance of design
Languages, political science, international relations	Emphasize the value of global studies and cultural awareness	Globalization, convergence of profit and nonprofit
Economics and the technical sciences	Do not take for granted that recruiters know your value, so highlight your analytical skills and market knowledge	Quantitative and analytical skills, business-specific projects and classes
Extracurricular	Position competitive sports, student government,	Teamwork, organizational skills,

Major	Your Strategy	Your Ability and Your Focus
activities	and special interest clubs as opportunities to develop teamwork, leadership, and a multidimensional background	leadership, ancillary skills (fund-raising, budgeting, event planning)

Scenario 4: You Did Not Have a Summer Internship, and You Do Not Need a Full-Time Job

You might have many reasons for not having a summer internship and not needing a full-time job. Perhaps you are graduating college and you plan to go directly into graduate school. You may not need a full-time job; however, it would be worthwhile for an aspiring law student to have a summer internship in a law firm that specializes in an area of law you find especially interesting. Perhaps you want to know what it's like to be a litigator, and eventually a judge, so working in the court system would be a tremendous learning opportunity for you, and a tremendous networking opportunity as well.

No matter what your plans are after school, internships can always help expose you to different opportunities. You may be surprised to discover an interest you didn't think you had. They are certainly invaluable tools for networking. At the very least, you can earn some money, which is always helpful!

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- When you are graduating, you likely will have four different scenarios: you received a full-time offer from your summer employer, you did not receive an offer, you didn't have a summer internship, and lastly, you didn't have a summer internship and you are not looking for a full-time offer. No matter which is your situation, you can take follow-up steps to strengthen your position.
- Business and technical majors may have a clearer idea of what career they want by virtue of having selected a major that translates into specific careers. Liberal arts majors may not have as clear an idea, but there are ways to leverage the strength of a liberal arts education.

EXERCISES

1. If you know exactly what industry you will enter, what "next steps" should you take to better position yourself?
2. If you have a liberal arts education, pair up with another liberal arts major and brainstorm about what industries and jobs could use your strengths. Business majors should do the same.

3. If you are a junior and you received a full-time offer from your summer employer, ensure you know what your next steps are.
4. If you are looking for a summer internship, identify the top ten companies in which you are most interested and use the six-step job search process outlined in the remainder of this book to obtain an offer from your dream employer.

1.2 Students: Pursuing an Internship

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand that internships are extremely helpful in your career because they support what you think you want to do, give you ideas of what you might like to do, or identify exactly what you do not want to do.
2. Understand the timing of the on-campus internship season and maximize your efforts to find a job.

Reasons to Pursue an Internship

Internships are some of the most important experiences you can have while you are in college because they either confirm the career you want or confirm the careers you know you do not want! Students can pursue internships at every stage of their college career. However, the majority of firms focus on juniors or graduate students because they are the feeder pool to a firm's full-time hires. In some large firms in specific industries such as banking and management consulting, 80–90 percent of the summer class receive a full-time offer. The most important internship is the one you secure for the summer of your junior year or between years of graduate school because that internship will most likely result in the extension of a full-time offer. Internships are available for freshmen and sophomores but may require a bit more work to secure because companies are more prone to hiring juniors. Smaller firms or organizations still focus on juniors, but sophomores and freshman have a chance to impress as well.

Timing Considerations

The most common internship is a summer internship, which lasts approximately ten weeks and begins in mid- to late May or very early June and ends in early to mid-August. The ten-week period usually begins with an orientation, and then you will be hard at work pursuing your deliverables. You may or may not have some training sprinkled throughout the ten weeks, but at the very least you should have several opportunities to network throughout the summer.

It is worth noting that some internship opportunities extend past the summer, and others are exclusively labeled fall, winter, or spring internships. Whatever the season, the experience you will garner from such opportunities can be extremely helpful to your full-time job search and will go a long way toward strengthening your résumé and value proposition to your future employer.

Table 1.5 "On-Campus Recruiting Calendar: Juniors, Sophomores, and Freshmen as well as First-Year MBA Students" outlines the recruiting calendar for internships. It may be helpful to use this and sync the dates and months with your school calendar and potential employers so you know exactly what to do at every turn.

Table 1.5 On-Campus Recruiting Calendar: Juniors, Sophomores, and Freshmen as well as First-Year MBA Students

School Calendar		On-Campus Recruiting Schedule
Aug.	School begins	Companies begin screening résumés for summer internships.
Sept.	Semester in full swing	Companies begin marketing opportunities on campus and continue to screen résumés.
Oct.	Midterms	Companies begin on-campus interviewing and some summer offers are extended.
Nov.	Preparation for end of semester; finals next month	Some summer offers must be accepted or declined. Summer intern candidates send résumés and apply for positions.
Dec.	Semester ends; winter break begins	Summer candidates continue to apply for summer opportunities; some are contacted for interviews.
Jan.	Winter break, classes begin mid- to late Jan.	Summer candidates are contacted for on-campus interviews. Interviews begin. Some offers are extended.
Feb.	Semester in full swing	Some offer deadlines are extended. Interviews continue. Some have deadline acceptance dates.
Mar.	Midterms	Interviews trail off. Most summer opportunities have been accepted or declined.
Apr.	Semester winding down; finals next month	Summer new hire paper work sent to future interns.
May	Classes end; some internships begin	Some summer internships begin.
June	Summer internships begin and are soon in full swing	Remaining summer internships begin and are soon in full swing.
July	Summer internships in full swing,	Summer internships in full swing, ending in early Aug.

School Calendar		On-Campus Recruiting Schedule
	ending early Aug.	
Note: Certain industries have more aggressive recruiting timelines than others. For example, investment banking, sales and trading, and consulting are typically the first industries to conduct on-campus interviewing in both the fall (September and October) and the spring (January and February). All other industries typically recruit later in the academic year: technology, marketing, communications, teaching, and so forth. It's best to check with career services, and with your classmates one or two years ahead of you, regarding this schedule, so you are best prepared. Note also that this chart represents only those companies that come to your campus to recruit. A vast number of opportunities are available, but not every opportunity will be listed with your career services office. Searches in the field of health care, teaching, and communications, to name a few, have to be managed off campus, where you are responsible for networking with decision makers, sending your marketing materials (your résumé, cover letter, and so forth), and obtaining interviews. This is challenging, but using the six-step job search process outlined in this book will help keep you on track.		

Internship Performance

It's wise to understand your performance measures during your internship. You might be evaluated on certain skills such as teamwork, communication, specific knowledge, and so on. Larger companies are more likely to have a formal performance review process. They sometimes share the performance metrics with you at the beginning of the summer, so there are no surprises. Some larger corporations also have other interns rate your performance because teamwork is so important. The more you know about your performance measurement, the more likely you are to succeed.

Internship Compensation

The best-case scenario would be to have a paid internship in your chosen field, so you can build upon the skills necessary to position yourself for a full-time job offer. However, in some industries, such as the arts, advertising, media and entertainment, public relations (PR), nonprofit, and government, unpaid internships or those that pay only a stipend are standard. In down economies, even industries that formerly offered predominately paid internships offer unpaid internships. Unpaid internships require that you receive credit for the internship. Research the credit aspect in advance. Each school produces a form or letter on school letterhead that confirms the school's approval in advance of you receiving credit for an internship. Some organizations do not check for proper credit authorization, but many do, so it's best to sort out credit requirements before you start your search.

Paid internships can vary from minimum wage up to a summer salary commensurate with a full-time salary. Some companies pay according to your year in school, for example, some pay $10 per hour for a

freshman, $12 per hour for a sophomore, $15 for a junior. The range is wide and varies by industry, size of company, role or functional area of intern, and geography, as illustrated in Table 1.6 "Internship Salary Differentiators".

Table 1.6 Internship Salary Differentiators

Differentiating Factor	How Salaries Differ
Industry	Private sector often pays more than public sector or nonprofit Banking, consulting, and technology often pay more than advertising, retail, or entertainment
Size of company	Big companies are more likely to have structured programs with higher pay (That said, sometimes small companies offer higher pay to stay competitive.)
Role or functional area of intern	Technical jobs (e.g., IT, engineering, graphic design) often pay more than other roles
Geography	Major metros often pay more than smaller geographies

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The larger the company, the more structured the internship program may be.
- Summer Internships last approximately ten weeks, roughly from late May or early June until early August.
- Other seasonal internships exist, but by far, the summer internship is the most popular. All should be explored, however.

EXERCISES

1. Look up three or four summer internship job descriptions in your area of interest that recruit on campus at your school and determine if you would like to apply. Learn what you need to do to apply via on-campus recruiting. Be especially mindful of deadlines.
2. Identify two or three summer internship job descriptions, in your area of interest, from companies that do not recruit at your school. Learn what you need to do to apply. Be especially mindful of deadlines.

1.3 Returning to the Workforce

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how gaps in employment history affect your hiring potential.
2. Develop strategies for how to talk about gaps in a truthful and positive way.
3. Learn how to overcome other potential obstacles relating to employment gaps.

Employment Gaps Raise Questions about Your Qualifications

Many perfectly good reasons can explain a gap in your work history:

- unemployment, especially in a down market, where job searches take longer
- family leave
- medical leave
- personal leave (e.g., to travel or try something new)

An employment gap raises questions about whether your skills are current, whether your industry expertise or functional knowledge is outdated, and if your network is still intact. When employers hire experienced people, it is often to use their skills right away, to take advantage of their up-to-date knowledge, and to get access to their network. If your skills, expertise, and network are questionable, and an employment gap weakens these three areas, then your value to the employer is weakened. Even if a prospective employer does not view you negatively because of a gap, all things being equal, the employer prefers a candidate with continuous work history to the one with a gap.

Because most of the downside of any gap is related to the job candidate being stale or having out-of-date skills, the length of the gap is very important. A gap of several months is much more easily overcome than that of several years. Multiple gaps also might give employers the impression that your career lacks forward progress and momentum.

The reason for the gap is also important. If you attribute the gap to being unable to find a job, the employer may question how desirable you are to its competitors. If the gap is for family leave, the employer may wonder if you are fully committed. If medical reasons kept you from working, the employer can legally only verify you are able to do the job in question, but this doesn't mean the employer won't wonder silently if you will be at your best. Finally, if your gap is due to personal pursuits, the employer may wonder if you are truly back for good or just biding time until your next adventure.

Take Control of the Message behind Your Gap

The more an employer wonders what's behind your employment gap, the more negatively they might view your circumstances. You must be specific and deliberate in how you message the reasons behind your gap.

Be empowered about your choice to leave. When you talk about why you took time off, don't sound sheepish. Don't denigrate your experience. If it was a layoff, employers aren't expecting you to be happy about being laid off, but you should, at the very least, stay composed and matter-of-fact. Simply state there was a layoff. Then move the conversation onto the present in a positive manner. Reiterate your interest in the current opportunity, rather than showing regret, anger, or any other lingering connection with your previous employer.

If your leave was medically related, you do not need to give details. Simply state you had a medical issue that needed to be taken care of, but, thankfully, you are well now! A future employer welcomes hearing that type of message.

Give detailed examples of what you accomplished and learned. If your gap is due to a layoff, don't talk about your job search activity as the sole focus of your time. Talk about how you are keeping your skills and network current. Talk about what you've read recently as a signal that you are keeping abreast of the industry. Stress the positive in all that you have been doing.

Translate your time off into experience your prospective employer will appreciate. If you took a family leave, don't focus on your parenting skills unless you are interviewing for a relevant position with children. Focus on how you coordinated playgroups, which shows organization, management, and attention to detail. Mention your fund-raising for school programs, which shows sales skills. If you took a leave to pursue a personal interest, make a case for how that experience contributes to your next role, for example, extensive travel might translate to international awareness and cross-cultural savvy.

Whatever the reason behind your gap, position it in a positive, optimistic, forward-thinking way. Perhaps the gap gave you the perfect opportunity to redirect your career to exactly what you are now most interested in. Use the reasons for your gap to make the case for why you are a strong candidate.

If you are having a tough time explaining a gap of any kind, find a resource, such as your school's career services office, mentor, or coach to help you craft a meaningful, impactful message.

Convince Yourself First to Help Convince Prospective Employers

Are you 100 percent convinced that you are ready to return to the workforce after your time away? If you are looking for a return job to be a place where you can learn on someone else's payroll, then you are not

making the most compelling case for why a prospective employer should hire you. Get ready to work before you return to work.

Make sure your skills, expertise, and network are up to date. Use Excel to maintain your household budget so you can keep that skill up to date. Read trade journals dedicated to your industry and functional area. Join professional associations in your industry and functional area. You may want to volunteer so that you update your skills, expertise, and network in a working environment. These suggestions are useful to everybody in the job search, but for a candidate with a gap in employment, maintenance of your skills, expertise, and network is even more critical.

Make sure you have the financial cushion to sustain a longer search. It may take a while to rebuild your skills, expertise, and network and to convince prospective employers this has occurred. You may want to take temporary or project work even in an area unrelated to your target field to ensure you can support your financial obligations during your search.

Do you show the confidence that results from being 100 percent convinced you are ready to return to the workforce after your time away? If you doubt your own skills, it will be difficult to convince others. Make sure that you work on your story, examples, and reasons for why you are the best candidate for your target job.

If you are just settling back into your field after time away, your personal support network might have fallen away. You might not have a daily routine in place that keeps you motivated and active. Make sure you rebuild your environment to support your job search. Professional associations, networking groups, alumni chapters, mentors, or coaches may help with your confidence and emotional support.

If you have unresolved personal issues or extreme anxiety, frustration, or other emotional constraints, then you might consider enlisting a therapist or counselor to help you deal with these issues. Remember that it is not just the tactical issues of your job search that need care and attention. Make sure you tend to your emotional needs.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- You have reasonable explanations for taking time off from your career, including a layoff, medical leave, family leave, or personal leave.
- Your skills, expertise, or network might become out of date in your absence, or prospective employers might assume that has happened.

- You need to make a strong case for why you took time off, how you benefited, and how the employer will benefit.
- You also need to make sure you have skills, expertise, a network, financial cushion, confidence, and a support structure to make a successful return to the workforce.
- You might consider seeing a therapist or counselor if you have unresolved emotional issues pertaining to your leave.

EXERCISES

1. If you are returning from the workforce, write your story about why you took time off. Then edit your story by half and again by half, until you have the three top points of your time away. This is your compelling and concise message.
2. Review your time off month by month or year by year and itemize specific accomplishments. Use a job description for a job you are targeting and make a case for how your accomplishments during the gap translate to the target job.

1.4 Changing Careers

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how career change is different from a traditional job search.
2. Get strategies for how to modify your job search to account for a career change.

Transitioning from School to Work Is the First Career Change

In a way, we are all career changers because the transition from school to work is a career change. You have a different role (from student to whatever your new job is). You are in a different environment (unless your new employer is an institute of higher education). You might even be in a different geography because many people go to school in a different place from where they settle.

Sometimes the career change is more pronounced, such as an executive who decides after decades of experience that she wants to try something new. Martha Stewart's early jobs were in financial services, not hospitality. You may have built up your expertise and accomplishments in an area very different from where you want to be working.

Changing Careers Is Different from Changing Jobs

When you change jobs, you do essentially the same role in the same industry. If you are a hotel concierge for a Hilton property and then move to a Sheraton hotel, this is a job change. If you are a hotel concierge for Hilton and become an office manager for an architecture firm, this is a career change—you are doing a different role in a different industry.

In the subsequent chapters on job search, you need to execute the same six steps as other job seekers. In the areas of marketing yourself and talking about yourself in networking and interviewing situations, however, you won't be able to rely on your past track record for examples or evidence of how you are suitable for the job. This doesn't mean you should simply ask prospective employers to take a leap of faith and trust that you will learn. Instead, you should do enough preparation that you fit in with the new area you are targeting.

Changing Careers Successfully Means You Look Like You Aren't Changing Careers

Essentially, you want to make yourself equal to someone already doing the job, so you don't want to appear like a career changer, but rather already a career insider. While you might not have a specific employment situation to point to, you can develop the skills and expertise of an insider by volunteering or consulting in that new job area.

A student might point to her work as a tutor when she interviews with schools for teaching positions. An aspiring marketer might highlight his role in the advertising campaign for his school's homecoming event. A more experienced executive who doesn't have the campus opportunities of clubs and extracurricular activities can look at community organizations for opportunities to volunteer.

As you go along the six-step job search process, pay close attention to Step 3, Conduct In-Depth Research. If you can showcase your understanding of your new target area by your exhaustive research and grasp of trends, challenges, and competitor information, then you will be valuable to prospective employers.

Changing Careers Requires Additional Search Skills Compared to Changing Jobs

Career changers have more convincing to do and need additional search skills. This means that the career changer's job search will be different:

It will likely take longer. You have to establish a track record in your new area. You have to find people who will listen to your story. Students should start their job search long before graduation. They can use the years in school to build a track record in areas where they might want to work after graduation. In the six-step job search process, step 5 includes strategies for maintaining long-term motivation, which also would be particularly helpful when changing careers.

It may be more expensive. A longer search means that you have no money coming in from your new job. If you have another job while you are looking, that might be fine, but if you are unemployed you have to factor in enough cash to last throughout the longer search.

It might require additional education or training. Depending on the new job requirements, you might need a specific degree or certification you don't already have. Experienced professionals might consider taking advantage of tuition benefits at their current employer to learn new skills while still at their old career. Students should look at specific courses they can take before graduation to enhance their marketability.

You have to hustle more. Because you don't have the track record in other workplaces, your résumé won't demonstrate a track record. If all prospective employers know about you is your résumé, you likely will not be seen. Therefore, you must network and get in front of people to have a chance to tell your story. In the six-step job search process, step 4 focuses on networking and interviewing, which will help with the hustling, as well as crafting a compelling story about your career change.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Changing careers is different from finding a new job in the same area, but we have all done it at least once, when we moved from school to the workplace.
- Changing careers requires you to convince prospective employers that you can do the job even though you don't have a track record at another workplace.
- Making a compelling case is easier when you are already doing the job (e.g., as a volunteer or consultant) and have the skills, expertise, and network in your new area.
- Having additional search resources and skills will help you successfully execute a career change. You need more time, more money, more (or different) credentials, and more hustle.

EXERCISES

1. If you are a student, take out your transcript and résumé to date and think about what types of jobs your history suggests. If you are not sure, get a group of students to do this exercise together or ask a trusted mentor to join you. If the answers you get are not areas of interest, list related courses you can take or experiences you can get before you graduate.
2. If you are an experienced professional considering a career change, map your existing résumé to a job description in the area you are targeting. What is missing? Make a list of action items with a timetable for how you can fill in the gaps.
3. If you have assumed that you need specific job experience or a specific degree, call a professional association for your area of interest and ask about typical member profiles. Check your assumptions before adding items to your to-do list, especially additional schooling.

1.5 Relocating

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand what is different when you are looking for a job based in a location other than where you are.
2. Get strategies for how to successfully complete a long-distance search.

Conducting a Job Search from a Different Location Presents Unique Challenges

You might be attending school in a location that is different from where you want to live after graduation. You might have personal reasons for wanting to relocate now. You might want to experience working in a different country. A number of positive explanations might exist for why you need to conduct a long-distance job search. This doesn't make it any less challenging:

Your network and support system may be smaller. Your contacts are more likely to be where you live. In the case of a long-distance search, you won't have as big or strong a network in your target geography.

You have additional planning and scheduling constraints due to travel. You need to travel to your target geography several times during your search. Phone interviews and networking meetings are fine to start, but you absolutely have to meet people in person during your search. Planning and accommodating travel into your schedule are concerns you must address if you are a job seeker who is relocating.

Your long-distance search can be expensive. Some employers will pay for interview travel, but even then, only at the later stages of an interview. For networking or exploratory interviews, you need to foot the bill. In addition, some but not all employers pay for relocation. National conferences or career fairs in your target geography give you a chance to meet and possibly interview with prospective employers. You need to budget and plan for the fees and travel accompanying these resources.

If you are relocating internationally, you have the added complexity of different time zones, different currencies, different employment laws, and different job search protocols. Imagine a search for someone in Asia wanting to work in the United States or vice versa—even the simplest phone call needs to be planned due to the time difference. When you research salaries or even company or industry revenues, you will be dealing with a different currency. You also have to check how you will be classified when working abroad—sometimes you can be paid in your home currency. You need

to research what visa or other authorization you need to work in a different country. Finally, your job search tactics need to take into account cultural norms abroad.

For those students who wish to return to their home country, perhaps you have friends and family who can help to make connections. You will want to use your time wisely when you travel back home during breaks and holidays, and arrange interviews and meetings far in advance. International students who want to stay in the United States after graduation are presented an entirely new set of issues. Obtaining permanent authorization to work in the United States can be complex because the government has caps on work permits that are often reached by the vast number of international students who want to stay in the United States. In addition, certain visas allow for one year of work in the United States (H1B), and extensions can come with those visas. Students should speak to the person in charge of international students or to career services for advice on these issues. You might also consult an employment lawyer who is well versed in visa requirements. A good job search strategy would include researching and then targeting companies that will hire international students who are not authorized to work in the United States on a full-time basis.

Searching Long-Distance Requires Extra Time, Expense, and Activities

You still need to execute the six steps of the job search process, but with these additions:

Plan time and budget to visit your target geography several times over the course of your search. If you are a student, consider using your academic breaks in your target geography. If you are employed, set aside vacation time to make these trips. Budget for these additional travel expenses as you plan your job search.

Set specific dates for when you will be in the target geography. It is helpful if prospective employers know when you will be in the area. You might convince employers or at least networking targets to meet with you because you are rarely in the area.

Make sure you are clear about time zones. You want to correspond during normal business hours for your target. If you are in the United States and targeting Asia, this means you have late-evening search activities. When you are scheduling within a different time zone, be vigilant about expressing what time zone you are referring to when you propose or confirm times.

Research visa, work authorization, and other legal issues as soon as your target geography is identified. Paper work often takes longer to process than you expect, and you do not want to find out

you have expended effort for an inaccessible location. Remember to consult with international student affairs, career services, or an employment lawyer well before you start your search.

Research cultural nuances and exactly how the job search is conducted in the geography you are targeting. This might be obvious for international searches, but there might also be nuances in different regions of the same country.

Account for extra time to be deliberate in your search. When you are in a different geography, you will not have the luxury to drop in at a networking event you heard about at the last minute. Conferences and career fairs have deadlines for registration. The immediate people around you will likely not be connected to your target geography. You will need to be proactive and find resources relating to your long-distance search.

Consider Moving before You Get a Long-Distance Job

Employers do not want to waste their time on candidates who then decide not to move. If you have a specific date for when your move will happen, this helps convince prospective employers how serious you are about moving. If you offer to pay for your interview travel, this also signals to employers that you are serious about their geography. (Employers don't always pay for interview travel, anyway.)

Some job seekers might make their move contingent on getting a job in the area, and financially, this may make sense, but it presents the chicken-and-egg problem: employers want to know you will definitely move before they consider hiring you, but you want to know they will give you a job before you consider moving. People do get jobs before they have physically moved. However, if your job search has stalled, you might want to consider moving to your target geography because it is easier to look for a job in the same place you live.

Getting an address or phone number that reflects your future geography can signal to employers that you are already there. This helps you with employers who won't consider out-of-area candidates. However, this may hurt your chances for relocation reimbursement if you need to move for the job and would otherwise have qualified had you not suggested you were already there.

Even hypothetically planning the move will help you personally, as it confirms whether you can indeed move. If you own a home, can you sell it in a timely way? Have you run the numbers on relocation costs and your new cost of living in the target geography? Are you emotionally prepared to uproot? It's one

thing to imagine that you would be open to relocating, but once you are in the thick of your job search, you want to be sure that you are spending time on geographies that are feasible options for you.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A long-distance job search adds complexity to your time and budget for your job search.
- Plans for travel or even an advance move to your target geography are things you must consider.
- For international job searches, be careful of different time zones as you plan, and be prepared to accommodate for different employment laws and cultural norms.
- With proper planning and the willingness to accommodate the additional work of visiting and researching your target geography, a long-distance job search can be successful.

EXERCISES

1. Make a list of the geographies you are considering for your search. How serious are you about moving there? For the strong contenders, run the numbers on travel to and from the area. Plan a trip so you know where you would stay and how you would get there. Look at a local paper for the geography (or online at Craigslist if it's available for the area) and check prices for housing, food, and so forth.
2. Find networking and support resources in your target geography. Bookmark the Chamber of Commerce sites or find local chapters of national industry or functional associations. Join a local chapter of a professional association so you can start building a network in that geography.
3. Research the visa and work authorization issues if you are considering international relocation. Make a list of resources you can consult for the legal information you need.

1.6 Chapter Review and Exercises

This book will give you the tools necessary to execute any kind of job search you need at any point in your life. A successful job search begins with understanding your current life situation. Knowing your goals and how each job can help you reach those goals is critical to your confidence and emotional level during a job search. Your current life situation and the reason for your job search represent the variables in your search. The six-step job search process that is covered in the subsequent chapters represents the constant, or the framework, from which you launch your search.

Whether you are a student interested in a summer internship or your first full-time job or an experienced professional returning from a leave or changing careers, this book gives you a job search methodology to get that next job.

There is much to consider when making a change of any kind in your life and career. Timing is important, such as campus recruiting deadlines or a specific moving date. Timing is a factor in another sense for individuals with gaps of employment on their résumé. Access to resources varies over time because you may be a student with great career services support or out of the professional workplace on a leave and feeling more isolated. Emotions vary because some job searches are more stressful than others: the regimented campus recruiting programs of banking and consulting firms; the career changer looking to fit in; the unemployed worker under a cash crunch.

Remember that your job search changes depending on your specific life situation. Knowing that your life influences your job search, adapt your strategy accordingly. Maximize your inherent advantages. Minimize any constraints.

Chapter Takeaways

- You can find yourself conducting a job search at multiple times in your college career. In your freshman, sophomore, and junior years, you will be searching for internships. The internship of your junior year can lead to a full-time job offer.
- While in college, you should know about and adhere to a recruiting schedule because it can facilitate getting internships and full-time jobs more easily.
- Liberal arts majors, by nature of a wide curriculum, may have a more difficult time deciding what career will be best for them. A liberal arts education affords many strengths that can be used in a job search, when positioned properly.

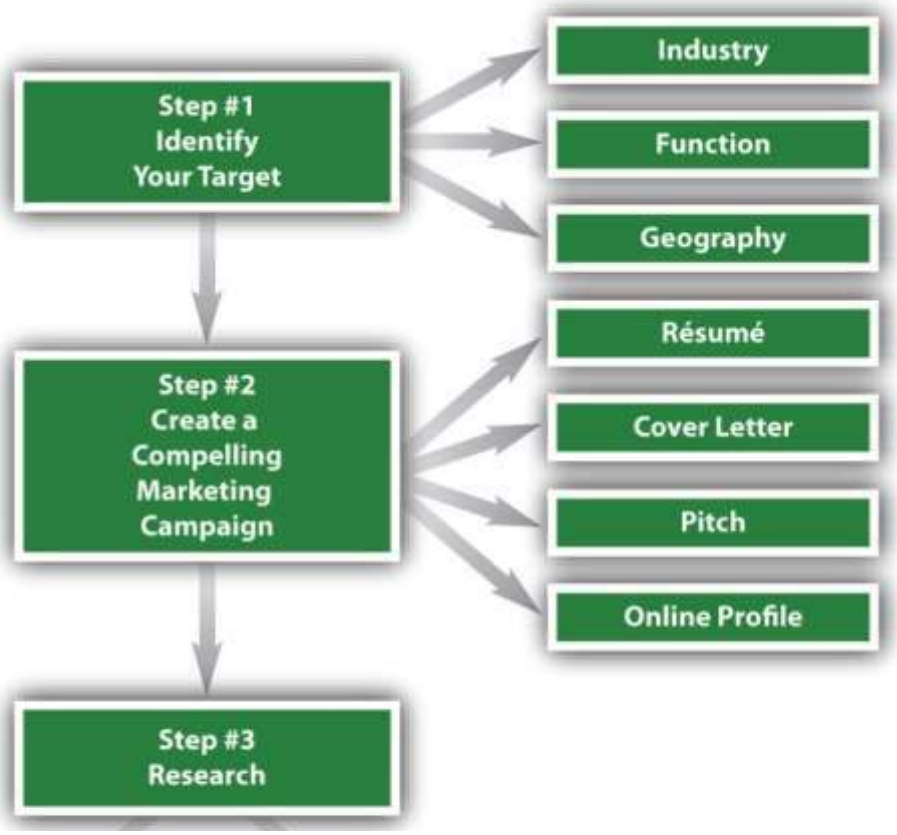
- Summer internships can be structured or unstructured. The most structured internships include an orientation and performance reviews, with multiple performance measurements.
- Gaps in your employment history can affect your hiring potential, but that risk is mitigated when you explain them strategically.
- Career changes are possible when you bridge the gap with skills you have developed in your current job with those same skills needed in your desired job.
- Long-distance job searches can be complex and you need to budget time and effort to execute them successfully. International job searches are even more complex because you need to take into account different time zones and different employment laws.

Chapter Review

1. Why do your life situation and needs dictate your job search and not the reverse?
2. What is the most important internship of your college career? Does it occur in your freshman, sophomore, or junior year?
3. What should you do if your summer internship in your junior year does not convert to a full-time job offer?
4. What should you do if you aren't sure what you can do in terms of a career?
5. If you've left the workforce to care for a parent or family member, what is the best way to explain the gap in your employment history?
6. Why is becoming a career insider the best way to change careers?
7. How would you go about changing industries? For example, how could you move from the communications industry to the financial services industry?
8. How can you execute a long-distance job search successfully?
9. What are some key factors to keep in mind if you want to conduct an international search?

Chapter 2: Overview of the Six-Step Job Search Process

Figure 2.1 The Six-Step Job Search Process



Overview

The What and How of Looking for a Job

In the previous chapter, we talked about the *why* of looking for a job—the reason and the life situation that cause you to search now. This is the variable component of your job search as it changes over time—your next job search may well be for different reasons.

In this chapter, we introduce the six-step job search process, or the *what* and *how*of looking for a job. This is a constant structure for your job search, regardless of the reason that may be prompting you to search.

While the specifics of the *what* and *how* you look for a job will differ based on your job search technique, personality, and the job market, all job searches share three common characteristics:

1. Job seekers want something (likely more than one thing) in their next job.
2. Job seekers meet with prospective employers who can provide these things.

3. Job seekers and employers decide to work together.

Whether it's an internship, a full-time job, or a career change, every successful search progresses through these three stages. Therefore, if you can move through this progression, taking into account your individual circumstances, then you will meet with job search success. This book breaks down the previously listed job search progression even further into *six* concrete steps you can take to get the job you want:

1. Identify your target.
2. Create a powerful marketing campaign.
3. Conduct in-depth research (of jobs, companies, and industries).
4. Network and interview.
5. Stay motivated and organized and troubleshoot your search.
6. Negotiate and close the offer.

Step 1 is where you define what you want. Step 2 is where you attract prospective employers. Step 3 is where you learn *in detail* about prospective employers so you are prepared when you meet. You likely have done some general exploration into industries, companies, or jobs over your lifetime, which gives you a sense of what you want (for step 1). The research in step 3 is about diving deep and gaining specific knowledge and expertise into your short list of targets. Step 4 gives you the technique for networking meetings and interviews. Step 5 keeps you on track. Step 6 gives you the techniques to negotiate and close an offer—that is, finalizing the deal with an employer who wants to work together.

Follow the six-step process to ensure you are doing everything you need to do to get the job you want. Having a process keeps you moving forward to your end goal.

2.1 Why You Need a Process

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Better understand how you can use the six steps.
2. Recognize the importance of flexibility in the process so you can adapt to job market conditions.
3. Lay the foundation for getting started on your job search.

The Six Steps Are Meant to Be Followed Sequentially

The six steps of the job search process are laid out in sequential order so you can follow them one at a time:

- You need to know what you want (step 1) in order to act on your job search.
- You want to have your marketing material in place (step 2) before you meet with any prospective employers.
- You want to research jobs, companies, and industries (step 3) to prepare for meeting prospective employers. This is detailed research into trends, challenges, culture, and other nuanced information. Some of this research will entail speaking to people in the areas you are targeting for your search, so you want to have your marketing ready to be shared.
- You network and interview (step 4) with prospective employers you discover from your research.
- You have to stay motivated and organized (step 5) as you juggle these meetings and absorb all the information you are learning. At this point, you may also see some problems with your search that need troubleshooting (also step 5).
- All these networking meetings and interviews culminate in a job offer that you negotiate (step 6) with your future employer.

Many job seekers are overwhelmed at the beginning of their job search. There seems to be so much to do—résumés, interviews, and social media. It is not surprising that many job seekers are afraid of networking!

A sequential job search process means that you don't have to worry about what comes next. Focus on where you are for your search, and give yourself time on that step. Before you worry about résumés (or other items in step 2), let yourself explore possibilities, ideals, and desires (step 1). Before you get too anxious about interviewing (step 4), know that you will have the preparation of knowing yourself (step 1),

positioning yourself effectively (step 2), and learning about the people and companies you will meet through in-depth research (step 3). There will be time for the job search to progress.

The Six Steps Also Overlap and Should Be Done Concurrently

However, as you move through your job search sequentially, this doesn't mean that you never revisit what you've already done. For example, if you are at the stage where you are meeting people (step 4), you are collecting information from these meetings. You might learn that a particular skill or experience is even more important than you initially thought. You may decide to go back to your marketing (step 2) to highlight these items even more in your résumé or structure future cover letters in a different way to emphasize this new information. These marketing changes will happen while you are still interviewing. In the thick of your job search, you will be juggling the six steps *concurrently*.

You might be juggling different job search targets, each of which is at a different stage. For example, you are interested in sales positions in both the technology industry and the pharmaceutical industry. You start your search focusing on technology companies and you are now at the interview stage with several of them. You have traction in this target, so you add pharmaceutical companies to the mix. You want to research these more before approaching them for interviews, so you are at step 3 for pharmaceuticals, but at step 4 for technology.

While you want to follow the steps sequentially, recognize that there will be instances in your search that the steps are revisited and therefore taken out of sequence. This is a natural part of the search process as you interact with people and situations evolve. Be flexible. Know that you will be learning things along the way—information about jobs, companies, and industries that aren't advertised—and gaining feedback about your skills and experience. You want to adapt your job search process to these new pieces of information.

Starting on the Six Steps Requires a Solid Foundation

The six-step job search process gives you tactics for how to get from where you are to your next job. It is based on the mechanics of how the job market plays out between employers and job candidates. This is important because job seekers often don't know what to do to secure a job. They may know how to do the job—that is, they have the selling and communication skills and experience for the sales job itself—but *getting*the job, convincing someone to hire you, is different from doing the actual job. It is the

difference between being a good driver and being able to pass the road test. You want to prepare for the road test (in this case, the job search process) in order to get a chance to drive.

But these tactics of the six-step job search process assume you have some fundamentals in place. Getting your driver's license also assumes you have certain fundamentals—for example, knowledge of traffic laws and proper eyesight. Here are some key fundamentals you will need to launch your job search:

- Confidence (100 percent belief you will get a job and a positive attitude)
- Communication skills (written, verbal, presentation, and listening)
- Poise (dress, manners, and body language)
- Resources (time, space, office supplies, budget for clothes, transportation, etc.)

With these fundamentals in place, you can use the process to take you through the mechanics of your search.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The six steps of the job search are sequential because one step leads into the next.
- It is helpful to follow the sequence so you are not overwhelmed by doing everything at once and so you can build a progression.
- The six steps of the job search are concurrent because each step influences the others.
- It is helpful to allow the six steps to overlap so you can use the information and feedback from each step to strengthen and refine the others.
- The six-step process assumes you have some fundamental skills and resources in place, including confidence, communication skills, poise, and physical resources.

EXERCISES

1. Looking at the six-step job search approach, what step(s) do you feel most comfortable with? Least comfortable with? Each step will be detailed in subsequent chapters, but you may want to budget your time to focus on the ones where you are most uncertain.
2. Do you have some job targets in mind? An entire chapter describes how to specify your target even further (or to elicit targets if you can't think of any). Make a list of your interests right now. Think about how the six-step job search process would apply if you were looking for a job in your areas of interest.

2.2 Prerequisite 1: Confidence

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Define confidence in the context of the job search.
2. Learn different strategies to build confidence.

You Must Be Confident Your Job Search Will Be Successful

If you are waiting until you get a job as proof that you can get one, this *prove it* attitude will kill your search. You will appear negative and unattractive to employers. You will get derailed by the inevitable obstacles and drop out along your search. You may not even get started if you believe that your efforts will be futile.

Having confidence in your job search means two things:

1. You believe you will get a job. You know with 100 percent certainty there is a job somewhere out there for you.
2. You believe you will get a job you want. You have a positive attitude about working. You are excited at the prospect of doing the job you are targeting, in the industry you are targeting, and for the companies you are targeting.

You have to know you will be successful, and you have to want that success. If you have just one of these two things, this is not sufficient to project enough confidence in your job search. If you believe you will get a job, but don't believe it will be something you want, you will appear anxious, frustrated, and full of dread. If you are excited about what you want to do, but don't believe you will get a job doing it, you will appear as if you are not good enough for your prospective employers.

A confident job seeker is someone who is energized at the prospect of finding his or her dream job. A confident job seeker may not be an expert on résumés, interviews, or other job search tactics, but he or she has an innate knowledge that he or she will be able to figure those things out.

This is not arrogance. Prospective employers will shy away from arrogant job candidates who appear to be high-maintenance divas and poor team players. You don't want to come across as someone who thinks you are better than your future boss or colleagues. Confidence is a healthy, positive attitude.

You Can Proactively Build Confidence into Your Job Search Strategy

Ideally, you have confidence before you start your job search. If confidence has been a struggle your whole life or if you feel overly depressed or anxious about your job search specifically, you should seek help from

a guidance counselor, therapist, or other professional resource. You want to rule out any medical conditions, such as depression, as the root cause of your anxiety. If you have some nervousness, but not in a crippling way that keeps you from your job search, you can plan to proactively build and maintain your confidence throughout your job search by surrounding yourself with positive influences:

- Pair up with a job search buddy. Pick someone with a can-do attitude, and agree to support each other during your search. Maybe you can meet once a week or call each other right before a big event (e.g., job interview or career fair).
- Start a job search group. A larger group will have more energy than just one person. A group also has a range of personalities and perspectives that can contribute alternative points of view. A group will also have people at different stages of the search, enabling you all to see different outcomes unfolding.
- Enlist the support of a coach or mentor. A more experienced person can be a great sounding board for ideas and a champion for when you need a pick-me-up.
- Read about successful people. When you see other people's achievements over adversity, you are able to see your own potential.
- Keep a journal that focuses on the positive. Write down things for which you are grateful. Write down past successes and wins. You will see that you have been successful in other areas, and this can give you the confidence that you can succeed in your job search as well.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Confident job seekers know they will get a job.
- Confident job seekers are excited at the prospect of working and getting jobs they want.
- You can build and maintain confidence by surrounding yourself with positive influences.

EXERCISES

1. Are you confident your job search will succeed? If not, why not? Which of the suggestions for building confidence will you try?
2. Make a list of people you know who have a positive attitude. Highlight people who might be a possible job search buddy, member of a job search group, coach, or mentor.
3. Make a list of past successes and wins. It might be helpful to organize by blocks of time in your life, such as elementary school, middle school, high school, college, and so forth. These don't

have to be specific awards. You should include all instances where you felt proud of your accomplishment.

4. Read a biography of a person you admire or a successful person in an industry in which you are interested. You might read a biography of Wendy Kopp, founder of Teach For America, if you are interested in education. You might read a biography of Warren Buffett if you are interested in investments.

2.3 Prerequisite 2: Communication Skills

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Define the different types of communication skills needed for a successful job search.
2. Learn ways to enhance overall communication skills.

A Successful Job Search Is All About Successful Communication

A successful job search is a match between what an employer wants and what a candidate wants. That match is made based on what is communicated. While an interview is structured a specific way, at its core it is a communication between job seeker and employer. While networking has its standards and rules of etiquette, at its core it is about communicating via listening, speaking, writing, and so forth.

The six-step process will give you the tactics that are particular to interviewing, networking, and other job search–specific communications, but the successful job seeker needs to have solid overall communication skills in place in the following areas:

- Written
- Verbal
- Presentation
- Listening

Communication occurs at every stage of the job search.

Table 2.1 Communication Skills Needed for Each Step of the Job Search

Job Search Step	Written	Verbal	Presentation	Listening
1. Identify Your Target	In the introspective work	In articulating your interests		To advice you are getting
2. Create A Powerful Marketing Campaign	In the creation of your material	In your networking pitch	In the design of your material and sample portfolio	To responses to your pitch and other marketing
3. Conduct In-Depth Research	To keep track of your information	To gather information		To information shared
4. Network and Interview	For scheduling, note-taking during meetings, and thank-yous	Before, during, and after meetings and interviews	During specialized interviews	During meetings and interviews

Job Search Step	Written	Verbal	Presentation	Listening
5. Stay Motivated and Organized and Troubleshoot Your Search	To keep track of your data	During support group and mentor meetings		To support and feedback
6. Negotiate and Close the Offer	For offer letter revisions	To advocate for what you want	To close the deal with senior management	To employers' needs, wants, and constraints

Communication Skills Are a Proxy for Job Skills

You need communications skills for more than understanding and developing rapport with prospective employers. You will also need communication skills on the job, so the way you communicate in your search is a sign of the way you might communicate on the job.

Many employers also look at communication skills in general as a proxy for attention to detail. If you are sloppy with your job search communication—leaving rambling voice mails, sending e-mails with typos or grammatical mistakes—then you likely do this on the job. Why should employers assume you will be more careful after you get the job? If you don't double-check your communication now, you probably won't start once you are hired.

Finally, your communication skills underscore your logic and reasoning. If your interview responses are scattered or unrelated, that could be a sign your thought process isn't logical or structured. If you can't get to the point in regular conversation, maybe you bring this disorganized reasoning to your work.

Your Job Search Can Be Tailored to Showcase Your Communication Strengths and Support Your Weaknesses

Look at your history to see your current communication strengths and weaknesses, so you know where you need to focus as you prepare for a job search. If you know that you are better at written over verbal communication, you might choose e-mail over phone calls in situations that call for either approach (e.g., when you try to get a networking meeting). But you can't avoid a method of communication entirely, so the verbally challenged should allot extra time to practice interviewing and perhaps take the time away from drafting cover letters, which play to their writing strength. For someone with more verbal than written strengths, they will structure their search differently—practicing different areas and budgeting more time in weak areas that may take longer to strengthen.

If you have already selected job targets, incorporate the communication requirements for your target as you plan your job search process. Some fields, such as education, law, sales, consulting, and public relations, heavily emphasize communication, so each and every correspondence has extra weight. Your job search communication becomes a proxy for your potential communication on the job.

The communication requirements may influence the structure of the process. For communication-focused fields, a presentation as part of the interview process may be required. For other fields that are not communication heavy, such as accounting or IT, you likely will not do a presentation (you may for senior roles, but not generally). Start brushing up on presentation skills now if your job search may specifically require this.

Improve Communication Skills with Deliberate Focus and Practice

Now you know the general ways communication skills enter the job search equation, as well as specific ways that different fields may use communication skills to evaluate potential job candidates. With the importance of communication skills in mind, you can deliberately focus and practice to improve your communication skills:

- Start the habit of editing all of your written communication, including e-mails, for correct spelling and grammar. Learn to use the spell check, dictionary, and other helpful functions in your word-processing and e-mail programs.
- Review proper business letter formats. We will review cover letters and thank-you letters later in this book, but general e-mails back and forth also need to be handled with proper care.
- Do an audit of your verbal communication style. Do you talk too fast? Do you enunciate? Are you able to get to the point concisely, or do you ramble? Do you stutter or sound nervous? Tape yourself or have a friend give you an objective critique of your verbal skills now, so you know what needs work.
- Practice delivering presentations. If you can take a class that has a presentation opportunity, that is a good option. You might also join a club or professional group where you have a chance to present.
- Practice active listening. In your daily conversations, become aware of how well you listen. Are you jumping to what you want to say? Could you paraphrase what the other person is saying?
- Practice listening in different scenarios. Do you listen well over the phone? Can you focus in a group and one on one? The job search involves many different situations, so your listening skills will be tested in many different ways.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Communication skills, including written, verbal, presentation, and listening skills, are required throughout the job search.
- All employers consider communication skills when they evaluate candidates.
- Some fields are communication focused, so the general communication during the job search serves as a proxy for your job skills.
- Some fields build different communication hurdles, such as presentations, directly into the job search process.
- You can improve your communication skills by focusing on them now and practicing good communication habits.

EXERCISES

1. What are your communication strengths and weaknesses? Force yourself to rank your verbal, written, presentation, and listening skills from one to four, in order of proficiency.
2. How will you modify your search to take advantage of your individual communication strengths? Do you have any job interests where communication skills play a particularly important role? Start saving writing samples and looking for opportunities to make presentations.
3. Go back to the list of activities to try in the previous section on improving your communication skills. Schedule in your calendar at least three, if not all, activities suggested.
4. What resources do you need to improve your problem communication areas?

2.4 Prerequisite 3: Poise

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the importance of physical appearance and nonverbal communication in the job search.
2. Learn ways to enhance your poise.

Your Poise Communicates Volumes without You Saying a Word

The way you dress, carry yourself, and physically behave also communicate your job potential. Your nonverbal communication either supports the things you say and how you say them, or it undermines you. If you are an articulate, well-spoken person but dress in a sloppy manner, slouch, and fidget, then your actions belie your verbal communication. Therefore, poise goes hand in hand with communication as a fundamental prerequisite for your search.

Professional Dress Signals Your Professional Maturity

What you wear to different job search functions signals neatness, professionalism, and understanding of general business protocol. A business suit in a dark neutral color is the standard. Black, blue, brown, and gray are neutral colors. Some industries and specific companies within industries dress more casually, so it's important to consult an experienced person in the specific industries and companies that interest you for the most relevant guidelines. For example, in media and fashion, your dress is a signal of how much you know and can fit into that field. A dark suit would be too bland and look out of place at a fashion-forward company.

For general functions, such as career fairs or professional mixers, stick to proper business attire. Even if there are a range of dress options in attendance, it's best to be more formally dressed. In addition, most job seekers look more professional and put together with a business suit. You probably will carry yourself more professionally, have better posture, and be more alert in a business suit than in casual attire.

If you are attending an event or an interview where business casual is stipulated, this is still neater and more formal than casual attire. Khakis rather than jeans, dress slacks and a sport coat for men, and a sweater set for women are some examples of business casual.

Here is a checklist of things to remember about dressing professionally:

- Dark, neutral colors and a matching suit jacket and slacks or skirt are the standard.

- Shoes should be comfortable and polished. No open-toed styles or very high heels; even in dressy styles, shoes with open toes or very high heels look unprofessional.
- What you wear beneath the jacket will also be seen. For men, blue or white dress shirts are standard, though some other colors are acceptable. For women, stick to blouses with sleeves in case you take your jacket off (sleeveless is too casual). Women should also stay away from frilly camisoles—they can be seen under your jacket and still look like lingerie.
- Cover yourself. No body hair for men or cleavage for women should be visible. Women should make sure skirt lengths are not too short.
- Avoid overly printed ties, lots of jewelry, accessories, or too much makeup, all of which detract from a professional appearance.
- Have a professional briefcase or bag. A backpack or other casual bag diminishes the professional image.
- Fragrance is not recommended because some people are allergic.
- Keep hair neat and off your face so interviewers can see you.
- Don't wait until you start your job search to make sure you have the appropriate clothes. It takes time to ensure the fit and length is right, and you may need tailoring or other services.

The Way You Carry Yourself Also Signals Professionalism

If you have a great suit but you slouch, that is an incomplete package. Good posture, steady eye contact, and a firm handshake are additional fundamentals to the job search process. Even if you think this is common sense, don't assume that you will be 100 percent put together once your search starts. If you are not used to dressing professionally and interacting with people in a formal business context, then you may have a weak handshake or poor eye contact and not realize it. Before you get busy with interviews, see if you can attend a business event just as a practice run.

Here is a checklist of things to remember about carrying yourself professionally:

- Maintain good posture. You don't want to be stiff, but you want to stand and sit straight, as it keeps you looking and feeling alert. Practice maintaining good posture over time (interviews can last thirty minutes or longer).
- Maintain steady eye contact, but not 100 percent of the time. It's preferable to look away from time to time, as glaring or staring at someone makes them uncomfortable.
- Have a firm handshake. Don't break the person's hand, but don't be hesitant or limp, either.

- Develop a habit of turning off and not checking your cell phone when you are talking to someone.
- Practice eating and speaking formally. There will be situations where you are networking or even interviewing over a meal. You don't want a real interview to be the first time you experience formal dining and conversation.

Body Language and Nonverbal Communication Support or Undermine Your Words

You might look great, carry yourself well, and speak eloquently, but you also communicate with physical gestures and other nonverbal cues. Pay attention to how you use your body during conversations and meetings. You might find that you can't sit still for long periods of time or that you use a lot of distracting hand gestures. You might be too still and miss opportunities to accentuate points with a nod of the head or finger movement.

Some recruiter pet peeves include the following:

- Looking over the recruiter's shoulder. What are you staring at?
- Fidgeting constantly. How are you going to appear to clients if you can't sit still?
- Gesticulating in an overly dramatic way. Don't slam your hands down emphatically on the recruiter's desk. It looks threatening, not forceful.
- Lack of common courtesy, for example, not covering your mouth when you yawn, cough, or sneeze. How could an employer put you in front of a client with that unmannerly behavior?
- Checking cell phones during meetings or interviews. Is this job less important to you than your cell phone calls?

Start practicing good manners now so these habits are ingrained behaviors before your job search.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Poise refers to professional dress, carriage, appropriate body language, and nonverbal communication skills. Poise is critical to the job search.
- Good poise complements and supports the other good job search fundamentals, while lack of poise detracts from them.
- Prepare and practice now to incorporate poise into your regular behavior.

EXERCISES

1. Review your interview clothes. Practice meeting with a friendly contact to check your handshake, eye contact, and posture. Practice interviewing with a friendly contact and ask him or her to watch for your nonverbal communication. What area of poise is your strongest and weakest in the job search?
2. What will you do now to work on problem areas? If your interview clothes need tailoring or additions, where can you shop or find a tailor? If your carriage or body language is lacking, do you have additional friendly contacts, even family, with whom you can practice getting through a conversation with upright posture, good eye contact, and appropriate gestures?
3. Check for resources in your school or community library, such as opportunities to practice or books specifically dedicated to professional image or style.

2.5 Prerequisite 4: Resources

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand what things you need and can put in place now to support your job search.
2. Identify support systems for your job search.

Physical Resources and Supplies to Launch a Productive Job Search

In a way, the resources you need for your job search can be broken down into three categories:

1. Time
2. Space
3. Money

Time includes not just the time for the six steps of the process (and to work on the fundamentals discussed in this chapter) but also the time away from your current activities. As you add the job search to your calendar, what will you take away?

Space includes the place where you will be doing the work of your job search—computer, phone, desk, a quiet area to focus. Your space must be outfitted with the right equipment but also include fast Internet access, paper, pens, postage and mailing supplies, and other office essentials.

Money is required to outfit your space and for your supplies. In the discussion on professional dress, there may be items listed that you need to purchase. Your job search will require travel to interviews. Networking might entail paying a membership fee to a group or an event fee for a professional mixer. Part of your research strategy might involve taking people to lunch in exchange for information. Many areas of the job search will require a financial investment.

Ideas and Support Systems to Help You Find and Manage Your Time

Finding and managing your time will require trade-offs. A proactive job search takes ten to fifteen hours per week. You will need to take this time from other activities. Before your job search starts, take an inventory of everything that is taking up your time. Create a comprehensive calendar that includes the following:

- Major trips or vacations when you will physically be away
- Critical projects, papers due, or exam weeks when you will be busier than usual
- Regular daily, weekly, or monthly appointments, such as classes, club meetings, or gym workouts

- Job search events that you know about in advance (for many students, include specific deadlines set by your school, such as when you should submit your résumé to the employers coming to campus)

Create a comprehensive activity list that includes necessary but non-time-specific activities:

- Homework
- Laundry and housework
- Exercise and self-care
- Volunteer work
- Hobbies
- Ten to fifteen hours of job search activity, some of which must be done during normal business hours

Look at the unscheduled times and your list of activities. Block out where things might go. Be realistic about when you do your best work. If you have more energy in the morning, reserve that time for your job search activity. If you know you can't concentrate by end of day, use that time for nonthinking activities, such as housework or exercise.

Well before you start your job search, start moving activities around and make arrangements for your replacement if you need to drop activities. You want to have a schedule in place that supports your job search, not crowds it out.

Ideas and Support Systems to Help You Set Up Your Work Space

Your job search is a project, so you need a comprehensive work space. Stocking up supplies in advance of your search enables you to stay focused and not get derailed by a surprise trip to the store. You also want to prepare in advance for services you may need, such as printing, copying, mailing, and faxing. Know the hours of the closest post office and office supply and service store. Know where you can send and receive faxes and where you can do special copying, binding, or printing.

Here is a checklist of ideas for a comprehensive work space:

- Build a surplus of office essentials, such as paper, pens, mail supplies, staples, and so forth.
- Have a pen and paper by all phones if you share your workspace with others. This way, your cohabitants can easily take messages for you.
- Audit your computer, phone, and Internet access to ensure that your equipment and communication lines are in order. If you have a slow Internet connection, research public access places, such as libraries, and list their availability.

- Create a professional voice mail message for all phones, including your cell phone.
- List post office, office supply, and service store addresses and hours.
- Figure out how to back up computer files, change printer ink, unblock paper jams, and any other minor but critical support services for your equipment. You do not want to be late for a meeting because you were printing a résumé at the last minute and it got stuck in the printer.
- Check for privacy. If your work space is part of your bedroom and you will be making video calls, invest in a folding screen or figure out how to position the webcam to keep your environment looking professional.
- Check for quiet. Your job search will involve a lot of phone calls, including interviews. Plan now for a space where you can be heard, hear well, and concentrate.
- Make it a space that energizes and inspires you. Add pictures, fresh flowers, and so forth.

  If you have a very organized friend, enlist his or her help in setting up and decorating your space.

Ideas and Support Systems to Help Manage Your Money

Know your budget for your job search essentials in advance. You can price out the work space items listed previously and the professional dress requirements listed earlier. For job search events you already know about, budget for registration fees and transportation costs. If you want to work with a career coach, factor that into your budget.

Another financial consideration is the opportunity cost of the time spent on your search, as opposed to working. If you have to drop a part-time job to launch your search, there is the cost of lost wages. If you are a student and your job search extends past graduation, there is the cost of supporting yourself while you look. How will you pay for your living expenses? How long can you sustain yourself without a job? Your financial situation affects the execution and timing of your job search, so you need to decide on these issues prior to your search. If you are relying on family or friends to help with your living expenses, have a candid conversation about both of your expectations before you start your search.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Your job search requires time, space, and money resources.
- You need to allocate these resources to your search and decide on the trade-offs necessary to spend your time, space, and money on your search, as opposed to other objectives.
- Line up your resources before your job search so that you create an environment that supports your job search.

EXERCISES

1. Do you have time, space, and money set aside for your job search? Review the sections with suggested activities and actually set up your schedule, audit your workspace, and create a budget.
2. In what areas are you underresourced or lacking? Do you need to talk to family members about financial support? Do you need to find the closest office supply and services store? Do you have an unrealistic amount of activities in your current schedule and need to make cuts?
3. What specific next steps will you take to line up your resources prior to your job search? Schedule a specific date and time for the conversation with family. Schedule a specific date and time to visit office supply stores. Pick activities to drop and make arrangements to delegate these or get out of any commitments.

2.6 State of the Market: Launching Your Job Search at This Time

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the current job market and how it impacts your overall job search.
2. Learn strategies to tailor your job search to this market.

Three Trends in the Twenty-First-Century Job Search

Today's job search can be characterized by three emerging trends:

1. 24/7 activity
2. An entrepreneurial approach
3. A multigenerational workforce

24/7 Job Search

With mobile devices and broadband Internet access, it is very easy to connect to people at all times of the day and on weekends. While formal job search activity still centers on normal business hours, it is easier and therefore more acceptable for job search activity to take place at all hours. It can be the middle of the night, and therefore you can still do the following:

- Draft cover letters and other marketing material using your word-processing software.
- Research companies over the Internet.
- Connect with people via social media.

Other job candidates will be working hard on their search, so you might feel obligated to compete with this extra time, hence the 24/7 job search. Even if you want to set time boundaries, jobs are increasingly global, so there is a significant chance that you might have to network and interview with people in time zones across the world. Finally, with job insecurity high after the recent recession, it is less likely that you will quit your job outright to devote time to your search. Students don't have the option to opt out of classes during their job search, so the job search activity is on top of everything else, extending your typical day.

Entrepreneurial Approach

With the tight labor market (more available job candidates than employers ready to hire), the competition is intense. The rise of social media gives job seekers the ability to brand themselves in a way formerly associated only with companies. Job seekers are marketing their job potential the way companies market

goods and services. This requires job seekers to develop branding, marketing, and sales skills normally associated with entrepreneurs.

Many job seekers are turning to consulting and freelancing during a protracted job search, thus becoming entrepreneurs by default. Even recent graduates are starting businesses, piecing together several smaller projects rather than a single internship, and consulting or interning after graduating in lieu of full-time employment. Your ability to adopt an entrepreneurial approach to your job search will be necessary as your competition increasingly does the same.

Multigenerational Workforce

There are four generations currently in the workforce:

1. Generation Y, born between 1980 and 1995
2. Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980
3. Baby boomers, born between 1945 and 1964
4. Traditionalists, born before 1945

Each generation grew up with different work expectations, technology, and communication styles. There is a culture clash as four generations work closely together. Much has been made in the media of the generational clash. As a job seeker, you will likely interview with someone from a different generation who has specific preconceptions of you. You may not change your job search tactics in anticipation of a clash that may not arise, but you want to be sensitive to some of the anxiety in the market.

What the Emerging Trends Mean for Your Job Search

You can use the 24/7 job search trend to your advantage by using the connectivity as extra time and resources for your job search. If you are comfortable with online research and online social networks, these are helpful tools to add to your job search.

You can incorporate the entrepreneurial techniques of branding, marketing, and sales into the way you brand, market, and sell yourself, thus enhancing your job search skills. If you can get consulting or freelance work while you search, that is a bonus for your finances and your experience base.

The multigenerational workforce is ripe for conflict, but there are also additional opportunities to add value as a collaborative team player. Be aware that communication styles, work styles, and expectations are different among the generations. Make a concerted effort to build rapport when you are dealing with

everyone, but especially people in different generations from yourself. Do not assume that they share your same preferences.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The current job market is characterized by 24/7 activity, increased entrepreneurship, and a multigenerational workforce.
- Savvy job seekers can incorporate these trends into their job search to increase their value over the competition.

EXERCISES

1. Do you hear about these trends for the areas that you are targeting for your job search?
2. How are you going to set boundaries for yourself so you don't fall into the trap of looking for a job 24/7?
3. If the notion of acting entrepreneurially appeals to you, add books about branding, marketing, and sales to your job search reading list.
4. Write down assumptions you have about the different generations, including your generation. Actually seek out people in those generations and ask them to share their assumptions. Compare your results to increase your awareness and open the lines of communication.

2.7 Chapter Review and Exercises

The six-step job search process provides a constant structure that works for a variety of life situations, including students looking for an internship or full-time job, career changers, people relocating for work, or people coming back to work after unemployment or a leave of absence. The steps are designed to give you a framework to follow and keep the job search process from becoming overwhelming. But the framework is not fixed, so you should expect to revisit the steps as needed to refine and adjust your search along the way.

In addition to the six steps of the job search, you need to have a foundation in place for job search success, including confidence you can get a job, strong communication skills, poise and professional presence, and the physical resources to support your search. You also should be aware of trends in the job market, including 24/7 communication capability that encourages people to overwork, an entrepreneurial approach to the job search that translates the business techniques of branding, marketing, and sales to the individual, and the multigenerational workplace. We have four generations active in the workplace, so the probability of dealing with someone much older or younger than you is significant. Do not assume that people have the same expectations and behaviors as you, and focus instead on building rapport individual by individual.

Chapter Takeaways

- The six steps of the job search are sequential because one step leads into the next.
- It is helpful to follow the sequence so you are not overwhelmed by doing everything at once and so you can build a progression.
- The six steps of the job search are concurrent because each step influences the others.
- It is helpful to allow the six steps to overlap so you can use the information and feedback from each step to strengthen and refine the others.
- The six-step process assumes you have some fundamental skills and resources in place, including confidence, communication skills, poise, and physical resources.
- A confident job seeker knows he or she will get a job.
- A confident job seeker is excited at the prospect of working and getting a job he or she wants.
- You can build and maintain confidence by surrounding yourself with positive influences.
- Communication skills, including written, verbal, presentation, and listening skills, are required throughout the job search.

- All employers consider communication skills when they evaluate candidates.
- Some fields are communication focused, so the general communication during the job search serves as a proxy for your job skills.
- Some fields build in different communication hurdles, such as presentations, directly into the job search process.
- You can improve your communication skills by focusing on them now and practicing good communication habits.
- Poise refers to professional dress, carriage, appropriate body language, and nonverbal communication skills. Poise is critical to the job search.
- Good poise complements and supports the other good job search fundamentals, while lack of poise detracts from them.
- Prepare and practice now to incorporate poise into your regular behavior.
- Your job search requires time, space, and money resources.
- You need to allocate these resources to your search and decide on the trade-offs necessary to spend your time, space, and money on your search, as opposed to other objectives.
- Line up your resources before your job search so that you create an environment that supports your job search.
- The current job market is characterized by 24/7 activity, increased entrepreneurship, and a multigenerational workforce.
- Savvy job seekers can incorporate these trends into their job search to increase their value over the competition.

Chapter Review

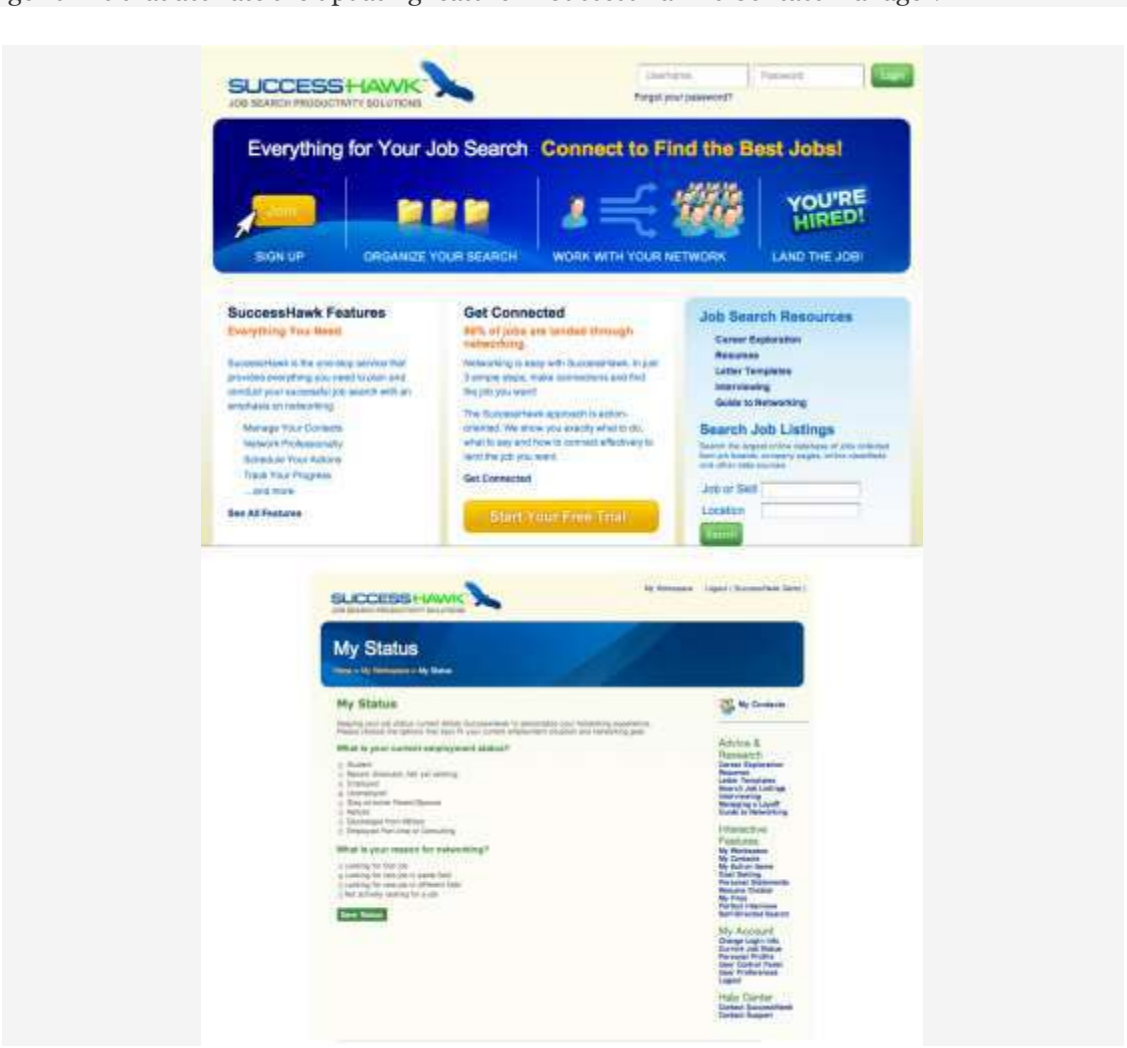
1. What are the six steps to the job search, and why are they sequenced in that order?
2. When should the six steps of the job search overlap or be taken out of the original order?
3. What are the four fundamental prerequisites to your job search?
4. Why is confidence required in the job search?
5. What communication skills are important to the job search? In what cases might communication skills be more important to some job seekers than others?
6. What is poise, and why does it matter in the job search?

7. What resources should you line up before you start your job search?
8. What are three emerging trends of today's job search? Why are they important to your search?

SuccessHawk: Getting Started

Go to http://www.successhawk.com and click on "Log In." You will then be asked to sign up.

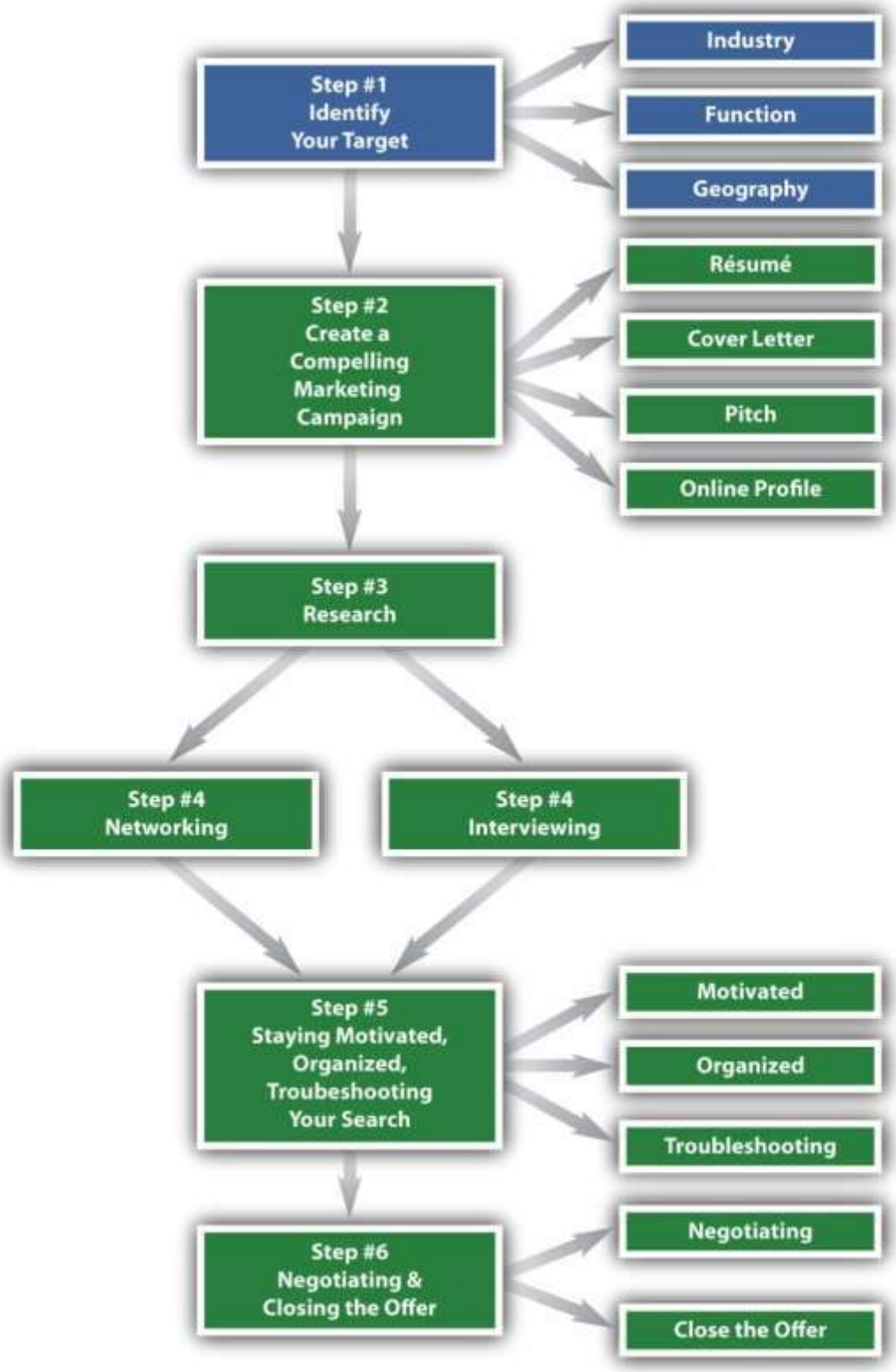
After enrolling, your first step is to complete "My Account: Current Job Status." This action sets algorithms that activate the updating feature in SuccessHawk's Contact Manager.



Take a moment to see the resources SuccessHawk provides and how to navigate the site. As with any new software, SuccessHawk may seem complicated at first, but with a little practice, you will find it easy to use.

Chapter 3: Step 1: Identify Your Job Search Targets

Figure 3.1 The Six-Step Job Search Process: Step 1



Overview

What Do We Mean by Job Search Targets?

If you think about achieving any goal (and finding a job definitely qualifies as a goal), the first step is to define

the goal. What type of job do you want? Getting a job is a match between the employer who has the job opening and the employee who will be doing the job. Because two parties are involved in achieving this goal, there are two considerations in determining your job search targets:

1. What does the employer want from the job?
2. What do you want from the job?

This chapter talks about these two considerations and how you can find the overlap.

Because the employer will be defining the job and finding the right candidates for the job, it is important that you are able to understand the employer's perspective on the job search:

- How is the employer going to describe the job?
- Where will the employer look for possible candidates for the job?
- What characteristics will the employer want in the person who is hired?

When you know how the employer describes the job, you know how to search for it. When you know where the employer will look, you can position yourself to be there. When you know what the employer wants in the person who is hired, you can market yourself to reflect these characteristics.

At the same time, you probably don't want just any job. You want a job for specific reasons. These reasons might be the following:

- Starting on your dream career path
- Supporting yourself in a comfortable way
- Fulfilling a specific mission or personal legacy
- Working with people you like and respect

When you know what you want in your next job, you can search for these specific criteria. If your priority is to start on a specific career path, then you look for growth, advancement, learning, and mentorship in your next job. If you have specific financial obligations that you need to meet (e.g., student loans to repay, family to support, a relocation), then compensation is a main criteria. If you have a mission or legacy you wish to impart (e.g., to help a specific underserved community), then you will be looking at the mission of your next employer to see if it aligns with yours. If you value your relationships and day-to-day interactions with people, then you will be looking closely at who your boss and colleagues will be in your next job. These are just some examples, and people

often have multiple considerations. You will want to look closely at your interests and values to determine overall what you want and how you might prioritize jobs that meet some but not all criteria.

This chapter covers both the employer's and your considerations for possible jobs. We will be looking at the following considerations:

- Three elements that define how an employer broadly characterizes a job
- Strategies for you to match your interests to these three elements
- Multiple ideas for what you might look for in a job
- Strategies for you to match your ideas to the market of jobs

Figure 3.2 A Visual Representation of the Intersection of Employer and Job Seeker Wants

We will also be looking at the importance of having multiple job targets. Sometimes people romanticize the ideal job, making it sound like there is only one perfect job target. Perhaps you are waiting for a lightning bolt of inspiration to tell you what avenue to pursue. The idea of only one perfect job target is problematic for several reasons:

- If you don't know exactly what you want, you might spend all your time considering the possibilities, rather than looking for an actual job.
- In a very competitive market, having just one area to target makes for a narrow search and limited possibilities.
- If you launch all of your search efforts on one job target and realize later that you are not as interested as you thought or otherwise need to refine your search, you need to start from the beginning.

  As a job seeker, there is a lot to do, and identifying your job targets is just the beginning. This chapter provides a structure and steps to move forward so that you don't fall into the inertia of too many possibilities, the scarcity of too few possibilities, or the inflexibility of just one right answer.

3.1 Three Elements of a Well-Defined Target

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the importance of a structure to categorize the very broad job market.
2. Learn the importance of each of the three elements that define a specific job.
3. Start thinking about how these elements will play a role in your job search.

The Importance of the Three-Element Structure for Defining Job Targets

If you glance at a job board or classified ad section, you will see hundreds, if not thousands, of job possibilities. Even similar ads, such as job postings for accountants, can list very different descriptions for the job responsibilities, as well as qualifications to get the job. If you don't have a structure to categorize this very broad job market, you will dilute your efforts wading through too many jobs that are of no interest to you or for which you are not qualified.

Instead, you need a structure that cuts across all of the jobs and is representative of how the employer thinks of the job (since the employer is the one advertising the job). This way, you know what job postings to research. For the searchable online job databases, you can filter specifically with the structure in mind. As you move through the six steps of the job search process, you can tailor each step to the target structure to ensure that you are always keeping the employer's point of view at the heart of your search.

Three Elements of a Well-Defined Job Target

A well-defined job target includes three elements:

1. Industry
2. Function
3. Geography

Continuing the example of accounting from the first section, accounting is a function. It is what the person in the job is doing. However, this accountant can be working for a government agency, for a hospital, for an insurance company, for a toy manufacturer, or for a host of other types of companies and organizations. Therefore, accounting is not specific enough—we also need to know the industry (whether government, health care, insurance, etc.). Finally, because people might relocate for a job, we also need to know the geography of our job targets. Are you looking at a specific city only, surrounding suburbs, surrounding cities, multiple states, or even multiple countries?

Industry

The industry you target is the type of business in which you want to work. Industries include the following examples:

- Arts
- Education
- Energy
- Food
- Fashion
- Health care, pharmaceuticals, and biotech
- Hospitality and leisure
- Financial services
- Government
- Legal
- Luxury goods
- Management consulting
- Manufacturing
- Media and entertainment
- Nonprofit causes
- Retail
- Sports
- Technology
- Telecommunications
- Transportation, aerospace, and automotive

These are just some examples, and they are of very broad industry categories. You can specify even further into subcategories. You will want to subcategorize because if you pick too broad an industry, you will have the same dilution-of-efforts problem as if you haven't specified an industry at all.

If you look at the arts, subcategories include the following examples:

- Type of art—visual, performing
- Type of organization—venues for exhibiting and performing, arts education, artist support, art supplies

- Sector—nonprofit (e.g., Lincoln Center, a venue for performing arts), private sector (e.g., Warner Music Group, a record label), government (e.g., National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency supporting artists and arts organizations)

  It is not enough to say, "I want a job in the arts." Do you mean visual arts, as in painting or sculpting? Do you mean you'd like to work in a venue, such as a museum or a theater? Do you want to work for educational programs that focus on the arts? Do you want to work in support of artists—at a foundation that gives grants for creative projects, or at an artists' union? Do you want to be in and around artists, selling or manufacturing art supplies? Finally, you can be in the arts and work for a nonprofit, a private company, or a government agency. Each of these sectors is very different.

  In a later section of this chapter, we will give ideas for how to explore different industries and the different subcategories of your industry choices to see what might be right for you. In Chapter 6 on *research*, we will talk about how to research industries for specific organizations and company names and other information that will help you find the jobs you want. You can see already how useful it can be to focus on being specific. Being specific in describing the jobs you want is necessary to find where those jobs are.

  Let's take another example from the list so you can get more ideas on how to break an industry down. If you look at energy, the following subcategories are included:

- Types of energy—oil, gas, coal, nuclear, alternative
- Types of organizations—exploration companies, utilities, research firms, regulatory agencies, equipment and support, capital raising
- Sector—nonprofit (the US Energy Association, a nonprofit professional association), private sector (e.g., Exxon Mobil, an oil and gas company), government (e.g., the Environmental Protection Agency)

  If you are interested in energy, you could work for a private company that is involved in many types of energy and at many stages, from exploration to delivery. You could research energy-related issues for a nonprofit. You could be focused on regulations for a government agency. There are multiple, different possibilities for that single energy industry choice.

  Finally, let's look at sports as a possible interest. Perhaps you have been a longtime athlete or a diehard fan. Can you take a personal interest and make it into a career?

- Types of sports—a specific sport (e.g., football) or sports in general

- Types of organizations—sports team (e.g., New York Giants), sports league (e.g., NFL), sports venue (e.g., Madison Square Garden, Meadowlands), sports program (e.g., an after-school program dedicated to foster competitive skills among youth), sports product (e.g., Under Armour), sports retailer (e.g., FootLocker), sports business (e.g., agencies who represent athletes, marketing and advertising firms who help companies with sports-related campaigns)
- Sector—nonprofit (e.g., Turn 2 Foundation, which supports sports programs and is funded by Derek Jeter, a professional baseball player), private sector (e.g., Under Armour, FootLocker), government (local departments of parks and recreation)

If you are interested in sports, you might focus on a specific team or sport and look at different organizations involved with that team. Or you might focus on sports in general—perhaps take on the mission of expanding the spectator base, increasing participation among youth, or determining the impact of sports on culture.

Here is a list of possible subcategories for common industries:

Table 3.1 List of Industry with Examples of Subcategories for Each

Overall Industry	Subcategories
Arts	Visual or performing arts Venues Education Artist support and marketing Arts-related products
Education	Early, elementary, middle school, secondary school, higher education, adult, corporate, and executive Independent, alternative and charter, public Regulation and advocacy Research Pedagogy
Energy	Oil, gas, coal, nuclear, alternative

Overall Industry	Subcategories
	Exploration Utilities Research Regulation and safety Equipment Capital raising
Food	Catering Restaurants Corporate services Media and journalism Nutrition science Regulation and safety Human rights and food access
Fashion	Retail Design Manufacturing Buying Media and journalism
Health care, pharmaceuticals, biotech	Hospitals, clinics Pharmacies Medical equipment Research Regulation and safety Human rights, medical care access, patient advocacy, privacy Insurance
Hospitality and leisure	Hotels, resorts, spas

Overall Industry	Subcategories
	Leisure versus commercial Booking and sales Event planning Equipment and operations
Financial services	Accounting and audit Commercial banking Private banking and asset management Investment banking Retail banking Insurance Regulation Consumer advocacy and protection
Government	Federal, state, municipal Constituents represented (e.g., artists, children, elderly, small business) Industries represented (e.g., arts, education, health care, banking)
Legal	Professional services, in-house Criminal, civil Family, immigration, litigation Research Operations and document processing Regulation Public defender
Luxury goods	Retail Design Manufacturing Media and journalism

Overall Industry	Subcategories
Management consulting	Functional specialists: HR, economics, sales, general strategy, technology Industry specialists: financial services, pharmaceutical, nonprofits
Manufacturing	Equipment Regulation and safety Union relations Capital financing
Media and entertainment	Film, TV, publishing, digital Content production Distribution Marketing Advertising Research Regulation and monitoring
Nonprofit causes	Mission based (e.g., ending poverty, eradicating polio) Constituent based (e.g., advocating for the homeless, protecting consumers) Programs Foundations
Retail	Product based (e.g., clothing, office equipment) Customer based (e.g., children's, women's)
Sports	Specific sport or sports in general Sports team Sports league Sports venue Sports-related education Sports products and equipment

Overall Industry	Subcategories
	Sports retailers Sports agencies, marketing, or advertising
Technology	Hardware Software Services Regulation Advocacy (e.g., privacy, net neutrality)
Telecommunications	Engineering and design Manufacturing Utilities Regulation Advocacy
Transportation, aerospace, and automotive	Motor, marine, rail, aerospace Leisure versus commercial use Engineering and design Manufacturing Logistics Regulation and safety Consumer protection and access

Function

The function of a job refers to your overall responsibility and what you are doing day to day. Examples of job functions follow:

- Management
- Sales
- Marketing and public relations
- Finance and accounting

- Human resources
- Operations
- Technology

In both of the industry examples for arts and energy, you could be doing many different things within any of the subcategories. If your industry choice leads you to an art museum as a possibility, you might do several things:

- Manage a program or exhibit (management).
- Handle membership or ticket sales (sales).
- Raise money (at a nonprofit, this is referred to as *development*).
- Create brochures and advertising (marketing).
- Analyze and report on the finances of the museum (finance and accounting).
- Act as the point person for employees on questions about pay, benefits, advancement, and other career-related issues (human resources).
- Organize the open and close, facilities, and maintenance or other daily operations (operations).
- Run the customer database (technology).

In a later section of this chapter, we will give ideas for how to explore different functional areas to see what might be right for you. In Chapter 6 on *research*, we will talk about how to research functions for information that will help you position yourself appropriately for these jobs. Function and industry build on each other. Knowing one but the not the other is incomplete.

Geography

Finally, even if you know what you are doing (function) and who you are doing it for (industry), you need to know where you'll physically be. Geography is the third element of a well-defined target. How many potential art museums are located in your desired area? If your desired location has few or no art museums, then your search is unrealistic, and you have to expand your industry (to include other types of museums or other types of art-related organizations) or change your geography. If there are art museums in your desired location, but they are all small and do not need the fundraising skills you have, then you need to expand your function (do something else within the art museums) or change your geography. Geography gives you another critical point of focus for your job search.

Aside from physical location, some jobs have another type of geography consideration. You might be targeting a job whose customers, research subjects, or constituents are of a specific geography:

- Chicago-based (geography 1) curator (function) for an art museum (industry) specializing in East Asian Art (geography 2)
- New York City–based (geography 1) equity research analyst (function) specializing in transportation projects (industry) in sub-Saharan Africa (geography 2)
- Washington, DC–based (geography 1) lobbyist (function) specializing in raising awareness for energy alternatives (industry) in the Mississippi Delta (geography 2)
- Austin-based (geography 1) marketing manager (function) for a computer manufacturer (industry) is charged with opening up the China market (geography 2)

Your job interest may be related to a specific geography, and this definitely should factor in your search. You also must then factor in your physical location.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- You cannot consider every job available, so you need a structure to filter through the possibilities and narrow your job search targets.
- Three elements of a well-defined job search target are industry, function, and geography.
- Each element can be further specified and may need to be, depending on how broad it is.

EXERCISES

1. Can you see how industry, function, and geography characterize the jobs around you? Look at friends and family members who are working, and practice categorizing their jobs.
2. Do you have an idea for jobs that you want to do? How would you categorize jobs you are interested in by industry, function, and geography?
3. Take a specific industry of interest, such as arts, energy, or sports, in the previous examples. Write out all the different subsectors you can think of.

3.2 Strategies to Match Your Interests to the Three Elements

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the importance of translating your job interests to the three-element structure.
2. Learn different ideas for finding specific industries, functions, and geographies of interest.

The Importance of the Three-Element Structure to Your Job Search

Having industry, function, and geography as filters for your job search is great because it translates to the employer's perspective. The computer manufacturer in Austin is looking for a marketing manager. If your search targets *technology manufacturing*, *Austin*, and *marketing*, you will hear about that position.

But what if you haven't narrowed down your search that specifically? You might just be getting started, and you know you want to live in Austin, but aren't sure about anything else. The three elements are offered here to prevent you from picking up the local paper and blindly going through every ad. When we get to the *research* and *networking* chapters, you will also see how the three elements will enable you to find jobs that aren't advertised. For example, by focusing on a specific industry, you can join a professional association with people from that industry and learn about companies and potential jobs via the association.

There are good reasons to try to move toward identifying your job search targets by industry + function + geography. This section gives some ideas and exercises for you to move toward more specific choices for your three elements.

Geography

You want to think about how narrow your geographic range is: neighborhood, city, surrounding suburbs, multiple cities, multiple states, multiple countries. You may decide to launch a job search in several geographies, for example, New York City and Boston. But each geographic target (New York City or Boston) is treated as a separate job search.

Here are some considerations for your geography choice:

- Do I want to live there?
- Can I afford to live there?
- Can I complete a job search there (maybe you don't live there currently and need to look long distance)?
- Is the job market for my target industry and function big enough?

Here are some exercises and activities to help you make your choices:

- Visit the location. Some job seekers are quick to pick a big, well-known city without experiencing it first. Your job is but one aspect of your life. There are other considerations to your happiness—for example, social life, proximity to family, climate, population size, pace of life, activities, and entertainment. A great site for data on all aspects of cities in the United States is http://www.city-data.com.
- Run the numbers on the cost of living. A quick Internet search yields numerous cost-of-living calculators (from Salary.com, Bankrate, *Money Magazine*, and more). This is great for cursory research, but get into the details by looking at local papers for housing costs, local grocery circulars for food costs, and other local ads for products and services you will buy day-to-day.
- Make a plan, including a budget, for job search travel if needed. If your target geography is distant and expensive, you need to factor this into the feasibility of your search. The best long-distance job searches include several trips to the target geography for networking and interviews. You cannot count on your prospective employers to pay for any or all of your travel costs.
- Identify specific companies and organizations in your target geography that satisfy your industry and function requirements. A large metropolitan area, like New York City or Boston, will probably have a big enough market for most searches. But if your target industry is the federal government, then Washington, DC, trumps New York City or Boston. Your desired government agencies may not have any offices in New York City or Boston. Remember that some geographies are bigger than others and will therefore have more overall job targets. Some geographies are more specialized in the industries that are located there.
- Look at the state of the overall job market in your target geography. Some geographies have stronger or weaker economies. All things being equal, you may want to target areas showing strong job and population growth or that are magnets for growing industries.

Industry

Like geography, you may decide to target more than one industry, but each industry is treated as a separate job search. You also want to dig into each industry to see how you can get more specific on the subsectors of that industry.

One overall consideration is your sector of interest:

- Private sector
- Nonprofit
- Government or public sector

There are many examples of careers that include jobs across the sectors. Politicians currently in the government sector may have started their career as lawyers in the private sector or working for a nonprofit. Still, there are also people who very specifically want to target just one sector.

Private sector companies are also called for-profit because they exist to make a profit. The focus of private companies and the measure of their success are their financial results. While individual companies are different, the private sector has been characterized as fast-paced (companies are vying for market leadership), money oriented (the focus on financial results), and business focused (to improve those financial results).

Nonprofit organizations are also called not-for-profit because they don't exist to make money but rather to serve a specific mission or cause. Again, while each organization is different, the nonprofit sector has been characterized as more slowly paced than the private sector (there are no market forces pressing a specific timetable), service oriented (the focus is on a mission or cause), and smaller in size (the largest nonprofits will not have as many employees or offices as the largest for-profits).

Government agencies can be at the municipal, state, or federal level. Government agencies and groups compose the public sector. Their size and reach is going to depend on the level of government on which the agency focuses and the size and needs of the population, or constituents, it serves. Government jobs have historically been more stable than either private sector or nonprofit jobs, so they often appeal to people looking for that stable environment, though slower advancement. Government jobs may also be appealing if you are interested in service and politics.

Here are some questions to help you decide on a target sector or sectors:

- Does any one sector stand out as a possible fit for your interests or personality?
- Are there people whose careers you admire? In what sector are they employed?
- Are there companies or organizations in which you are interested? Which sector do they represent?
- If you are not partial to any sector, how can your current industry interests translate to each sector?

To help you identify specific industry interests, you can do the following:

- Look at industry lists.
- Read general news or business media.
- Review what you do for fun or things you've done that have interested you.

You can look at the list in section one and see if any of the industries mentioned stand out for you. Government and regulatory agencies also issue industry classifications (e.g., the North American Industry Classification System), and these lists can also give you ideas.

If seeing the names of industries isn't enough because you are not sure what they do, reading general news and business media is a great way to learn more about different industries. You don't have to read issues cover to cover, but go to a well-stocked magazine store or business library and read the table of contents for several issues of the major general news and business magazines. Which stories attract you? This gives a clue to industries of interest. You can also do a lot of this research online.

Examples of general business magazines that could be helpful for your industry research include the following:

- *BusinessWeek*
- *Fortune*
- *Fast Company*
- *Inc.*
- *Wired*

Sometimes you have dream companies in mind because you use their product or service. Several magazines have various top lists (e.g., Largest Companies, Best Places to Work for Women, Most Innovative, Fastest Growing). Look at these lists, which are often broken out by industry, and see if you recognize and are interested in any of the companies.

What you do for fun is also a good indication of what you might like to do for your work. If you are interested in clothes and fashion trends, the fashion or retail industry is a possibility. If you like to travel, the hospitality and leisure industry (e.g., hotels, travel agencies) is a possibility.

To help you break down your overall industry into the subcategories, brainstorm all of the people and companies associated with that industry. Let's say you are a fashionista:

- You read fashion magazines. Do you want to work at a magazine or other media that covers fashion?
- You follow celebrities for their latest look. Do you want be in celebrity styling?
- You buy your clothes. Do you want to be in retail or sales?
- You may even make your own clothes. Do you want to design or manufacture clothing?

- You care about the content and origins of your clothes. Do you want to work on environmental causes relating to fashion?
- You care about everyone having access to good clothes. Do you want to work for social causes?

Look at the providers of the things you buy and use. This will enable you to branch out of just fashion and actually itemize the specific subcategories.

Function

The function of a job refers to your overall responsibility and what you are doing day-to-day. As you peruse the general news and business stories that interest you, what problem are they solving?

- Is the company trying to expand its customers or sales?
- Is the company trying to be more efficient in certain aspects?
- Are you drawn to the financial information—sales, costs, profits?
- Are you concerned with people issues?
- Are you interested in how things work behind the scenes or how technology can help?

Your target function of interest solves a problem or fills a need. The problems covered in news and business stories can give you a window into the types of problems with which you may want to work. You might also have a theme in your life of doing certain types of activities. Make a list of twenty-four experiences and achievements over your life that you are most proud of. Be specific—don't just say "running," but talk about a specific route or event. Now select your top twelve, then top six, and then top three. Look across your list, but particularly at your top three.

- What are you doing?
- Are you solving a problem?
- Are you taking care of people?
- Are you creating something?
- Are you using specific skills—computer oriented, design, math, foreign language?
- What is your environment?
- Are you in a difficult situation that you are turning around?
- Are you in a happy, stable place?

Your past accomplishments give a window into what you might want to focus on for your work. You will still need to translate this into actual job titles and descriptions. Look for people you know who are doing

a job you might want to do—what are these jobs called? Look at job boards for these job titles and read the descriptions to compare with what you think you like about the job. Look at career information websites, such as Vault.com or Wetfeet.com, that describe different jobs.

A good example of using past experience to identify potential function targets is Vince P. Vince had two business-related degrees, including an MBA, and had held various positions in financial services, including finance and reporting, business development, and investor relations. When it came time to pick a function, Vince focused on manager jobs that he thought would reflect the diversity of his skills. The problem was that manager roles are notoriously not specific enough—what does it mean to say that you *manage*? Instead, Vince made a detailed list of his twenty-four achievements, and once he looked at the patterns in these he noticed an interest and talent in turning around crisis situations, raising money, and creating new operating procedures, including working with regulatory and compliance issues. He now positions himself, not just for management in general, but for managing crisis situations or new situations where processes need to be worked out. He has moved from a general manager to an operations and turnaround specialist.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- You need to translate the three-element structure to your interests.
- Geography targets can be as narrow as a specific neighborhood or as broad as multiple countries. You want to look not just at the job market but also at living conditions when selecting your geography targets.
- Industry targets can be uncovered by looking at industry lists, general news and business magazines, and your own interests. Look at all the different products and services of a particular industry to identify possible subcategories.
- Function targets can be uncovered by looking at problems to solve or needs to fill.

EXERCISES

1. What are your initial industry, function, and geography targets?
2. Are you comfortable with your choices? What information do you still need? Can you talk to people in those jobs? Can you shadow someone in that job? Can you read a biography of someone doing a function or working in an industry of interest to you? Remember that business magazines often profile people's backgrounds.

3. Are you specific enough in your targets, or can you still break down any of the three elements into smaller, more specific categories? Does your interest have two geography components?
4. Review the different suggestions throughout the chapter for how to get more specific on your industry, function, and geography selections.

3.3 Personal Decision Criteria When Considering Possible Job Targets

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the different ways a job impacts your personal values and life.
2. Learn strategies and exercises to prioritize the different personal impacts.

The Three Elements Paint an Incomplete Picture

Industry, function, and geography are helpful external criteria. When you look out into the market at the broad spectrum of jobs, having three elements to filter and narrow this down is critical. But you have other criteria important to you internally that are unrelated to a specific industry, function, or geography:

- Employer size (global *Fortune* 500 company, small business)
- Employer history (start-up, established, either OK)
- Employer name recognition (household brand name, start-up)
- Compensation (minimum salary of $x, bonus, equity)
- Opportunity for advancement and growth (clear path of advancement, training)
- Lifestyle (reasonable and set hours, no travel)
- Flexibility (able to work from home, able to work compressed workweek)
- Job structure (lots of autonomy, lots of structure)
- Culture and colleagues (friendly, meritocratic)

Being clear about the three elements will help you research, but understanding your internal criteria will help you ***select*** your next job. From the preceding, you can see three broad categories to consider:

1. Employer characteristics
2. Compensation and advancement
3. Lifestyle and environment

Employer Characteristics

An employer might be big or small, new or established, well branded, or unknown. These are all considerations that may or may not matter to you. Each has its pros and cons:

Table 3.2 Advantages and Disadvantages for a Sampling of Employer Characteristics

Type of Employer	Advantages	Disadvantages

Type of Employer	Advantages	Disadvantages
Big Company	Chance to meet lots of people and grow a big network Likely more structured and defined role	May be overwhelming Role may be very siloed and narrow
Small Company	You may know all or most of your colleagues. Chance to develop a small, but deep, network You might have more variety in your tasks due to lack of staff	Insular culture due to fewer perspectives Less room for growth as there are fewer levels to move up into or fewer other departments to move laterally
New Company	Chance to be part of growing and establishing something Likely fast paced with lots of variety as there are no established structures in place	No track record, so you may be getting into something that turns out different than expected Lack of structures means lots of volatility
Old Company	Established structures and best practices identified Proven track record provides stability and security	Might be less innovative or less receptive to change Colleagues might be closed to new staff, hard to establish credibility
Brand Name	Great résumé builder, company's brand casts a halo effect on your qualifications Glamour and prestige that accompanies working for a famous name	People may have preconceived notions of the brand that cast a negative effect on you Fewer brands means a more narrow search
Unknown Brand	There are more of these companies out there. Not everyone can work at the market leader Today's unknown might be tomorrow's market leader	Not as valuable for marketing for your next job Harder to market yourself for conferences and professional association leadership positions

Of course, there are gradations between each of the preceding extremes. You need to decide which, if any, criteria matter to you and your priorities. For example, is a brand-name company more important *to you* than whether it's big or small?

Compensation and Advancement

Compensation has many elements. Opportunity for advancement can be categorized with compensation because it is directly tied to compensation elements:

- Cash salary
- Sign-on bonus
- Other bonus (year-end, quarterly, performance)
- Profit sharing
- Equity and stock options
- Health benefits
- Insurance
- Retirement plans and pension
- Tuition reimbursement
- Travel and expense reimbursement
- Perks (professional association membership, discounts)
- Size and speed of salary increases and promotion opportunities

Some elements are more standard for certain jobs than others. Nonprofit and government jobs typically do not have any bonus components. You will want to find out what is customary in the sector, industry, and function you are considering, if a specific element of compensation is high on your list of priorities. The range of offerings varies greatly from company to company and even within companies. One company in the same industry and for the same functional role may pay more or less and have a different compensation structure than another company in the same industry and function. Even within companies, there is variation because your compensation depends on the level of the job you are filling, as well as the skills and experience you are bringing to the job. Some roles have a lot of built-in variability. For example, sales roles may have a small defined portion (base salary or draw) and then have bonuses or commissions based on achieving certain goals (e.g., selling $x amount).

Look at your needs and priorities. What are your financial obligations? If you have a lot of student loan or credit card debt, then lower-paying jobs may just be out of the question. If you have a spouse with health benefits that you can use, then maybe that part of the package doesn't matter to you. If you are considering graduate school, then tuition reimbursement may be more attractive. Rank the compensation elements in the previous list, and know which are necessary versus nice to have versus of no interest. Compare your list with what is customary to your job targets to ensure that you are realistic in your job search.

Lifestyle and Environment

While compensation items can be quantified, the lifestyle and environment category includes the qualitative benefits of your job:

- Lifestyle
- Flexibility
- Job structure
- Culture and colleagues

Table 3.3 Areas to Explore When Considering Lifestyle and Environment Issues of Job Choices

Benefit	Considerations
Lifestyle	Is there work and life balance? Are the hours very long? Are the hours volatile, such that it's hard to plan for activities after work? Is there a lot of travel? International travel? Long periods of time away? Do people take vacations and lunch breaks, or is it an all-work mentality?
Flexibility	Can I work from home? Can I start and end my day when it suits me as long as I get the work done? Is this a 9–5 workplace? Can I work longer hours on fewer days? Can I take personal days as needed?
Job structure	Is the role well defined, or will I have to make my own way? Is the day-to-day experience very volatile? Will I be doing a lot of crisis management, or is it

Benefit	Considerations
	predictable?
Culture and colleagues	Do people collaborate and work together, or is it a competitive place? Do I like and respect my boss? Do I like and respect senior management? Do I like my coworkers? Will I make friends here? Will I have mentors and supporters here?

As with employer characteristics and compensation, itemize and prioritize what's important to you. This way, you can look for jobs with these criteria, and you can assess job opportunities that come your way against the things that matter to you.

How to Make Trade-Offs

Take all of these criteria, including industry, function, geography, employer characteristics, compensation, and lifestyle and environment, and create a master list of the things that matter to you. Rank that list, and note any criteria that you absolutely must have in a job. You should have some, but not many, must-have criteria. You want some must-have criteria because these will anchor your job search and keep you from chasing opportunities that will not make sense in the long run. At the same time, no job will meet all of your desired criteria, so you want to remain flexible and open to trading off some criteria for others.

One possible exercise to work through is to force rank your criteria. Make a master list of the criteria, including the preceding suggestions as well as any other criteria you wish to add. Eliminate from the list criteria you don't care about—for example, "Sure, a bonus would be nice to have, but I would still take a job that doesn't provide one." For the remaining criteria, select your top half and then select the top half from there. Keep reducing until you get to the criteria you absolutely must have in your next job and can delete no further.

A good example of using both external market criteria and internal personal criteria to make choices is Emily G., a recent undergraduate looking for her first full-time permanent position. She had interest in financial services and media, HR or office administration, and New York City. Her wish list still included a lot of job possibilities, and therefore the risk of a haphazard, diluted search. But Emily also highly prioritized a brand name company, which narrowed the field considerably. She also knew she did well in a

more structured environment, so she looked for either established roles or at least a boss and colleagues with tendencies to coach and support. Otherwise, she was flexible, looking at new roles and old roles, staying open about all aspects of compensation, and otherwise not restricting herself except for brand name and structure.

Emily wants	Hired for
New York City	New York City
Media or financial services	Media
HR or office administration	HR
Brand name	New division, but of a household name
Structure	Start-up environment, but very strong and supportive manager

Emily met her personal criteria because she knew to look for them. The job she accepted was not initially an obvious match because the company itself is very new, but it is a subsidiary of a brand name. The role also has the potential of being unstructured because of the start-up nature of the subsidiary, but Emily ensured she had supportive structures in place (an experienced boss with a supportive coaching style) before accepting. Similarly, you need to know your personal criteria, and find or negotiate your next job to meet them.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Industry, function, and geography are not enough when selecting your next job.
- You also want to look at employer characteristics, compensation, and lifestyle and environment.
- Not all criteria will or should matter to you. You decide what matters and how much you prioritize the criteria or are willing to make trade-offs.

EXERCISES

1. Using the list of different personal criteria, what are your top three priorities? The force-ranking exercise will help if your top priorities aren't immediately obvious.
2. Do your current industry, function, and geography targets meet the personal criteria you prioritize? If you see that the work and life balance is your top criterion, but your industry of choice is known for a very difficult lifestyle, do you plan to change industries or at least add

additional industries for consideration? What characteristics will you look for in specific organizations to make sure you meet your work and life balance preference?

3. How will you reorient your search to more closely map industries and functions to your personal criteria? Remember the case study of Emily G., who was able to narrow down her target list to big companies in her target industry and function because she recognized that only these companies would have the possible support she prioritized.

3.4 Importance of Multiple Targets

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn why you need more than one target.
2. Learn how to expand your targets without diluting your focus or efforts.

Up to this point, we have been talking about one job search target that maps to a specific industry, function, and geography and recognizes the personal decision criteria that are meaningful to you. It is important to be specific in your job search, so you know how to position yourself, what to research, and how to network and interview effectively. However, a specific target does not mean just one target. You can and should have multiple targets, each one being very specific, as you proceed with your search.

Advantage of Multiple Targets

You need multiple targets to do the following:

- Ensure that the total market of positions you are going for is large enough to sustain your search
- Give you flexibility if the hiring in any one target is slow, declining, or volatile
- Allow you to have alternative options if your search in one target stalls

You want a large job market in your target. This doesn't mean a large number of openings, but rather a large number of people working in that job. The Five O'Clock Club, a national career-coaching firm that has analyzed statistics on thousands of job seekers over twenty-five years, recommends two hundred active jobs as a sign that the market is large enough. [1] This does not mean two hundred job openings are posted and confirmed as needing to be filled. These are are two hundred jobs, where some of these jobs will be filled and others will be vacant. The idea is that with a total of two hundred jobs *or more*, there will always be enough vacancies to support a search.

Remember the art museum example in the first section? If your search target is fund-raising in art museums in Minneapolis, you want to see how many art museums there are and check whether they are big enough to need a fund-raiser at your level. You don't need to identify two hundred art museums because some might need several fund-raisers (e.g., one for individual gifts, one for corporate gifts, one for grants, etc.). But you want to make sure there are two hundred positions. It is unlikely that any city will have two hundred art museum fund-raiser jobs, so this target is too narrow. You might keep Minneapolis and fund-raising constant but want to add art galleries, artist support agencies, and art schools to your target definition. Arts as an industry is too broad; art museum is too narrow. You want to

be in-between. If the number of visual arts organizations still isn't high enough to support a search, you might broaden to performing arts, or you might add a different area altogether, say education. Now you can target fund-raising jobs in art museums *and* education organizations. (Remember that education needs to be broken down, as the arts were. Are you targeting schools themselves, government agencies or nonprofits that work with schools, or after-school programs?)

Another advantage of multiple targets is that it helps with timing if any one target is on a downturn with hiring. If you are a student looking for a full-time job after graduation, different companies recruit on different calendars. Banking and consulting firms recruit at the beginning of the academic year, but most other industries recruit in the spring or close to graduation. You might decide to focus on banks or consulting firms when they are active but add additional companies of interest later on.

Finally, having multiple targets broadens your options, thereby keeping momentum in your search and giving you more leads to pursue. Let's say that your ideal target function is fund-raising, but your experience and skills to date have been more in public relations. You might keep arts as a focus (specifying subcategories to narrow your search enough but not too much), and you might look at PR jobs, as well as fund-raising. This way, you can focus your research and networking on one industry, but you are not shut out if fund-raising is too much of a stretch right now.

Add Alternatives to One but Not All Three Elements

As you now know, a good way to expand your job targets is to change just one of the three elements. In one example, we expanded the industry target of the arts, keeping geography and function constant. In another example, we kept the industry target narrow and the geography constant, but we expanded the functions from fund-raising to fund-raising and PR to target within the industry and geography target. You will know what works for you because you should expand based on your interests in different industries, functions, and geographies and how these possibilities match your personal decision criteria. The more elements you add, the more combinations you must pursue and the more diluted your search efforts may become. If we added education as an industry choice *and* added PR as a function choice, we now have four combinations:

1. Minneapolis + arts + PR
2. Minneapolis + education + PR
3. Minneapolis + arts + fund-raising

4. Minneapolis + education + fund-raising

This adds to the research you need to do, the networking meetings and interviews you need to attend, and the complexity of your marketing.

If you add another geography to the mix, say Chicago, now you have eight combinations:

1. Minneapolis + arts + PR
2. Minneapolis + education + PR
3. Minneapolis + arts + fund-raising
4. Minneapolis + education + fund-raising
5. Chicago + arts + PR
6. Chicago + education + PR
7. Chicago + arts + fund-raising
8. Chicago + education + fund-raising

At some point, the benefit of having more companies and organizations to target is lost by the complexity of having to cover too many disparate targets.

A special consideration before adding geographies or broadening your geography target is that there is a financial cost and physical time for travel that you must factor into your search efforts. It is far easier to contain your search to one geography and expand to multiple industries and functions.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Yes, targets need to be specific as you define each one, but you do not need to have only one target overall.
- There are significant advantages to having multiple targets, including increasing the size of your overall job market, increasing your flexibility to react to slowdowns in any one job market, and increasing your options should one target prove elusive.
- It is best to change just one element—either industry or function or geography—but not all three, to prevent search efforts from getting too confusing and diluted.
- Expanding geography targets is more difficult than expanding industry or function because of the financial and time requirements for travel.

EXERCISE

1. How might you expand the target you currently have? Make a list of industry, function, and geography interests. Rank your top combinations. Are you changing too many elements and possibly diluting your search? Or are your targets still too narrow?
2. If you are having trouble deciding how to expand your search, look at industries and functions related to the one you have selected. Look at the core skills you are using in the function you want and think about what other roles within the same industry might use those skills. Look at the industry you've selected and see if there are organizations from the different sectors (private, nonprofit, government) that you can add. Or see if the companies you want collaborate with other companies—these partners might be added to your target list.

3.5 Chapter Review and Exercises

Identifying your job search targets is step 1 of the six-step job search process because it informs all of the following steps:

- A specific target enables you to create marketing (step 2) that is appropriate to your prospective employers.
- In the *research* step, we will focus on finding the trends, challenges, and other nuances of your job targets. We also will focus on finding the structure and actual people of organizations that are active in your industry, function, and geography. By specifying your targets, you will know what to research in depth (step 3) and how to find this very specific information.
- You can define your networking and interviewing (step 4) around contacts relevant to your target.
- When you organize and troubleshoot your search (step 5), you can pace your search with what you know of a typical search in that target, and you can troubleshoot your results with what is expected for your target.
- When you negotiate your offer (step 6), you can build on the compensation structure and amounts that are customary for your target.

By looking at how to define your job target the way an employer defines jobs (the three elements of industry, function, and geography), you are grounding your search efforts in a practical, actionable way. Yet, we also reviewed other criteria that are meaningful to your job decisions personally (the decision criteria broadly categorized as employer characteristics, compensation and advancement, and lifestyle and environment). This way, you focus efforts not just on what the market wants but also on what you want.

Chapter Takeaways

- You cannot consider every job available, so you need a structure through which to filter the possibilities and narrow your job search targets.
- Three elements of a well-defined job search target are industry, function, and geography.
- Each element can be further specified and may need to be, depending on how broad it is.
- You need to translate the three-element structure to your interests.

- Geography targets can be as narrow as a specific neighborhood or as broad as multiple countries. You want to look not just at the job market but also at the living conditions when selecting your geography targets.
- Industry targets can be uncovered by looking at industry lists, general news and business magazines, and your own interests. Look at all the different products and services of a particular industry to identify possible subcategories.
- Function targets can be uncovered by looking at problems to solve or needs to fill.
- Industry, function, and geography are not enough when selecting your next job.
- You also want to look at employer characteristics, compensation and advancement, and lifestyle and environment.
- Not all criteria will or should matter to you. You decide what matters and how much you prioritize the criteria or are willing to make trade-offs.
- Yes, targets need to be specific as you define each one, but you do not need to have only one overall target.
- There are significant advantages to having multiple targets, including increasing the size of your overall job market, increasing your flexibility to react to slowdowns in any one job market, and increasing your options should one target prove elusive.
- It is best to change just one element of the industry-function-geography model to prevent search efforts from getting too confusing and diluted.
- Expanding geography targets is more difficult than expanding industry or function because of the financial and time requirements for travel.

Chapter Review

1. What are the three elements of a well-defined job search target?
2. Why is using the three elements to filter important to your job search?
3. Why are the three elements not enough to make decisions about your next job?
4. What are other criteria you need to consider as you search for a job that is right for you?
5. What does it mean to have multiple targets?
6. Why are multiple targets helpful?
7. How might you expand your targets without diluting your search efforts too much?

SuccessHawk: All about You

Log in to SuccessHawk and go to the right-hand menu bar. Under "My Account," click on "Personal Profile." Spend some time thinking about the information you are asked to provide here. This will help you determine what kinds of jobs and careers you should pursue.

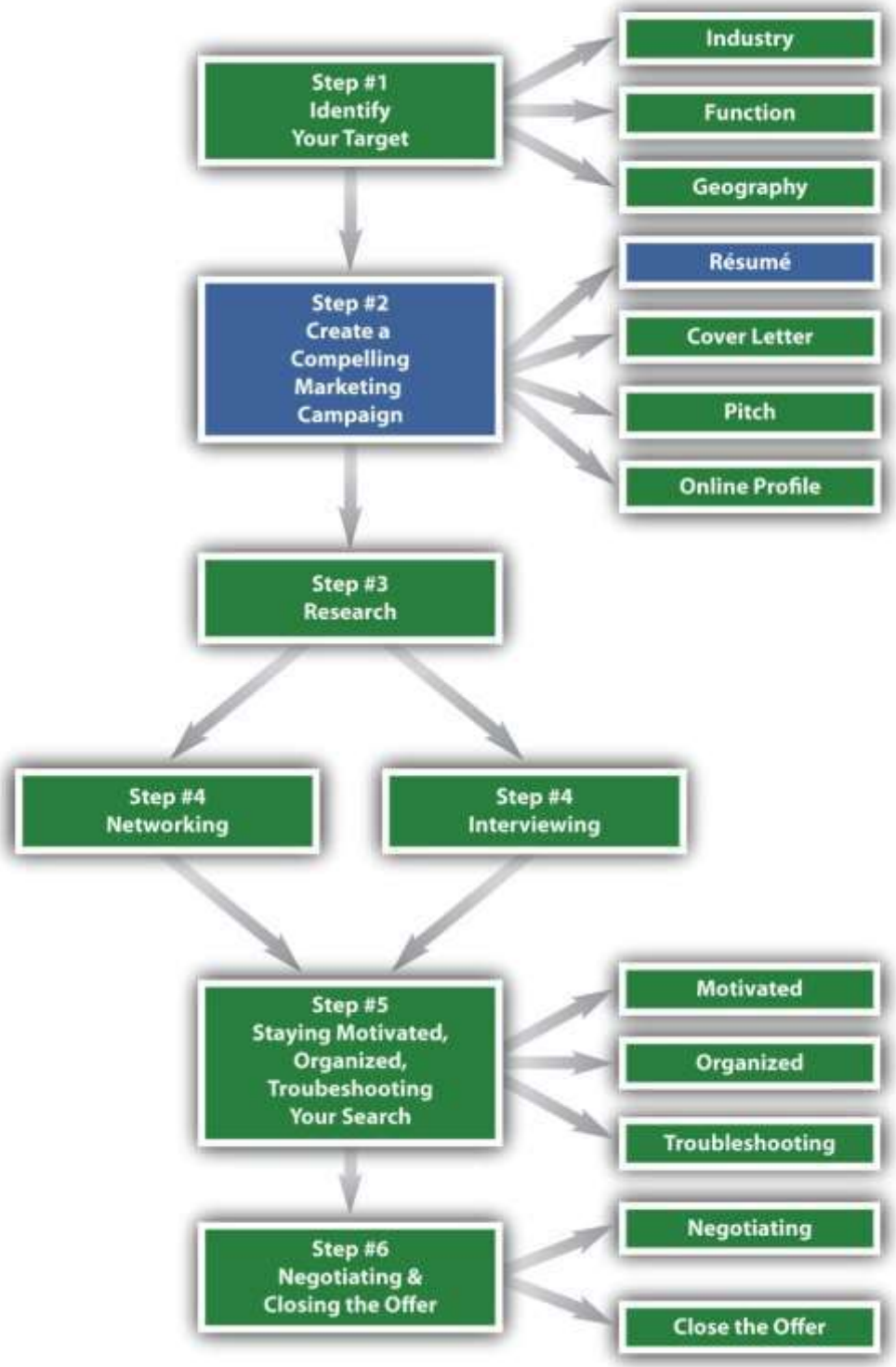
SuccessHawk: Goal Setting

Clearly defined goals help focus your attention on your job search objectives, the actions you need to take to achieve your objectives, and the time you need to spend on your job search.

To access the goal-setting tool, go to the right-hand menu bar and click on "Goal Setting" in the "Interactive Features" section.

Chapter 4: Step 2: Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign, Part I: Résumé

Figure 4.1 The Six-Step Job Search Process—Step 2



Overview

Market Yourself First with Your Résumé At this point in your search, you have completed step 1 with a specific industry, function, and geography in mind. Step 2 (creating a compelling

marketing campaign) consists of four distinct tools that can help construct a strong, effective, and successful job search:

1. Your résumé
2. Your cover letter
3. Your online profile
4. Your pitch

This chapter will focus only on your résumé. Chapter 5 "Step 2 (Continued): Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign, Part II: Cover Letter, Pitch, and Online Profile" will complete this step, and we will then focus on the remainder of your marketing campaign: your cover letter, your pitch, and your online profile.

Marketing Focus. Your résumé is a marketing document that sells your candidacy. It provides an outline of your educational background, your work experience, and the key skills you have acquired. Your résumé should be marketed in a format that is pleasing to read, efficient in its use of the English language, and so concise that it fits on one page. Once you have approximately ten years of experience, it is more acceptable to have a two-page résumé, but until then, you should adhere to a one-page document. Recruiters can frown on the audacity of a college student with a two-page résumé. Whether you are not sure you can fill a one-page résumé, or whether you think it's not possible to fit your information to only one page, this chapter will help you get to your goal: an exceptional, one-page résumé.

Quality, Clarity, and Accuracy. Your résumé is the most critical component, or cornerstone, of your marketing campaign and it must meet two important criteria:

1. Your résumé must be written in a clear and concise manner so the reader can quickly grasp what you offer as a candidate. Most seasoned recruiters scan a résumé in about seven to ten seconds, but do not let that short review time throw you. Recruiters have an eye for the key things to look for in a résumé, so a lot of care should be put into its construction. That construction should highlight the following features:
   - Your strengths
   - Your responsibilities
   - Your accomplishments
2. Your résumé must be completely error-free. A résumé represents you when you are not there. Recruiters look for reasons to reduce the number of résumés to review, so one error can be all that is needed to

discard your résumé and your candidacy. This is true in both good and bad economies, so take great care to guarantee 100 percent accuracy.

Proofread your résumé several times, use spell check, and ask someone who is exceptional at proofreading to review it. Always assume that an error lurks somewhere in your résumé and review it and review it and review it until you find that error! Résumés often have the following common errors:

- Misspellings (Spell check does not catch every misspelled word; *meat* will not be corrected if you meant to write *meet*.)
- Errors in verb tense (Past experiences should be written in the past tense and current experiences in the current tense.)
- Grammatical errors of any kind
- Inconsistent formatting
- Inappropriate length

How to Craft the Perfect Résumé. This is a trick title because there is no perfect résumé. You could always choose to have a particular bullet written in ways that are grammatically correct, are results oriented, and use action verbs, but writing a résumé is not a perfect science. You could show your résumé to five different recruiters and you might get five different opinions. There is no need to worry. The important thing is that it is well-written and highlights your accomplishments (no matter how big or how not so big). It's important that the format be consistent and that you get an opinion from a professional, whether it is someone from career services, a professor, or a person who is currently working in the field in which you are most interested.

On-Campus Recruiting. If you are participating in on-campus recruiting (when a company comes onto your campus to recruit), three interview scenarios are possible: open, closed, or a mixed schedule. The school dictates the type of schedule, and it's important to know in which type you are participating:

1. An open schedule allows any student to go to the career services office to drop their résumé for the specific position in which they are interested. An open schedule, therefore, is open to any candidate who wishes to be considered for an interview. The company recruiter will then review all of the résumés and select the top ten or twelve candidates they will interview on campus. (Thirty-minute interview schedules allow for twelve students to be interviewed, while forty-five-minute interview schedules allow for nine

students to be interviewed.) The company will select the length of interviews when they initially book the schedule with career services.

2. A closed schedule happens when the recruiter selects all of the ten or twelve individuals they will interview either from the résumé book, from interactions they have had on campus, or from a colleague's recommendation. Perhaps they met a student who impressed them at a marketing event. The recruiter could choose to include that student in a closed schedule.
3. Half open/half closed schedules are a hybrid of the two preceding schedules. Half the students will be selected from students who have dropped their résumés, and the recruiter will select the other half from the résumé book, a recommendation, or a direct interaction with the student while they were on campus.

Whether you drop your résumé for an open schedule or you are selected to participate in a closed schedule, the recruiting cycle is fast paced and résumés can be easily missed due to no fault of the job seeker and résumé writer. Sometimes recruiters review hundreds of résumés to find the ten or twelve they will pursue, and sometimes résumés can be missed because of something as simple as pages sticking to one another.

Should your résumé be one of the many that isn't selected, you can write to the recruiter, using your cover letter to make a strong case for why you should be considered. In some cases, this may work to get you an interview. In other cases, it will not. You can easily be passed over for no reason.

The recruiting process is not perfect, so it's recommended that you apply for as many positions as possible. Never rely solely on the submission of one résumé (Chapter 5 "Step 2 (Continued): Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign, Part II: Cover Letter, Pitch, and Online Profile" will give you additional strategies to get your foot in the door). Instead, when on-campus recruiting takes place, apply for all positions that fit your strengths and interests.

Off-Campus Recruiting. Don't limit your search to only on-campus opportunities because off-campus opportunities can also be fruitful. Conducting both an on-campus and off-campus job search only increases the number of opportunities you can consider. You will want to pursue off-campus opportunities for three reasons:

1. Your school does not have a robust career services department that attracts a variety of employers.
2. You are interested in a company that does not recruit on campus.

3. You want to hedge your bets to have as many opportunities as possible, representing a mix of on-campus and off-campus possibilities.

   The main difference between on-campus and off-campus recruiting is that in off-campus recruiting, you manage the entire process. You are responsible for getting your résumé into the hands of the company recruiters or hiring managers. You schedule the interview and follow up on your own. An off-campus job search demands that you are organized and proactive enough to keep things moving.

   Make an Exceptional First Impression. Your résumé will probably be the first impression a potential employer has of you and your qualifications, so it must hold their attention long enough to propel your job search forward. Use this opportunity to impress and to intrigue them enough to want to interview you. This chapter will outline multiple strategies you can employ to be seriously considered for numerous job opportunities.

4.1 Purpose and Goal of a Résumé

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand that a résumé is a marketing document that sells your candidacy and represents you when you are not there.
2. Get specific ideas of how to quantify your accomplishments and create a résumé that proves your worth to past employers, which then proves your worth to future employers.

A well-written résumé can do seven specific things for you and your job search:

It Represents You When You Are Not There

Your résumé can be uploaded to global job boards like Monster, CareerBuilder, and others in a few minutes. It can be sent to a company's online database with a push of a button. It can then be shared with dozens of recruiters and hiring managers without you even knowing about it. In fact, it's a lot easier to get your résumé in front of a recruiter than it is to have a physical presence in their office; therefore, make certain it's a well-written, well-positioned document that makes an exceptional first impression.

It Quantifies Your Accomplishments

The best résumés quantify results and accomplishments clearly and easily. Here are some examples:

1. If you reduced errors by 35 percent, if you increased profits by 55 percent, and if 75 percent of your customers are repeat customers, include this information clearly, succinctly, and proudly.
2. If you have been a student teacher with thirty-five students in a classroom and student grades improved by 25 percent, include that as well.
3. If you have worked as an administrative assistant in a dentist's office and you are part of a marketing team that has increased new patient accounts by 10 percent last quarter, include that!
4. If you worked in the school library and the number of lost books has declined by 50 percent, or if you provide guidance to approximately fifty students per day, that information should be in your résumé.

Quantifying your accomplishments gives your résumé readers the specific information they need to know about your abilities and to be intrigued by what you can do for them.

It Clearly States Your Abilities

Focus on the results of your actions. Being results oriented helps résumé readers understand your abilities. What exactly do you do, or what have you done in the past? Your résumé should answer this question very quickly. For example, if you have been responsible for opening and closing a retail store on a daily basis and for managing the register that took in approximately $5,000 worth of merchandise a day, state that clearly and concisely. If you have written three to four sports articles for your school paper every month for the past three years, include that as well. The more you quantify your accomplishments, the more your abilities will be understood.

It Shows Your Command of the Written Word

You don't have to be an English major to make sure that your résumé is well-written. If your school has a career services department that offers résumé workshops, be sure to participate in them. Ask an older sibling who is in the workplace to review your résumé before it goes into cyberspace or to a future employer. Other options include asking a teacher, professor, or perhaps someone with whom you worked with or for in the past to review your résumé. Whatever the case, it is your responsibility to have a well-written résumé. You can pay for résumé-writing services, but finding someone who knows the basics of solid résumé writing may be all you need, along with this textbook. Remember that if it has one misspelled word, your résumé could easily be dismissed, along with your candidacy. It's critical that your résumé be accurate and well written.

It Creates Talking Points for Your Future Interviews

Clearly listing your accomplishments and quantifying those accomplishments can create talking points for your future interviews. For example, perhaps your bullet point is the following:

- Responsible for the intake and outtake of approximately 1,000 books daily, ensuring that all library users are logged into the new electronic database, which has decreased the number of lost books by 80 percent in the past year.

Many individuals have to think about the results of their work. Including this detailed information in your résumé actually allows you to easily talk about the value you've brought to previous employers. During an interview, with the preceding example in mind, you can easily talk about how you use technology to improve processes. You can discuss the team environment of the library staff and how you are all working toward decreasing the number of lost books. It shows that you have positively affected the bottom line by helping libraries hold onto books versus losing them, which results in unnecessary fees to library users.

It Proves Your Worth to Your Past Employers

Whenever including bullet points about past work, always tie your efforts to the bottom line. Earlier examples in this chapter included the following accomplishments:

- Reducing errors by 35 percent
- Increasing profits by 55 percent
- Boosting repeat sales to 75 percent

Information relating to a company's bottom line is exactly what employers want to read. Highlighting results like these increases your chances of having your résumé noticed.

It Demonstrates What You Can Do for Your Future Employer

Unlike financial investments, past performance *is* an indicator of future success, so include and quantify your past performance, and future employers will be inclined to believe you can do the same for them. They will believe it, but you have to continue supporting that belief with your exceptional networking and interviewing skills (Chapter 7 "Step 4: Network Effectively" and Chapter 8 "Step 4 (Continued): Master the Interview"). Remember, however, that your résumé is introductory in nature. You want to get their attention and initiate their interest so your foot can inch ever closer to getting in their door.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A résumé is a marketing document that represents you when you are not there.

- A résumé quantifies your accomplishments and proves your worth to your future employer by proving your worth to your previous employer.

EXERCISES

1. Quantify two or three accomplishments for each of your past employers (this can include paid and nonpaid work experiences).
2. Create two or three bullets for each of your past work experiences and use them to note quantified accomplishments.
3. Share your bullet points with a peer and ask that person to critique your points while you critique your peer's accomplishments.

4.2 Header and Objective

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Make certain that your header is professional and gives your prospective employers a positive first impression.
2. Learn the importance of clarity when writing an objective.

Header

Your résumé header should include four items:

1. Your full name
2. Your address
3. Your e-mail address
4. Your phone number

Your Full Name

Include your full name. If your first name is difficult to pronounce, you could include your nickname in quotation marks or parentheses (e.g., Xioang "Angie" Kim or Massimo "Mass" Rapini). Names are typically bolded and centered on the page, but aligning your name to the right or left is also appropriate.

Your Address

You can use your school address or your permanent home address, or both. Most recruiters prefer both because, at times, they may need to send information to both addresses at different times of the year. Clarity is always a very good thing.

Your E-mail Address

Have a professional e-mail address because employers frown upon unprofessional addresses such as greeneyes2@gmail.com or runningguy62@verizon.net. It's best to use your first name and your last name in a simple e-mail format.

Establish a professional e-mail address as soon as possible (e.g., c.thompson@gmail.com or e.autoris@verizon.net). It's much more relevant than c.thompson@rutgers.edu, especially if you graduated six months earlier. If you continue your job search after graduation, you might not be permitted to use your school e-mail address, nor should you once you have graduated. Given this, obtaining a professional e-mail address is a good networking opportunity to contact the individuals with whom you've been in touch regarding your job search. Inform those individuals and any relevant recruiters that you've updated your contact information.

Your Phone Number

Include only one phone number on your résumé and record a professional voice mail. Do not play music on your voice mail. and speak clearly and succinctly. It's also recommended that you not answer your cell phone if you are in a loud area, especially when you do not recognize the number. Allow the call to go to voice mail, listen to it in a quiet place, and return the call as soon as possible. It very well could be a recruiter who would not be impressed by you shouting, "What? I can't hear you!" A professional voice mail might sound like the following: "You've reached John Smith at 555.555.5555. Please leave a message and I will call you back as soon as possible."

Include your name and repeat the phone number to help the recruiter know for certain that the proper person has been reached. Clarity is always helpful and appreciated. Lastly, be sure to check your voice mail on a regular basis, even if you are on vacation.

Objective

Recruiters appreciate clarity, and an objective can help a recruiter understand exactly what you offer or what business would best suit your background. Objectives can be very targeted and mention a specific position or can be a bit broader in describing a job function. Whatever objective you choose, it should state what you are looking for and what you have to contribute. It's not only about you. It's about what you can do for them. Here are some examples of effective objectives:

- An entry-level accounting position in audit, allowing me to use my analytical and detail orientation to ensure accuracy in all reports and reviews.
- A communications internship at a top media company that will allow me to use my knowledge and experience to produce and edit clear and effective communications.

- An entry-level position in the health-care industry, enabling me to use my business and communications skills to enhance a company's bottom line.
- A full-time marketing position at a *Fortune* 500 company, enabling me to utilize my knowledge and experience to enhance marketing efforts firm-wide.

Your objective should not ramble past two lines because no recruiter appreciates reading a paragraph-sized objective.

Using the four preceding items, Figure 4.2 "Sample Résumé—Header and Objective" illustrates how our sample résumé looks thus far.

Figure 4.2 Sample Résumé—Header and Objective

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A header is the first thing a recruiter sees on your résumé. This information should make a strong and professional impression of your candidacy.
- A professional voice mail recording is critical to being considered for a position.
- An objective should be clear and succinct, allowing the reader to understand what type of position you are looking for.

EXERCISES

1. Draft the header to your résumé, including all core components.
2. Create professional voice mails for your cell phone and your home phone if they will be used for your job search.

3. Create a professional e-mail address separate from your school e-mail address, unless you already have one. This is especially important when you enter your senior year.
4. Draft two objectives: one that references a specific job and another that references an entry-level position in a certain industry.

4.3 Education Section

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn how to present your education to position you for success with your résumé reader.
2. Include vital information regarding your GPA, major and minor selection, and extracurricular activities so prospective employers can get a sense for your focus.

While you are in school, or up to one year after you graduate, your *education* section should appear before your *experience* section. Once you are a working professional, these two sections can and should be flipped.

Additional items in this section include the following:

- Expected graduation date: Listing the month or the season both work well here (e.g., Spring 2013 or May 2013).
- Relevant coursework: You may choose to list relevant coursework if it pertains to the position for which you are applying.
- Major and minor: You may choose to include both your major and your minor.
- GPA: You may include your overall GPA or you may decide to list the GPA of your major. It's recommended that you not include your GPA if it is below 3.3. Certain industries are more concerned with GPA than others, including consulting, investment banking, and trading, which can require a 3.6 or 3.7 and above. It's best to research each industry to better familiarize yourself with such requirements because this can vary by industry and by company.
- Extracurricular activities: Recruiters may be impressed to read that you were active in your college and that you belonged to targeted student clubs. If you held any leadership posts, that information should be included as well.
- Study abroad: If you have studied abroad, list that here. You should include the name of the university, the city and country, and the coursework.

Nontraditional college students (those who have significant work experience and then decide to obtain their degree) may want to list experience before education. Since this is unusual for a new graduate, you should consult with either career services or a career coach regarding this résumé order.

Here is an example of how to list your education information.

If you attended only one college, only that college should be listed in this section.

If you transferred from another college, you should list both schools in this section. The first school you list is the current school you attend, followed by the previous school. If and when you attend graduate school, law school, and so forth, your postgraduate school would then be listed first.

High schools, no matter how prestigious, should not be included in a résumé.

If you've received additional training and certifications, this information does not belong in your education section. Instead, it can be listed in skills and additional information, which will be reviewed in the section of this chapter titled "Skills, Additional Information, and References."

Using the preceding information, Figure 4.3 "Sample Résumé—Header, Objective, and Education" illustrates what our résumé looks like thus far.

Figure 4.3 Sample Résumé—Header, Objective, and Education

John M. Smith
C: 555.555.5555 • E: John.Smith@utexas.edu

School Address:
123 Campus Street
Austin, TX 12345

Permanent Address:
456 Oak Drive
Queens, NY 67890

OBJECTIVE: An entry level position in the healthcare industry, enabling me to use my business and communications skills to enhance a company's bottom line.

EDUCATION:

University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois Expected graduation date: 2013
Pursuing a BS degree in mathematics with honors and with a minor in economics
GPA: 3.7
Coursework: Honors Calculus IBL Sequence; Honors Analysis; Honors Econometrics; Algebra
Extracurricular Activities: Mathematics Club, Member; Investment Banking Club, Treasurer;
Oxford University, London, England: course on Shakespeare, Spring 2010.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Your education section should clearly list your college(s) and include a number of important details, including GPA, majors and minors, and extracurricular activities.
- Your candidacy can be enhanced by including supporting coursework, so include that as well.

EXERCISES

1. Create your education section, using the details listed in this chapter.
2. Include all important aspects of this section: your expected year of graduation, GPA (if over 3.3), major and minor, relevant coursework, and extracurricular activities.
3. Pair up with someone in your class, review their information, and critique it to make the section better.
4. Have your classmate review your work by critiquing it so you can enhance your education section.

4.4 Work Experience

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand that your work experience is perhaps the most important part of your résumé because it bridges the gap between being a college student and becoming a potential employee.
2. Include quantified, results-oriented information in your bullets to help engage your prospective employer.

This section is arguably the most important of your résumé because most recruiters look for past work experience as a predictor of future work experience. The most conventional method of listing your work experience is in opposite chronological order (as with your education section). List your most recent job experience first and include the following information:

- The name of the company
- The city and state and, when outside the United States, the country
- The years of employment (If you've had several jobs at one company, include the overall years of experience, and for separate jobs, note specific years of experience.)
- Three to seven bullet points describing your responsibilities and the results of your work, depending on the number of years of experience

It's important to use bullet points because they clearly and succinctly list your responsibilities and achievements. Recruiters do not enjoy or appreciate reading long paragraphs because they want to quickly skim the information.

Action verbs are helpful in this section of your résumé. You may want to consider the following words.

Accomplished	Generated	Showed
Analyzed	Influenced	Standardized
Assisted	Introduced	Structured
Calculated	Investigated	Supplied
Circulated	Joined	Supported
Clarified	Led	Surveyed
Collected	Located	Taught
Conducted	Maintained	Trained
Decreased	Managed	Updated

Directed	Marketed	Used
Distributed	Negotiated	Utilized
Documented	Organized	Verified
Edited	Programmed	Won
Eliminated	Provided	Worked
Expanded	Resolved	Wrote
Expedited	Responded	
Facilitated	Reviewed	

Bullets should be results oriented and used to help quantify as many things as possible. Earlier in this chapter, we referenced the following examples:

- Reducing errors by 35 percent
- Increasing profits by 25 percent
- Boosting repeat sales to 75 percent

Here is how these items can be put into bullets:

- Reduced errors by 35 percent by creating an Excel program that immediately highlights inconsistencies when raw data are entered into the system.
- Increased profits by 25 percent by gathering best practices and creating a training program for all new hires.
- Boosted repeat sales by 75 percent by delivering the very best customer service, as evidenced by numerous satisfaction letters and comments to senior management.

Work experience comes in many forms. The majority of your experience will be paid, but it's fine to include unpaid work experience. Perhaps you had an unpaid internship working in the marketing department of a magazine. Absolutely include that in your work experience. Perhaps you volunteered to help a teacher organize their classroom, and perhaps you interacted with students and helped them be prepared for the lesson plan. Include that in your work experience. The bottom line here is that through every experience, either paid or unpaid, you learn something. If you are washing cars, you learn the value of a production line: someone washes, someone rinses, and someone receives the payment. It's fine to list work experiences such as babysitting, where your bullet could read as follows:

- Managed three to four hours of after-school activities for three children ages seven to eleven, ensuring homework was completed accurately and efficiently.

You may work in a grocery store and include the following information in your bullet:

- Assisted dozens of customers daily with all aspects of the store's retail offerings, including answering questions about the locations of items and checking out customers quickly and efficiently at the register.

Sample résumés are included the end of this chapter. Refer to them when drafting your résumé as some have quite a bit of related work experience, some have very little, and others have international exposure. Each sample will give you an idea of how to craft your résumé for your job search.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Your work experience section is one of the most important on your résumé because recruiters will review this in light of the opportunities they have available.
- No matter what the type of position, it's important to quantify information and your accomplishments. The clearer your experience, the easier it will be for a recruiter to match you to a position.
- Bullet points are preferred when drafting your responsibilities and accomplishments. Recruiters can easily review bullet points versus reading long, drawn-out paragraphs.
- A results-oriented résumé is preferred. Include how you helped your employer succeed and grow.

EXERCISES

1. Review some of the résumés at the end of this chapter.
2. Record all of your work experiences, starting with your most recent.
3. Use three or four bullet points for each experience.
4. Try to tie as many of your responsibilities as possible to the company's or organization's bottom line.
5. When writing your bullet points, remember to be results oriented.
6. Draft a résumé using what you learned in this section, and pair up with someone in this class. Review and critique their information and have them do the same for you. This should strengthen your résumé overall.

4.5 Skills, Additional Information, and References

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Provide your skills and additional information to offer another dimension of your candidacy, one that can resonate with your résumé reader.
2. Communicate with your references in advance because references are a vital part of the job search process and can position you for success.

Skills and Additional Information

This section of your résumé should include, but not be limited to, the following information:

- Computer skills: Most employers expect Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, but include additional software knowledge (e.g., Dreamweaver).
- Language skills: Include your honest level of fluency (e.g., Spanish, fluent, French, beginner).
- Community service: Include any volunteer work, such as park clean-ups, walk-a-thons for various causes, fundraising events of any kind. Be specific about your responsibilities and your results including: dollars raised, hours spent, leadership position, end-user experience (e.g. fund-raising efforts reached over $20K, providing for five developmentally disabled students and their parents to travel to Florida to swim with the dolphins.)
- Interests: This information can help to build rapport with interviewers. It's best to keep it simple and include things that are truly of interest to you such as reading, movies, and physical fitness (in general) or tennis, football, softball (specifically). It's true that the "Interests" section is not a core piece of information, but the vast majority of interviewers enjoy reviewing this, and the rapport you build can be helpful!

You can include additional information:

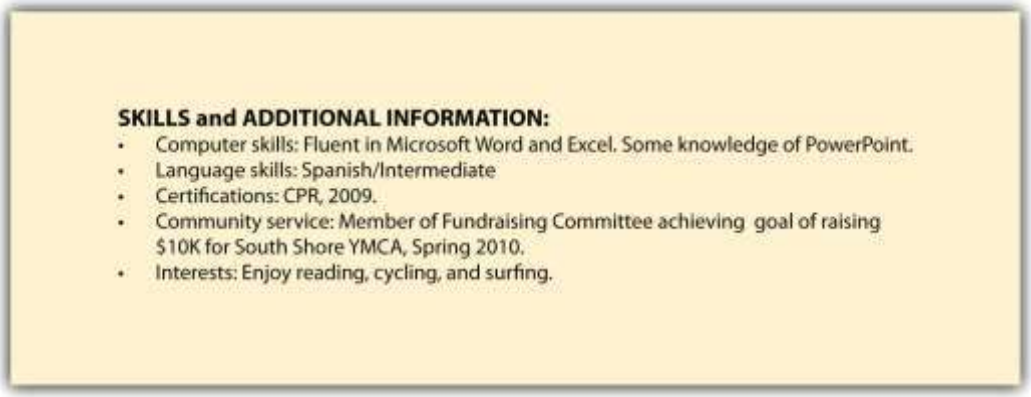
- Licenses and certifications: Individuals can achieve literally hundreds of professional licenses in the areas of health care, finance, real estate, insurance, and so forth. For a complete list, Google professional licenses, and you will be able to identify if you should include any on your résumé. Examples include Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Level I, Licensed Real Estate Agent, and so forth.

Important note: Never misrepresent any information on your résumé. If you have knowledge of another language, qualify your knowledge as fluent, intermediate, or beginner. If you don't speak a language other

than English, do not include a bullet point about language because you might not know the language capabilities of your interviewers.

Some résumé readers differ on this, but listing your interests can help develop rapport with your résumé reader and interviewer. No matter what the skill level of the interviewer, having a common interest can always begin a great conversation.

An example of information listed in this section could include the following.



References

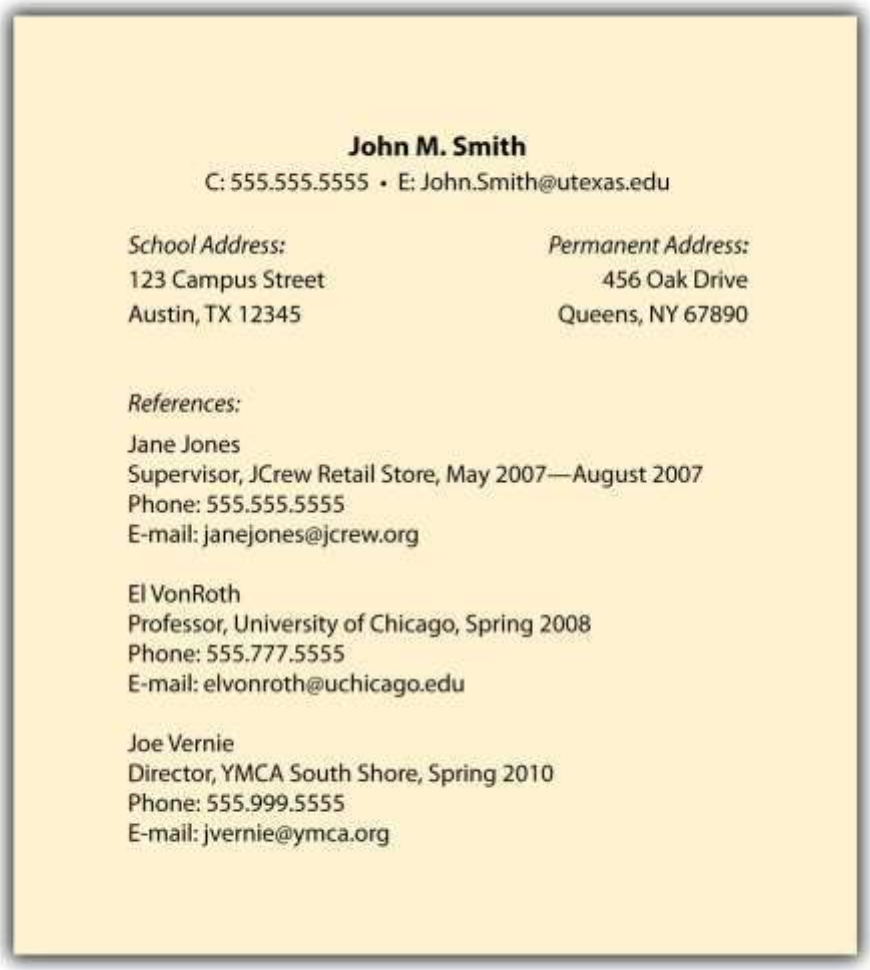
One of the famous last lines of a résumé is "References furnished upon request." This is not necessary because employers can simply ask for references when they want them. However, a proactive, impressive strategy would be to create a single-page document that includes the following information:

- Your header (so it's a matched set with the résumé), including your name, address, and contact information
- Your reference's name
- Your reference's company and title
- Your reference's relationship to you (e.g., manager, peer, vendor, and so forth)
- Your reference's contact information, including their e-mail address and phone number

Do not widely distribute this information because it contains the contact information of your references, which you should treat as confidential. However, having the list prepared enables you to quickly share this information with prospective employers upon request.

Help your references help you by notifying them that they can expect a call and by highlighting the most important qualities you want them to mention.

An example of this document could include the following.



John M. Smith
C: 555.555.5555 • E: John.Smith@utexas.edu

School Address:
123 Campus Street
Austin, TX 12345

Permanent Address:
456 Oak Drive
Queens, NY 67890

References:

Jane Jones
Supervisor, JCrew Retail Store, May 2007—August 2007
Phone: 555.555.5555
E-mail: janejones@jcrew.org

El VonRoth
Professor, University of Chicago, Spring 2008
Phone: 555.777.5555
E-mail: elvonroth@uchicago.edu

Joe Vernie
Director, YMCA South Shore, Spring 2010
Phone: 555.999.5555
E-mail: jvernie@ymca.org

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Skills and additional information and another dimension to any résumé. Recruiters should know your computer skills and any language skills you may have. This section of your résumé also presents a great opportunity to share information about any community service work you've done.
- Listing your interests often helps build rapport with recruiters and interviewers.
- Misrepresenting your accomplishments or abilities is unethical. Many otherwise-qualified candidates often find themselves in uncomfortable positions when they have misrepresented even the slightest item on their résumé.
- The names of your references do not belong on a résumé.
- It's not necessary to include the line "References furnished upon request."

- Having a reference document is very helpful when conducting a proactive and efficient job search.

EXERCISES

1. Draft this section of your résumé and include all the details mentioned in this chapter.
2. Qualify your computer and language skills as fluent, familiar, or having some knowledge. If you speak only one language, don't include this information on your résumé.
3. Identify three or four individuals who can serve as your references, and get their permission to give their names and contact information to prospective employers.
4. Speak to your references in advance and let them know about your career goals and which companies you are targeting. You may also ask that they emphasize one particular skill over another (e.g., that you pay great attention to detail or have strong analytical skills).
5. When you are interviewing with a specific company, let your references know in advance that they may be contacted, and ask that they let you know if they are contacted.
6. Thank your references.

4.6 Other Résumé Formats, Including Functional Résumés

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. A chronological résumé has the most-expected résumé format, and while it's good to give a résumé reader what they expect, it's also helpful to know about other types of résumé formats.
2. A functional résumé highlights skills versus specific work experiences.
3. A functional résumé can be used when you think employment gaps or the lack of employment can hurt your candidacy.

Functional Résumés

This chapter thus far has reviewed a résumé that follows a chronological format. Another format to consider is a functional résumé, which highlights the skills you've developed more than the individual jobs you've held.

Functional résumés can be different from what most recruiters will review, so it's best to proceed with care. This includes consulting a career services office and consulting a professional résumé writer.

It's important to note that throughout the many, many years that individuals have been drafting résumés, recruiters have expected to see a chronological résumé with certain sections: employment, education, and additional information. In most cases, it's best to give recruiters what they expect: a chronological résumé.

With that understood, functional résumés can be used for college students and experienced candidates for the following reasons:

- Individuals may want to highlight their skills and achievements rather than the companies for which they worked.
- College students who do not have a strong work experience history can use a functional résumé to give them a chance to include other achievements, honors, and abilities in a very pronounced way.
- Experienced individuals can deemphasize gaps in employment because recruiters often notice gaps and then want those gaps explained.
- Experienced individuals can also deemphasize career mobility and emphasize skills and achievements.

Here are some categories you may want to consider when drafting a functional résumé:

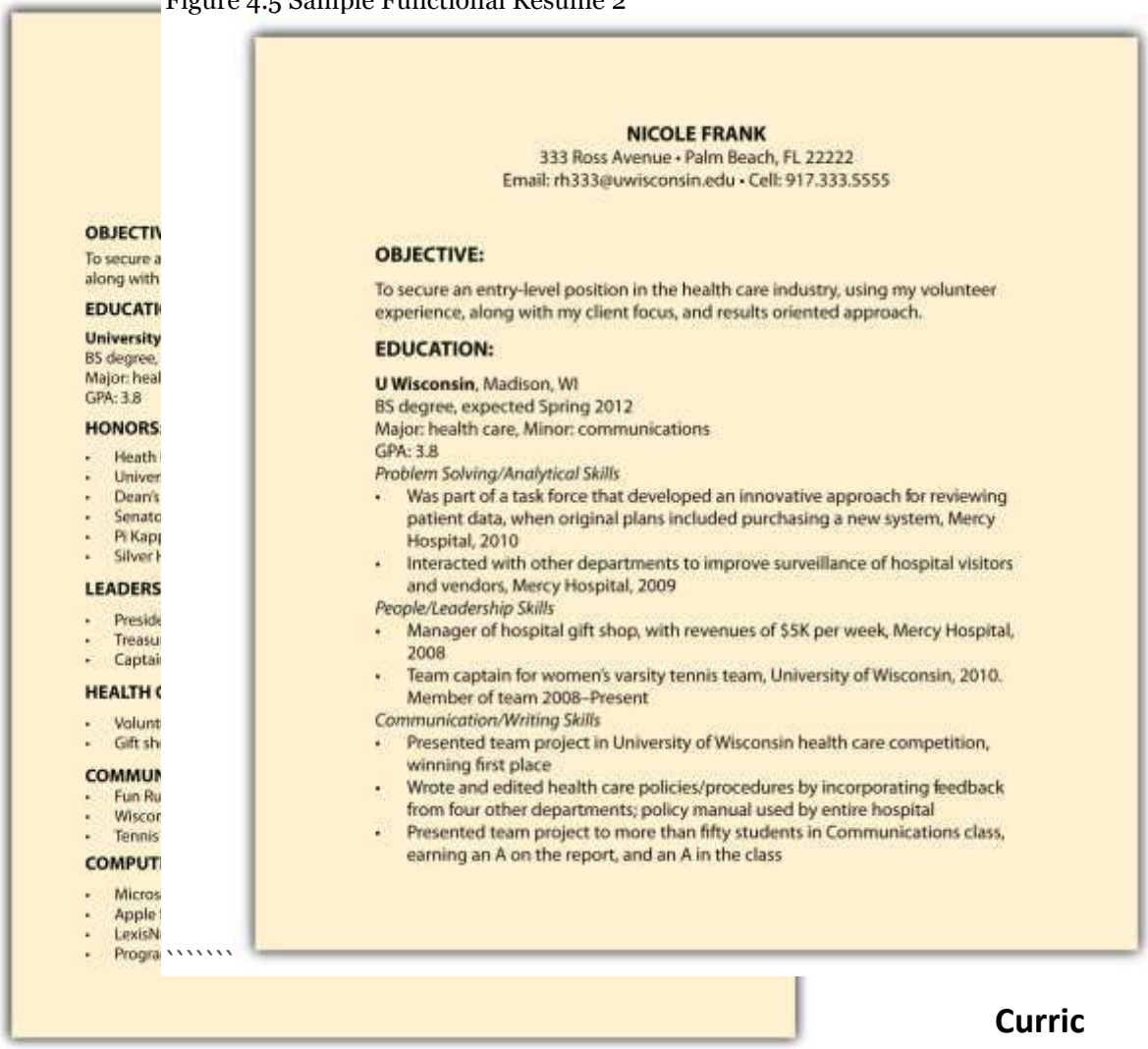
- Communication skills
- Teamwork skills
- Leadership skills

- Honors and special achievements
- Athletic involvement and achievements
- Volunteer experiences

Figure 4.4 "Sample Functional Résumé 1" and Figure 4.5 "Sample Functional Résumé 2" are examples of how a functional résumé might look.

Figure 4.4 Sample Funct

Figure 4.5 Sample Functional Résumé 2



NICOLE FRANK
333 Ross Avenue • Palm Beach, FL 22222
Email: rh333@uwisconsin.edu • Cell: 917.333.5555

OBJECTIVE:

To secure an entry-level position in the health care industry, using my volunteer experience, along with my client focus, and results oriented approach.

EDUCATION:

U Wisconsin, Madison, WI
BS degree, expected Spring 2012
Major: health care, Minor: communications
GPA: 3.8

Problem Solving/Analytical Skills

- Was part of a task force that developed an innovative approach for reviewing patient data, when original plans included purchasing a new system, Mercy Hospital, 2010
- Interacted with other departments to improve surveillance of hospital visitors and vendors, Mercy Hospital, 2009

People/Leadership Skills

- Manager of hospital gift shop, with revenues of $5K per week, Mercy Hospital, 2008
- Team captain for women's varsity tennis team, University of Wisconsin, 2010. Member of team 2008–Present

Communication/Writing Skills

- Presented team project in University of Wisconsin health care competition, winning first place
- Wrote and edited health care policies/procedures by incorporating feedback from four other departments; policy manual used by entire hospital
- Presented team project to more than fifty students in Communications class, earning an A on the report, and an A in the class

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Some people interchange the word résumé with curriculum vitae (CV), which is incorrect because they are different items. A CV is mostly used internationally, particularly for research-oriented positions. A CV is often longer and more detailed than a résumé. In some cases, CVs are six to eight pages long and include

published material and conference information if the person presented information to colleagues. A CV may or may not include biographical information, including marital status and nationality (this is typically the case with international students studying in the United States).

With this said, a résumé is the appropriate document when seeking any nonacademic or nonclinical position in the United States. If you are interested in working overseas, use research to familiarize yourself with an employer's expectation regarding résumés, CVs, and additional information.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Functional résumés are not what most recruiters expect, but they have certain advantages that can help your candidacy.
- Functional résumés highlight specific strengths rather than the name of the company for which you worked.
- CVs are very different from résumés because CVs, which often are used for research-oriented positions, can sometimes be six to eight pages in length.

EXERCISES

1. Think about how you would construct your résumé in a functional format versus a chronological format.
2. Decide which format works best for you: chronological or functional.
3. Review and critique this information with a classmate.

4.7 Documenting Problems: Gaps, Short Stints, and Merging Companies

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn to properly explain any time gaps in your résumé because recruiters have a trained eye and often notice gaps in employment and jobs of short duration.
2. Learn how to position companies that have merged with other companies.

Gaps

Recruiters carefully review résumés and will notice any gaps in either employment or education. While rare, any anomaly should be addressed. For example, perhaps a student was ill for half a semester and didn't graduate in the expected year. Perhaps they had an opportunity to live in another country for a prolonged period of time. A résumé will state the timeline, but the cover letter can be used for more of an explanation. It's best to consult a professional because this situation can be a bit of a minefield.

Short Stints

Recruiters appreciate longevity at a company. If you've worked two summers at the same company, that proves your worth to your employer because they rehired you. If you've jumped from one company to another in short periods of time, that can be considered a disadvantage.

Merging Companies

A list of the top one hundred companies today is vastly different from a list of the top one hundred companies from ten years ago. If you worked for a company that has now merged with another company and no longer has the same name, simply list the name of the new company and put the previous company's name in parentheses. Here is an example:

Pfizer (premerger Warner-Lambert), New York, New York

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Recruiters review a résumé in seven to ten seconds, yet are trained to identify gaps of any kind.
- Recruiters appreciate candidates who have repeat work experiences at a certain employer, such as working at one company for two consecutive summers.
- Companies often merge with other companies, so note the new name first and put the company's original name in parentheses.

EXERCISES

1. Review your résumé with a critical eye toward gaps of any kind: gaps in employment and gaps in your educational experience.
2. Consider how you would explain any existing gaps to a recruiter.
3. Practice your explanation with a classmate and have them critique your response.
4. Meet with someone at your career service office for a mock interview, and have them specifically ask about any gaps in your résumé.
5. Seek out someone in the profession in which you are most interested, and ask if they are willing to review your résumé to help you improve it. It's very helpful to get an industry professional's advice.

4.8 Chapter Review and Exercises

Creating a compelling marketing campaign is a vital step in your job search because it helps you market your skills and abilities to future employers before you meet them. It's a critical link in the six-step job search process. Take great care in creating each of the four components:

1. A résumé
2. A cover letter
3. A pitch
4. An online profile

Your résumé is clearly the cornerstone of your marketing campaign because it sells your candidacy. It also serves as a one-page summary of your strengths, abilities, job responsibilities, educational background, and much more.

The more care you put into writing your résumé, the greater your chances of being noticed by the employer of your choice. The best strategies for writing a résumé are the following:

- Be clear, concise, completely accurate (in terms of grammar and content), and results-oriented.
- Quantify whatever accomplishments you can.
- Proofread your résumé with someone who knows what a résumé should look like and contain.

It's also important to know that while a résumé is a critical piece of your job search, it alone will not get you an interview or a job. A résumé, at best, is subjective, and different individuals have different preferences regarding format, font, length, typeface, and content. Following the guidelines of this chapter can only help position you best for success.

The remaining elements of your marketing campaign will be covered in the following chapter; each element will continue to strengthen your marketing campaign and ultimately, your job search success.

Creating your compelling marketing campaign will be more effective when you are more specific, targeted, and thoughtful:

- Your résumé will prove your success to your past employers, which then proves your worth to your future employers.
- Your cover letter makes the case for why you should be hired because it highlights the two or three critical skills necessary to succeed in the job in which you are most interested.

- Your pitch allows you to introduce yourself in a clear and concise way, highlighting the strengths that will enable you to succeed.
- Your online profile works behind the scenes so you will be noticed by recruiters who seek talent, and also provides a great way to stay connected with your network.

Step 3 is research, which will enable you to gather vast amounts of information about your industry, your function, your geography, and the companies you are targeting.

Chapter Takeaways

- A compelling marketing campaign is vital to your job search and is composed of four things: a résumé, a cover letter, a pitch, and an online profile.
- Your marketing campaign must have high-quality standards because it represents you when you are not there.
- Your résumé is the cornerstone of your marketing campaign, and it positions you for success.
- A well-written résumé can do seven specific things for you and your job search.
- A résumé should include the following sections: header, objective, education, experience, skills (computer and language, when appropriate), and additional information that may include community service, certifications, and interests.
- Bullets in your work experience section should outline your responsibilities and your accomplishments in a clear, results-oriented manner.
- Action verbs should be used to describe your responsibilities.
- Résumés can be presented in two formats: a chronological format and a functional format. Both have advantages and can be used by college students and more experienced candidates.
- A CV is very different from a résumé. CVs are used quite a bit internationally, often for research or clinical positions. CVs also can be six to eight pages in length and include biographical information such as marital status and country of origin.
- Recruiters are trained résumé screeners and actively look for gaps in employment, in addition to short periods of employment.
- Ask three or four individuals to act as references. Proactive candidates create a reference document that lists the names and contact information of people who will serve as positive references.

Chapter Review

1. How can a résumé market you as a candidate?
2. What are the two most important things a résumé must be?
3. What are the main things a résumé can do for you?
4. What are the most important sections of a résumé?
5. Why would you use an objective on your résumé?
6. What should you record on your voice mail?
7. Why should you not pick up your cell phone if you are in a noisy place, especially if you don't recognize the number?
8. Why are action verbs important?
9. Why is it important to quantify your accomplishments?
10. Why is it helpful to be results oriented?
11. Why is it important to include skills, certifications, and interests on your résumé?
12. What is the difference between a chronological and a functional résumé? What are the advantages of each type?
13. What is the difference between a résumé and a CV?
14. Why do recruiters care about short stints at employers and any gaps in employment?
15. What is the most productive way to present references to a prospective employer?
16. How can you keep your references up to date regarding your job search?

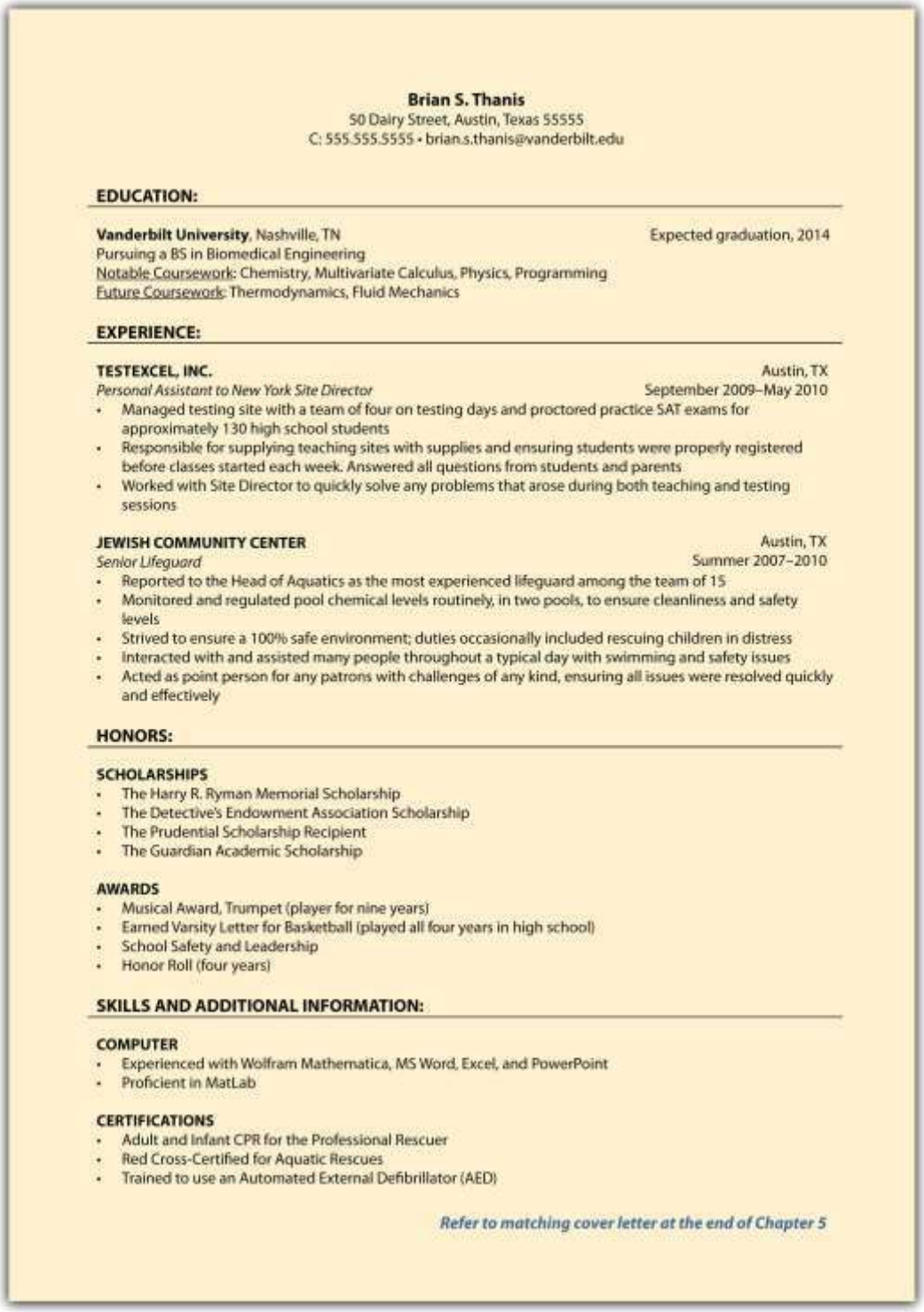
SuccessHawk: Résumés

For tips and ideas about creating your résumé, go to the menu bar at the right click on Résumés in the advice and research section. (*Note*: There is a charge of $9.95 for use of the Résumé Creator.)

and

4.9 Sample Résumés

Figure 4.6 Sample #1—Brian Thanis



Brian S. Thanis
50 Dairy Street, Austin, Texas 55555
C: 555.555.5555 • brian.s.thanis@vanderbilt.edu

EDUCATION:

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN — Expected graduation, 2014
Pursuing a BS in Biomedical Engineering
Notable Coursework: Chemistry, Multivariate Calculus, Physics, Programming
Future Coursework: Thermodynamics, Fluid Mechanics

EXPERIENCE:

TESTEXCEL, INC. — Austin, TX
Personal Assistant to New York Site Director — September 2009–May 2010
- Managed testing site with a team of four on testing days and proctored practice SAT exams for approximately 130 high school students
- Responsible for supplying teaching sites with supplies and ensuring students were properly registered before classes started each week. Answered all questions from students and parents
- Worked with Site Director to quickly solve any problems that arose during both teaching and testing sessions

JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER — Austin, TX
Senior Lifeguard — Summer 2007–2010
- Reported to the Head of Aquatics as the most experienced lifeguard among the team of 15
- Monitored and regulated pool chemical levels routinely, in two pools, to ensure cleanliness and safety levels
- Strived to ensure a 100% safe environment; duties occasionally included rescuing children in distress
- Interacted with and assisted many people throughout a typical day with swimming and safety issues
- Acted as point person for any patrons with challenges of any kind, ensuring all issues were resolved quickly and effectively

HONORS:

SCHOLARSHIPS
- The Harry R. Ryman Memorial Scholarship
- The Detective's Endowment Association Scholarship
- The Prudential Scholarship Recipient
- The Guardian Academic Scholarship

AWARDS
- Musical Award, Trumpet (player for nine years)
- Earned Varsity Letter for Basketball (played all four years in high school)
- School Safety and Leadership
- Honor Roll (four years)

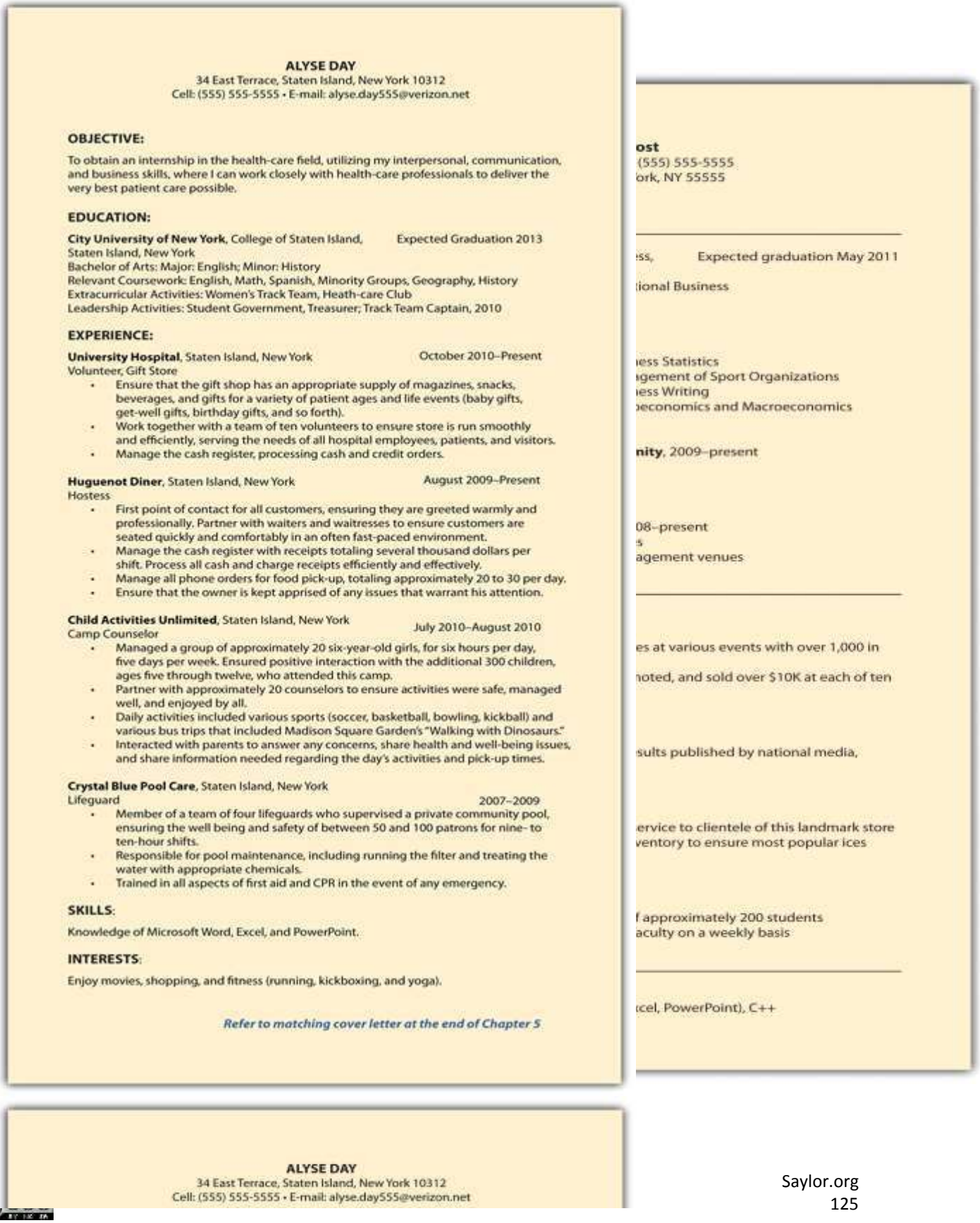
SKILLS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

COMPUTER
- Experienced with Wolfram Mathematica, MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Proficient in MatLab

CERTIFICATIONS
- Adult and Infant CPR for the Professional Rescuer
- Red Cross-Certified for Aquatic Rescues
- Trained to use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

Refer to matching cover letter at the end of Chapter 5

Figure 4.7 Sample #2—Alyse Day



ALYSE DAY
34 East Terrace, Staten Island, New York 10312
Cell: (555) 555-5555 • E-mail: alyse.day555@verizon.net

OBJECTIVE:

To obtain an internship in the health-care field, utilizing my interpersonal, communication, and business skills, where I can work closely with health-care professionals to deliver the very best patient care possible.

EDUCATION:

City University of New York, College of Staten Island, Staten Island, New York — Expected Graduation 2013
Bachelor of Arts: Major: English; Minor: History
Relevant Coursework: English, Math, Spanish, Minority Groups, Geography, History
Extracurricular Activities: Women's Track Team, Heath-care Club
Leadership Activities: Student Government, Treasurer; Track Team Captain, 2010

EXPERIENCE:

University Hospital, Staten Island, New York — October 2010–Present
Volunteer, Gift Store

- Ensure that the gift shop has an appropriate supply of magazines, snacks, beverages, and gifts for a variety of patient ages and life events (baby gifts, get-well gifts, birthday gifts, and so forth).
- Work together with a team of ten volunteers to ensure store is run smoothly and efficiently, serving the needs of all hospital employees, patients, and visitors.
- Manage the cash register, processing cash and credit orders.

Huguenot Diner, Staten Island, New York — August 2009–Present
Hostess

- First point of contact for all customers, ensuring they are greeted warmly and professionally. Partner with waiters and waitresses to ensure customers are seated quickly and comfortably in an often fast-paced environment.
- Manage the cash register with receipts totaling several thousand dollars per shift. Process all cash and charge receipts efficiently and effectively.
- Manage all phone orders for food pick-up, totaling approximately 20 to 30 per day.
- Ensure that the owner is kept apprised of any issues that warrant his attention.

Child Activities Unlimited, Staten Island, New York — July 2010–August 2010
Camp Counselor

- Managed a group of approximately 20 six-year-old girls, for six hours per day, five days per week. Ensured positive interaction with the additional 300 children, ages five through twelve, who attended this camp.
- Partner with approximately 20 counselors to ensure activities were safe, managed well, and enjoyed by all.
- Daily activities included various sports (soccer, basketball, bowling, kickball) and various bus trips that included Madison Square Garden's "Walking with Dinosaurs."
- Interacted with parents to answer any concerns, share health and well-being issues, and share information needed regarding the day's activities and pick-up times.

Crystal Blue Pool Care, Staten Island, New York
Lifeguard — 2007–2009

- Member of a team of four lifeguards who supervised a private community pool, ensuring the well being and safety of between 50 and 100 patrons for nine- to ten-hour shifts.
- Responsible for pool maintenance, including running the filter and treating the water with appropriate chemicals.
- Trained in all aspects of first aid and CPR in the event of any emergency.

SKILLS:

Knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

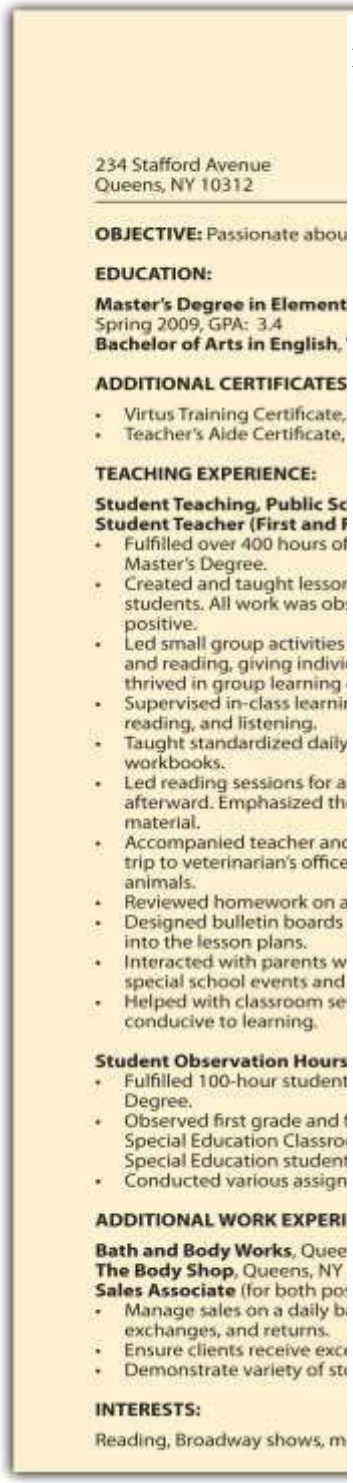
INTERESTS:

Enjoy movies, shopping, and fitness (running, kickboxing, and yoga).

Refer to matching cover letter at the end of Chapter 5

ALYSE DAY
34 East Terrace, Staten Island, New York 10312
Cell: (555) 555-5555 • E-mail: alyse.day555@verizon.net

Figure 4.9 Sample #4—Donna Right



234 Stafford Avenue
Queens, NY 10312

OBJECTIVE: Passionate abou

EDUCATION:

Master's Degree in Element
Spring 2009, GPA: 3.4
Bachelor of Arts in English,

ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATES

- Virtus Training Certificate,
- Teacher's Aide Certificate,

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Student Teaching, Public Sc
Student Teacher (First and
- Fulfilled over 400 hours of Master's Degree.
- Created and taught lesso students. All work was ob positive.
- Led small group activities and reading, giving indivi thrived in group learning
- Supervised in-class learni reading, and listening.
- Taught standardized daily workbooks.
- Led reading sessions for a afterward. Emphasized th material.
- Accompanied teacher and trip to veterinarian's office animals.
- Reviewed homework on a
- Designed bulletin boards into the lesson plans.
- Interacted with parents w special school events and
- Helped with classroom se conducive to learning.

Student Observation Hours
- Fulfilled 100-hour student Degree.
- Observed first grade and Special Education Classro Special Education student
- Conducted various assign

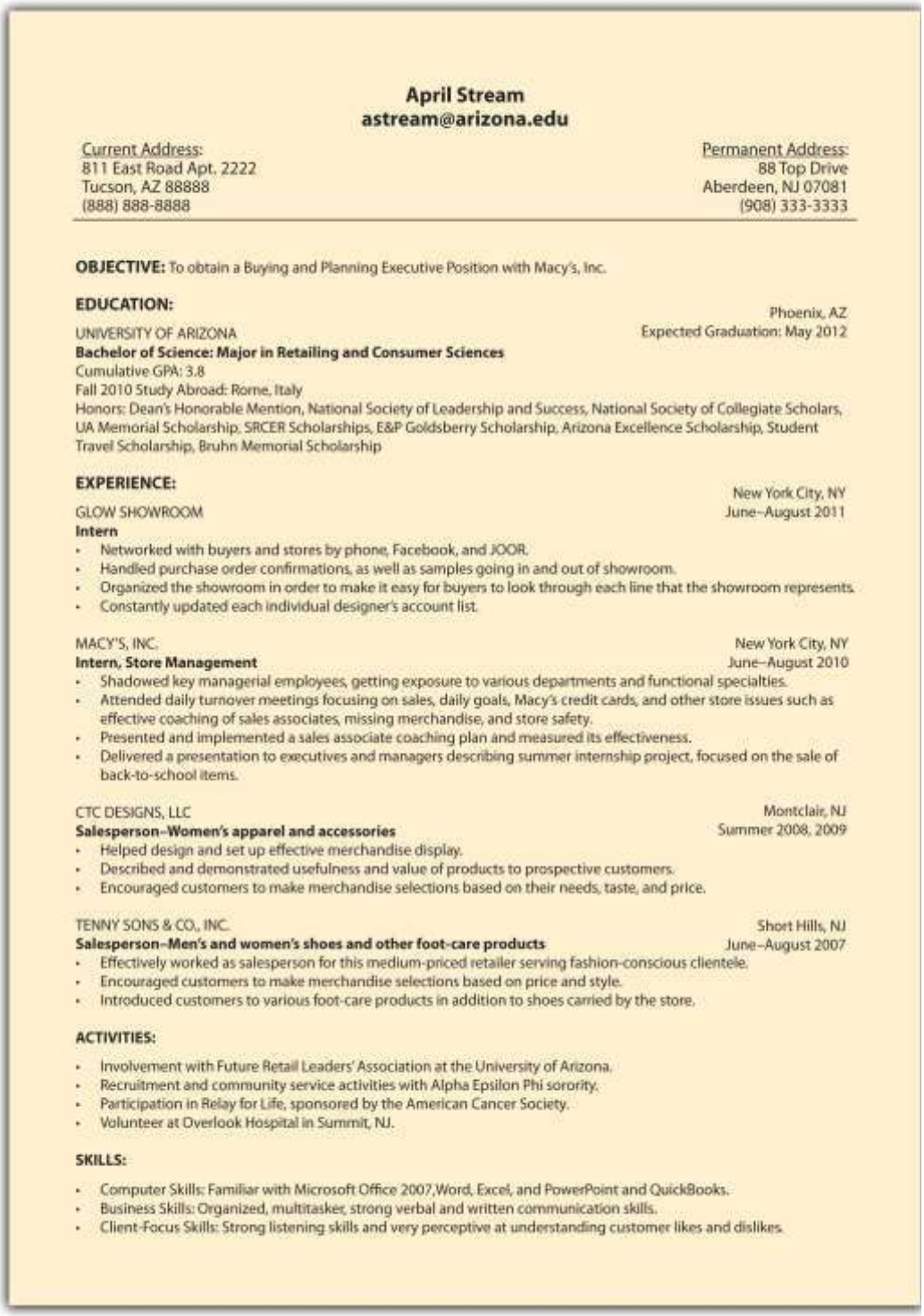
ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERI

Bath and Body Works, Quee
The Body Shop, Queens, NY
Sales Associate (for both po
- Manage sales on a daily b exchanges, and returns.
- Ensure clients receive exc
- Demonstrate variety of st

INTERESTS:

Reading, Broadway shows, m

Figure 4.10 Sample #5—April Stream



April Stream
astream@arizona.edu

Current Address:
811 East Road Apt. 2222
Tucson, AZ 88888
(888) 888-8888

Permanent Address:
88 Top Drive
Aberdeen, NJ 07081
(908) 333-3333

OBJECTIVE: To obtain a Buying and Planning Executive Position with Macy's, Inc.

EDUCATION:

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA — Phoenix, AZ
Bachelor of Science: Major in Retailing and Consumer Sciences — Expected Graduation: May 2012
Cumulative GPA: 3.8
Fall 2010 Study Abroad: Rome, Italy
Honors: Dean's Honorable Mention, National Society of Leadership and Success, National Society of Collegiate Scholars, UA Memorial Scholarship, SRCER Scholarships, E&P Goldsberry Scholarship, Arizona Excellence Scholarship, Student Travel Scholarship, Bruhn Memorial Scholarship

EXPERIENCE:

GLOW SHOWROOM — New York City, NY
Intern — June–August 2011
- Networked with buyers and stores by phone, Facebook, and JOOR.
- Handled purchase order confirmations, as well as samples going in and out of showroom.
- Organized the showroom in order to make it easy for buyers to look through each line that the showroom represents.
- Constantly updated each individual designer's account list.

MACY'S, INC. — New York City, NY
Intern, Store Management — June–August 2010
- Shadowed key managerial employees, getting exposure to various departments and functional specialties.
- Attended daily turnover meetings focusing on sales, daily goals, Macy's credit cards, and other store issues such as effective coaching of sales associates, missing merchandise, and store safety.
- Presented and implemented a sales associate coaching plan and measured its effectiveness.
- Delivered a presentation to executives and managers describing summer internship project, focused on the sale of back-to-school items.

CTC DESIGNS, LLC — Montclair, NJ
Salesperson–Women's apparel and accessories — Summer 2008, 2009
- Helped design and set up effective merchandise display.
- Described and demonstrated usefulness and value of products to prospective customers.
- Encouraged customers to make merchandise selections based on their needs, taste, and price.

TENNY SONS & CO., INC. — Short Hills, NJ
Salesperson–Men's and women's shoes and other foot-care products — June–August 2007
- Effectively worked as salesperson for this medium-priced retailer serving fashion-conscious clientele.
- Encouraged customers to make merchandise selections based on price and style.
- Introduced customers to various foot-care products in addition to shoes carried by the store.

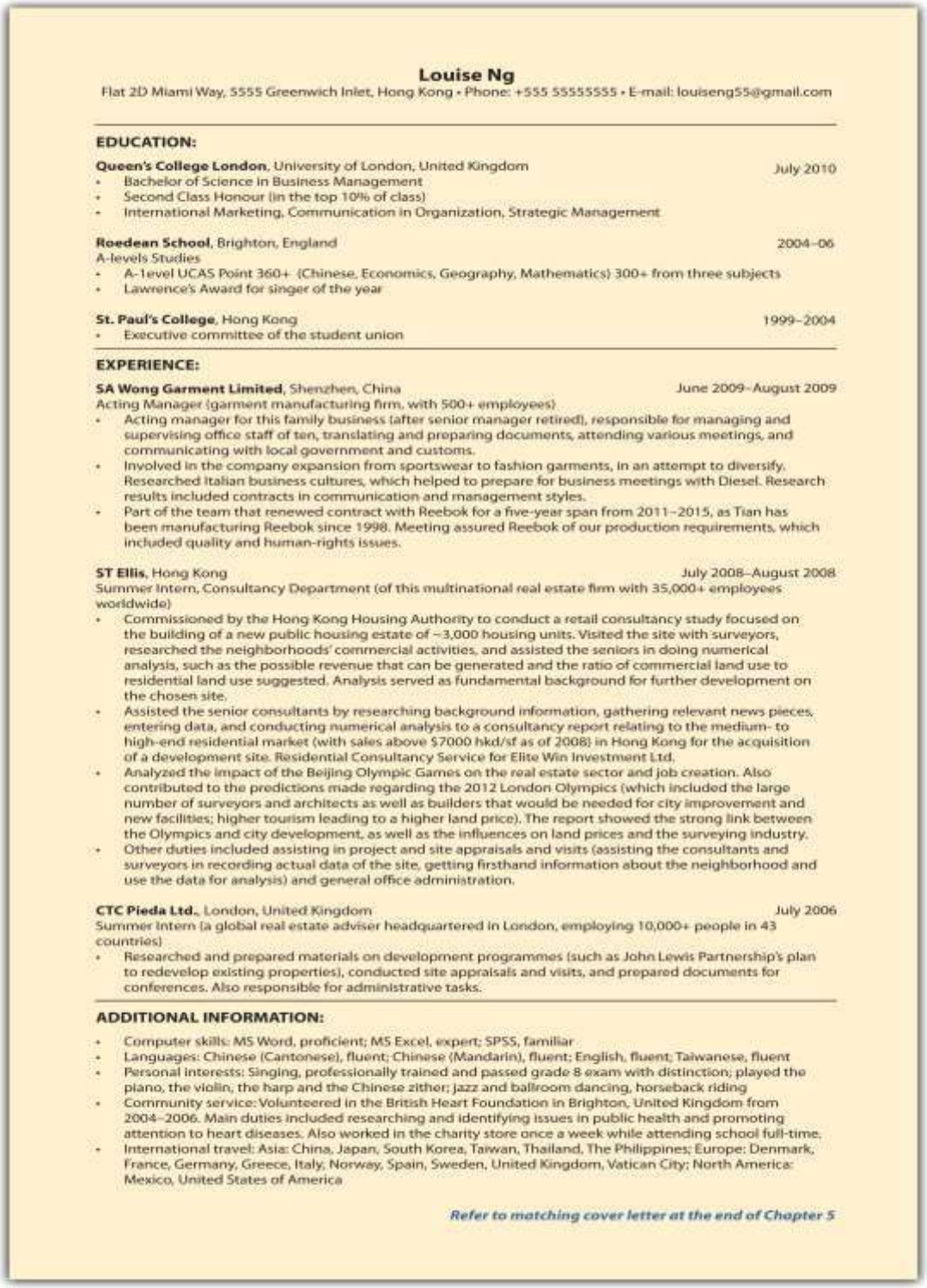
ACTIVITIES:

- Involvement with Future Retail Leaders' Association at the University of Arizona.
- Recruitment and community service activities with Alpha Epsilon Phi sorority.
- Participation in Relay for Life, sponsored by the American Cancer Society.
- Volunteer at Overlook Hospital in Summit, NJ.

SKILLS:

- Computer Skills: Familiar with Microsoft Office 2007, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint and QuickBooks.
- Business Skills: Organized, multitasker, strong verbal and written communication skills.
- Client-Focus Skills: Strong listening skills and very perceptive at understanding customer likes and dislikes.

Figure 4.11 Sample #6—Louise Ng



Louise Ng

Flat 2D Miami Way, 5555 Greenwich Inlet, Hong Kong • Phone: +555 55555555 • E-mail: louiseng55@gmail.com

EDUCATION:

Queen's College London, University of London, United Kingdom — July 2010
- Bachelor of Science in Business Management
- Second Class Honour (in the top 10% of class)
- International Marketing, Communication in Organization, Strategic Management

Roedean School, Brighton, England — 2004–06
A-levels Studies
- A-1evel UCAS Point 360+ (Chinese, Economics, Geography, Mathematics) 300+ from three subjects
- Lawrence's Award for singer of the year

St. Paul's College, Hong Kong — 1999–2004
- Executive committee of the student union

EXPERIENCE:

SA Wong Garment Limited, Shenzhen, China — June 2009–August 2009
Acting Manager (garment manufacturing firm, with 500+ employees)
- Acting manager for this family business (after senior manager retired), responsible for managing and supervising office staff of ten, translating and preparing documents, attending various meetings, and communicating with local government and customs.
- Involved in the company expansion from sportswear to fashion garments, in an attempt to diversify. Researched Italian business cultures, which helped to prepare for business meetings with Diesel. Research results included contracts in communication and management styles.
- Part of the team that renewed contract with Reebok for a five-year span from 2011–2015, as Tian has been manufacturing Reebok since 1998. Meeting assured Reebok of our production requirements, which included quality and human-rights issues.

ST Ellis, Hong Kong — July 2008–August 2008
Summer Intern, Consultancy Department (of this multinational real estate firm with 35,000+ employees worldwide)
- Commissioned by the Hong Kong Housing Authority to conduct a retail consultancy study focused on the building of a new public housing estate of ~3,000 housing units. Visited the site with surveyors, researched the neighborhoods' commercial activities, and assisted the seniors in doing numerical analysis, such as the possible revenue that can be generated and the ratio of commercial land use to residential land use suggested. Analysis served as fundamental background for further development on the chosen site.
- Assisted the senior consultants by researching background information, gathering relevant news pieces, entering data, and conducting numerical analysis to a consultancy report relating to the medium- to high-end residential market (with sales above $7000 hkd/sf as of 2008) in Hong Kong for the acquisition of a development site. Residential Consultancy Service for Elite Win Investment Ltd.
- Analyzed the impact of the Beijing Olympic Games on the real estate sector and job creation. Also contributed to the predictions made regarding the 2012 London Olympics (which included the large number of surveyors and architects as well as builders that would be needed for city improvement and new facilities; higher tourism leading to a higher land price). The report showed the strong link between the Olympics and city development, as well as the influences on land prices and the surveying industry.
- Other duties included assisting in project and site appraisals and visits (assisting the consultants and surveyors in recording actual data of the site, getting firsthand information about the neighborhood and use the data for analysis) and general office administration.

CTC Pieda Ltd., London, United Kingdom — July 2006
Summer Intern (a global real estate adviser headquartered in London, employing 10,000+ people in 43 countries)
- Researched and prepared materials on development programmes (such as John Lewis Partnership's plan to redevelop existing properties), conducted site appraisals and visits, and prepared documents for conferences. Also responsible for administrative tasks.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
- Computer skills: MS Word, proficient; MS Excel, expert; SPSS, familiar
- Languages: Chinese (Cantonese), fluent; Chinese (Mandarin), fluent; English, fluent; Taiwanese, fluent
- Personal interests: Singing, professionally trained and passed grade 8 exam with distinction; played the piano, the violin, the harp and the Chinese zither; jazz and ballroom dancing, horseback riding
- Community service: Volunteered in the British Heart Foundation in Brighton, United Kingdom from 2004–2006. Main duties included researching and identifying issues in public health and promoting attention to heart diseases. Also worked in the charity store once a week while attending school full-time.
- International travel: Asia: China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, The Philippines; Europe: Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Vatican City; North America: Mexico, United States of America

Refer to matching cover letter at the end of Chapter 5

Figure 4.12 Sample #7—Helen Patty

HELEN PATTY

33 West Terrace, Washington, DC 22202 • Mobile: (555) 555-5555 • E-mail: helenpatty@verizon.net

PROFILE:

- Communications experience working with nonprofit organizations and advocacy campaigns.
- Secured media placements in SF Chronicle, Chicago Tribune, NY Times, Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal.
- Exceptional work ethic with strong research, teamwork, and effective client-management and organizational skills.

EXPERIENCE:

CTC STRATEGIC SERVICES, Washington, DC October 2003–Present
Assistant Account Executive, Communications
Responsible for implementing strategic communications plans and ensuring media attention to client-critical issues.

- Drafted op-eds, facts sheets, and talking points on issues ranging from client protection in the financial industry to breast cancer and philanthropy, which has resulted in developing partnerships with high-profile clients such as Susan G. Komen, GlobalGiving, Save Darfur Coalition, and Pew Foundation.
- Performed communications audits analyzing the structure, internal capacity, internal, and external perception of the organization. Also reviewed communications data to determine what is lacking, what is working, and what areas need improving. Provided feedback of findings to the head of Communications, which led to maximizing the organization's visibility and capacity.
- Developed and implemented communications strategies for a wide range of clients, which led to securing media placements in national media publications.
- Ensured that all clients were properly prepared and positioned before media events. This included the drafting of speaking remarks and providing media training prior to events. Preparation included escorting Susan G. Komen advocates during Capitol Hill visits with their representatives and preparing clients for media interviews on CNN.
- Developed internal and external communication style guides for Accion International to ensure communications stayed consistent throughout their "Smart Campaign," which included drafting mission statements, pitches, vision statements, and determining tone in press releases and website content.
- Promoted twice in just 3.5 years due to strong track record of performance (from Assistant, Communications to Account Coordinator, ultimately to Assistant Account Executive).

CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES (CSS), Washington, DC Summer 2002
Europe Program Intern
Responsibilities consisted of conducting extensive research to support senior-level staff members, attending and reporting on seminars and conferences, and planning events with guests ranging from U.S. senators to foreign ministers and presidents.

- Wrote European country reports and background papers that covered issues ranging from economics to foreign policy that were used to keep employees informed and for personal research.

OCEANIS, Madrid, Spain Summer 2001
Fund-raising and Press Department Intern
Responsible for coordinating the hiring process for future interns and researching potential board members as well as celebrity spokespeople to potentially represent Oceana.

- Developed extensive databases of banks, foundations, major donors, and Brussels press agencies, which resulted in being used as a primary tool for outreach by the development department.

EDUCATION:

University of British Columbia, Institute for European Studies, Vancouver, BC, Canada May 2010
Master of Arts in European Studies

Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA June 2003
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Comparative Politics

INTERNATIONAL COURSEWORK/EXPERIENCE:

American European Summer Academy, Schloss Hofen, Austria	July 2006
European Union Study Tour, Brussels, Strasbourg, Luxembourg, EU	May–June 2006
Ilisa Language Institute, San Jose, Costa Rica	June–August 2003 and April–June 2005
International School of Manila, Manila, Philippines	August 1997–June 1999

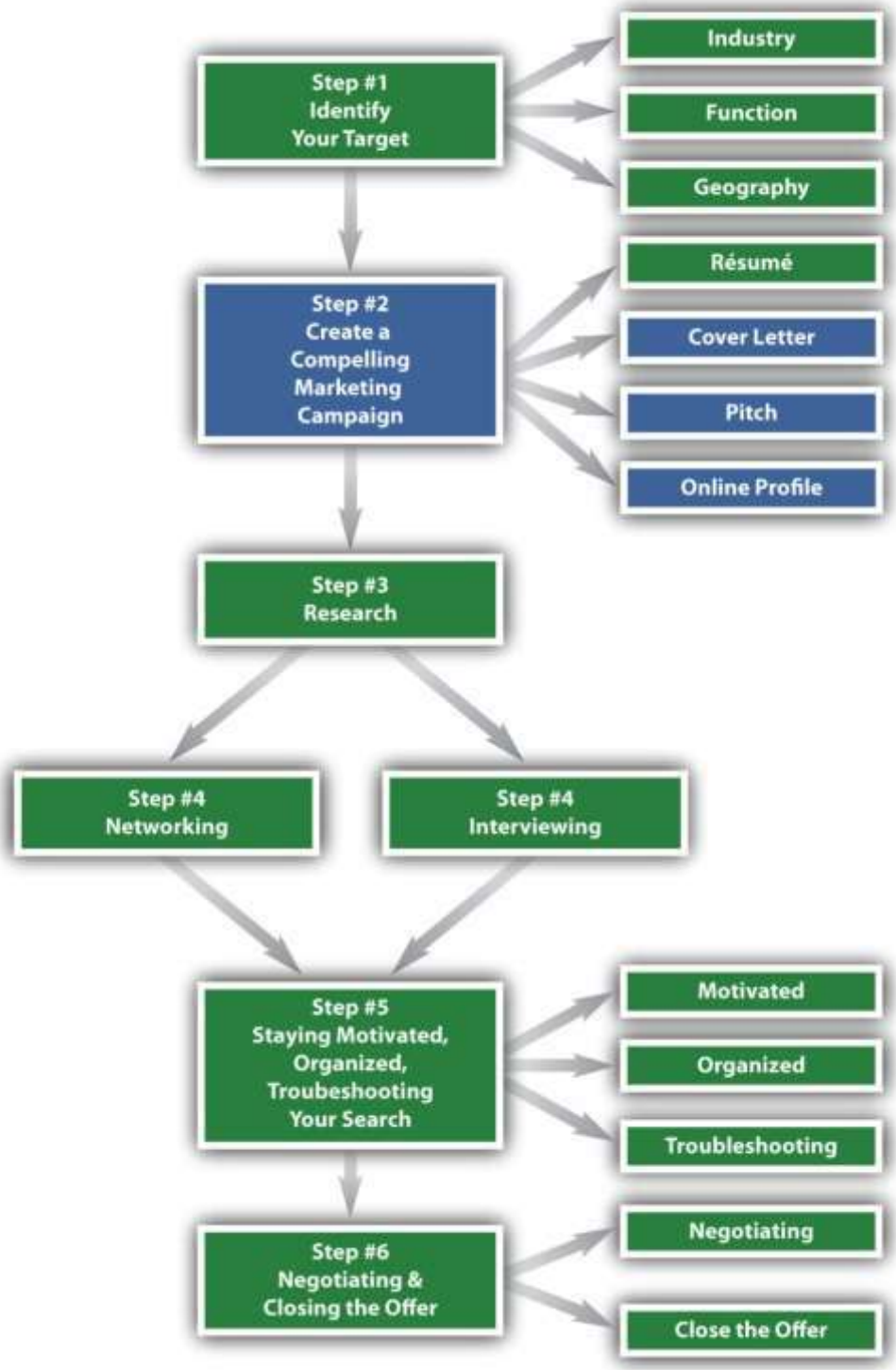
SKILLS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Computer skills: Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite, Nexis, Acrobat, PR Newswire, Cision
Language skills: Fluent in English, French, Spanish; basic comprehension of German
Interests: Traveling, reading, cooking, quilting; member of the Junior League of Washington

Refer to matching cover letter at the end of Chapter 5

Chapter 5: Step 2 (Continued): Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign, Part II: Cover Letter, Pitch, and Online Profile

Figure 5.1 The Six-Step Job Search Process—Step 2



Overview

A Compelling Marketing Campaign Is More Than a Résumé

At this point in your search, you have completed Step 1, Identifying Your Target, by focusing on a specific industry,

function, and geography.

You have also completed half of step 2 (create a compelling marketing campaign) by creating your résumé.

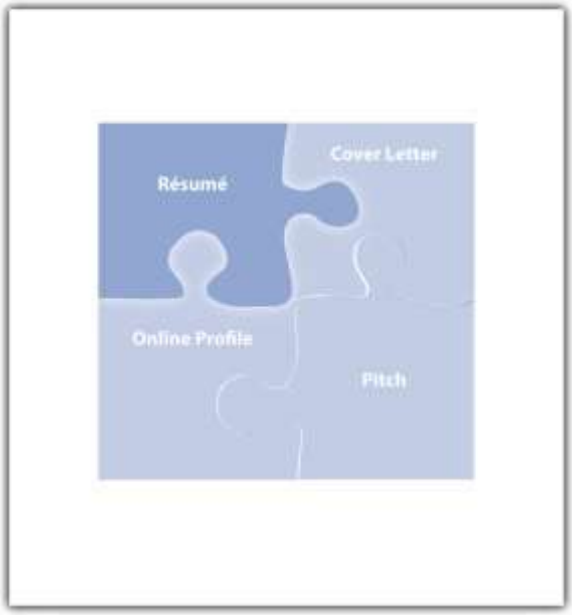
Now it's time to complete your marketing campaign, which will create additional job search tools that will get the attention of your target companies and identify yourself as the best candidate available—that is, the person who can produce for them in a meaningful way.

The marketing component of your job search should be compelling, innovative, and of the highest quality. Think about how Apple markets their products. At first sight of the Apple logo—an apple with a bite out of it—you think of a sleek, innovative, quality product. You know that consumers are enjoying Apple iPads and iPods whether they are in New York or New Zealand, in the United States or in the United Kingdom—the marketing is that ingenious.

It should be the same with the remainder of your job search marketing campaign. A prospective employer's impression of you should be crystal clear in terms of the quality associated with your name, your abilities, and your overall candidacy, even before they meet you. Your marketing campaign will set the stage for these quality interactions, especially step 4 (networking and interviewing) and step 6 (negotiating and closing the offer). But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

Creating a compelling marketing campaign is composed of four distinct tools that can construct a strong, effective, and successful job search:

1. Your résumé (which was covered in Chapter 4 "Step 2: Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign, Part I: Résumé")
2. Your cover letter
3. Your online profile
4. Your networking pitch



It's important to note that Step 2, Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign, is the second step because it is introductory in nature. Your marketing campaign introduces you to future employers and positions you for success. The better the quality of your marketing, the better will

be your interactions with future employers. Just like creating a strong and successful brand, creating a marketing campaign will enable you to present yourself to potential employers in the best possible way. Step 2 is about getting their attention long enough to propel your job search forward.

Your marketing campaign must have high-quality standards because it forms the very first impression an employer will have of you. It also represents you when you are not present, so your marketing components are important:

- Your résumé must be written in such a way that it proves your worth to your previous employers. Your future employers will use this to measure how you can potentially help them, so it's critical to quantify the results of your projects and efforts.
- Your cover letter is the closest thing you will have to a conversation with your future employer, so it must make a strong case for why they should hire you. It should be a formal statement of your strong candidacy and should leave the recruiter with the impression that they absolutely must invest their time in meeting you. A cover letter should not simply repeat what is in your résumé, but instead, should highlight why an employer would hire you.
- A huge percentage of recruiters use online profiles to search for potential candidates, so it's imperative that your online profile be 100 percent complete and very professional. In addition to this, it's a valuable way to network.
- Lastly, your pitch clearly and succinctly highlights your strengths and value proposition, so it must be well worded, in a tone that is professional and suitable to your goals, and it must be practiced so that you can deliver it at a moment's notice.

The better the quality of the preceding items, the better your chances of being interviewed and subsequently hired. None of these elements should have any errors whatsoever. All should be well written, showing your strong command of the English language. Whether your writing skills are exceptional or abysmal, all elements of your marketing campaign need to be double- and tripled-checked by someone who is knowledgeable about this process: an advisor at your learning institution's career services, a trusted and competent peer or friend, or a professional career coach. This chapter will give you the tools necessary to construct all elements, but they must be checked and checked again to ensure quality.

High-quality marketing is especially important in down economies, when recruiters literally look for reasons to discard someone's candidacy. Do not give them such a reason. Many cover letters are sent in

haste without proofreading each detail. Some are even addressed to the wrong company: cover letters addressed to Goldman Sachs end up in the hands of a Citigroup recruiter, and many addressed to *The Wall Street Journal* are sent to *The Washington Post*. Marketing documents have a way of *blinding* proofreading abilities because candidates tend to look at them so often they lose their ability to identify errors. Pay attention to the details, spell check, and check again by reading each sentence out loud. Errors of any kind are immediate cause for discarding an otherwise qualified candidate. Quality should always preempt quantity.

5.1 The Cover Letter

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Conduct the preliminary work needed to write a cover letter that has purpose and gets noticed.
2. Learn the three basic sections of a cover letter. Is it worth writing a cover letter knowing it might never be read? The short answer is yes. Some recruiters don't read cover letters and go straight to the résumé, but other recruiters read and carefully weigh the information in cover letters. You don't know which recruiter will receive your résumé and letter, so write the best cover letter you can. A well-written cover letter is an opportunity to present yourself well and influence a recruiter, so always take full advantage of that opportunity. A cover letter can also be viewed as your first conversation with a future employer, so be certain its quality is exceptional.

Your cover letter should be engaging, informative, and show your command of the written word. It should flow easily from a reader's perspective, making the connection between the opportunity and your ability to succeed if given the chance. The tone should be compelling. You should be excited about the opportunity and you should be confident of your ability to succeed (even if you truly lack the confidence).

Cover Letter Preliminary Work

Preparation and practice are critical to every step of the job search process, and the cover letter is no different. Five actions can help make your cover letter compelling:

1. Make a list of your top ten strengths.
2. Make a list of your top five weaknesses (also known as areas you'd like to strengthen).
3. Decipher the job description to identify each separate skill and qualification.
4. Compare the two lists to see if they are in alignment. Also identify the gaps—does the job description list something that you haven't done?
5. Highlight your top three skills that align with the job description as you will use them in your cover letter.

List Your Top Ten Strengths

Knowing your top strengths is vital to your job search efforts. To find your top strengths, assess your past successes. Fill out the following chart, and, next to each strength, list a detailed example of how you have excelled at this particular strength. Quantify as much of your example as possible, and ensure you include a clear beginning, middle, and end. Table 5.1 "Chart of Top Strengths" lists an example for your reference:

Table 5.1 Chart of Top Strengths

Top Strengths		Examples
1	Organized	In my last internship, I was asked to manually organize paper work for the past year's real estate transactions, with little other direction. I was given two weeks to complete this, and all of the paper work was in approximately five boxes. I quickly reviewed the contents, which fit into four categories: (1) commercial, (2) private homes, (3) condos, and (4) incomplete transactions. I asked my manager to review this to make sure I was going in the right direction. He gave me the green light. I finished the project in one week, and I not only organized the files but also computerized the entire process. As a result, my manager quickly focused on completing 25% of the outstanding transactions, adding ~$100K in the last half of the year!
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

Top Strengths		Examples
9		
10		

Notice that the example is very detailed:

- Time was referenced (in a few ways): This project was during your last internship, and you had two weeks to complete the task. The work was actually finished ahead of schedule—in one week versus two.
- The duties were defined: You had to organize the contents of boxes of paper work for the year's real estate transactions.
- The action was emphasized: You took the initiative to organize the work into four categories and you checked with your manager to make sure you were going in the right direction.
- The accomplishment was highlighted: You completed the task in half the time, and you automated the process. Most of all, you enabled your employer to close 25 percent of the outstanding transactions, adding about $100,000 in revenue to the bottom line.

(Whenever possible, identify the result(s) of your actions. Future employers will hire you because you have proved your worth to your past employers.)

Other strengths and skills could include (in alphabetical order):

	Loyal
Analytical	Optimistic
Detail oriented	Passionate
Client focused	Persistent
Conscientious	Proactive
Communicative	Quick learner
Creative	Team Player
Hard worker	Tenacious
Industry knowledge	Thoughtful
Technical	Trustworthy
Leader	Vigilant

List Your Top Five Weaknesses

Many job search candidates are uncomfortable talking about their weaknesses. This should not be the case. Knowing your weaknesses is just as important to your job search as knowing your strengths. Three very strong reasons exist to speak fluidly and confidently about your weaknesses:

1. Employers want to hire individuals who are self-aware, and you can be self-aware only if you know both your strengths and weaknesses. Being self-aware is the only way you can improve.
2. Employers know it takes a certain level of maturity to talk about your weaknesses. They want to ensure you have achieved that level of maturity before extending an offer.
3. Your weaknesses should in no way contain a hint of the skills necessary to excel at your target position. Your weaknesses should in no way contain a hint of the skills necessary to excel at any position. Remember that everyone has strengths and everyone has weaknesses, including every CEO, every country's president, every manager, and every one of your coworkers. You will be in good company when considering and discussing your weaknesses.

   The trick, if there is a trick, to your weaknesses lies in your plan to strengthen them. Having a plan to strengthen a weakness is impressive, especially if you've already taken steps to do so.

   Table 5.2 "Chart of Weaknesses" will help you identify five weaknesses, or areas you'd like to improve.

Table 5.2 Chart of Weaknesses

	Weaknesses	Plan to Strengthen
1	Public speaking	I have given many presentations, and on a scale of 1–10, I'm probably a 6. I do my best when I'm very prepared and when I rehearse. To improve, I've registered for a public speaking class next semester, and until then, I raise my hand more than usual. I also volunteer to present whenever I can because the more I practice, the better I get. Lastly, I'm reading a book about presenting, and it's helped very much.
2		
3		
4		

	Weaknesses	Plan to Strengthen
5		

Notice that the weakness is specifically described with a plan for improvement:

- You are aware that public speaking is a weakness, yet you've already given presentations, are not an abysmal failure in this area, and have already achieved some success.
- You quantified where you are on a scale of one to ten and consider yourself a six. You have shown that you know the topic well, but haven't yet mastered it. You mention two important aspects to being a good presenter: (1) you do best when you are prepared and (2) rehearsal and practice help you as well.
- You already have a plan to strengthen this skill: (1) you will take a public speaking class, (2) you are raising your hand as much as possible in class (which is a form of public speaking), (3) you are volunteering to present whenever you can, and (4) you are reading a book about presenting and it's already helped.

In addition, it's important to note that a weakness should never be a core component of the job. For example, if you perceive your weakness to be public speaking, you wouldn't apply for a position as a trainer. If you perceive your weakness to be analytical skills, you wouldn't apply for a position as an accountant. A weakness can be a part of a job, for example, if you are applying for a position as an accountant, you would predominately do financial work and only sometimes present (e.g., share your findings with management), so using public speaking as a weakness in this case is fine.

Decipher the Job Description and Identify Each Skill and Qualification

Most job descriptions can be copied from the employer's website. Copy the job description and do the following (if you only have a hard copy, it's worthwhile to retype it as you'll want to manipulate each requirement for the position):

- Put each skill and qualification on a separate line.
- Group like with like. If communication skills are listed as important, in addition to giving presentations to potential clients, list one after the other.

In the following sample, each component of the job description is considered and deciphered, in preparation for applying and eventually interviewing for the position.

Job Description Sample

Entry-Level Sales

The CML Company, a leading provider of recruiting and staffing services, is currently seeking motivated, career-oriented individuals to join our recruiting team.

Our recruiters work with our clients and inside sales team identifying, screening, interviewing, and presenting qualified candidates for contract and permanent positions.

CML promotes from within. Entry-level sales staff start as recruiters. Once they master that role and have a desire to become a member of our sales team, they can be considered for promotion.

Qualified Candidates for the Recruiter Position Will

- Develop recruiting strategies designed to identify qualified candidates through various recruiting tools.
- Evaluate candidates' strengths compared with clients' requirements by evaluating, screening, and interviewing the candidate.
- Negotiate wage rates and other terms and conditions of employment with candidates, and gain commitment from candidates for current and future job requirements.
- Complete necessary preemployment processes, including reference and background checks and drug tests.
- Work with account executives to identify top accounts, client skill sets, and key market segments, and to assess clients' staffing requirements.
- Communicate effectively with others to create a productive team environment.
- Communicate with peers by sharing recruiting best practices and providing accurate, thorough documentation on contract employees in our applicant-tracking system or by using other documentation tools.
- Maintain relationships with industry contacts to provide customer service, gain industry knowledge, and get referrals and sales leads.

Qualified Candidates for the Recruiter Position Must

- Have a bachelor's degree or related sales or recruiting experience
- Be available to work before and after typical office hours as work may demand
- Possess strong written and oral English communication skills
- Be familiar with Microsoft Word and MS Outlook (or similar e-mail applications)
- Have work experience in a service-oriented business

- Have a desire to learn and advance in a fast-paced sales environment, and be capable of regularly using good judgment and discretion to accomplish goals and work requirements
- Be currently authorized to work in the United States for any employer

Requirements:

1. Bachelor's degree
2. Able to work flexible, long hours
3. Strong written and verbal communication skills
4. Computer literate
5. Desire to learn in a fast-paced sales environment
6. Good judgment
7. Discretion
8. Currently authorized to work in the United States

Review the Job Description Sample

Consider the preceding sample. Study each component of the job description and how it relates to your skills so you can apply for and gain an interview for the position:

- Eight items are listed in the requirements section. Do your skills match all of these requirements, or the vast majority of them? It would be wise to compare this list to your list of strengths.
- An additional three requirements are not stated as obviously: (1) individuals must be motivated, (2) they must have the ability to master the work, and (3) they must have a desire to be a part of the sales team in order to be promoted. These requirements are found in the first section of the job description.
- Don't count out the opportunity if you don't fit every requirement. Do your best to think of something that is somewhat related. For example, if you have never worked in a fast-paced sales environment, focus on your desire to learn. Focus on the fact that you've observed fast-paced sales environments, and those situations appeal to you. At the very least, you could think of the fact that although you don't have direct experience in that particular environment, you have always been very proactive in completing tasks as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- If you are a strong match for the majority of the requirements, ensure you have specific, results-oriented examples to demonstrate these skills.

- You will not have a clear indication as to which skills are more important than others, so use your best judgment call. Treat each skill as if it's the most important. For example, consider communication skills—have a specific, results-oriented example of your verbal skills and your written skills. At some point, however, you will want to select the three skills you think are most important, match them to your strongest skills, and then write your cover letter.

Consider Future Responsibilities of the Job

Note that it's not necessary for you to know how to develop recruiting strategies. You can learn that on the job. However, a proactive candidate may research recruiting strategies and the identification of talented individuals.

Compare the Two Lists and Find the Alignment between Your Strengths and Weaknesses

You now have taken the following two steps:

1. Deciphered the job description into each individual skill and requirement needed
2. Listed your top ten strengths, with examples for each

Your next step is to check if the two lists are aligned:

- If there is alignment, you have a potential good match and you should apply for the job.
- If there isn't alignment, it's a clear indication that the job is not the right fit for you and it's best to continue your search.

Highlight Your Top Three Strengths

The last step in this section is to select the top three skills needed in the job description, and decide which skills fall within your strengths and which you will highlight in the cover letter. These three skills, if positioned properly, will make the case for why you should be hired.

The Cover Letter Template

The cover letter template includes three main sections:

1. The introductory paragraph
2. The last paragraph, which reiterates your interest
3. The magic middle

The Introductory Paragraph

In the introductory paragraph, you introduce yourself to the hiring manager or recruiter. The paragraph should include five general items:

1. Why you are contacting them
2. How you heard about the position (If someone referred you, mention the name of your contact.)
3. Whether you are still in school and, if so, your major and minor
4. How your work experience pertains to your desired or targeted job
5. Why you are interested in the position

The Last Paragraph

In the last paragraph, you summarize and close, taking the following five steps:

1. Reiterate your interest.
2. State you would be a perfect match because your strengths match the key skills necessary to succeed at the job.
3. Inform them that you will contact them in a week.
4. Ask that they contact you should they have any questions or an interest in moving forward.
5. Thank them for their time and consideration.

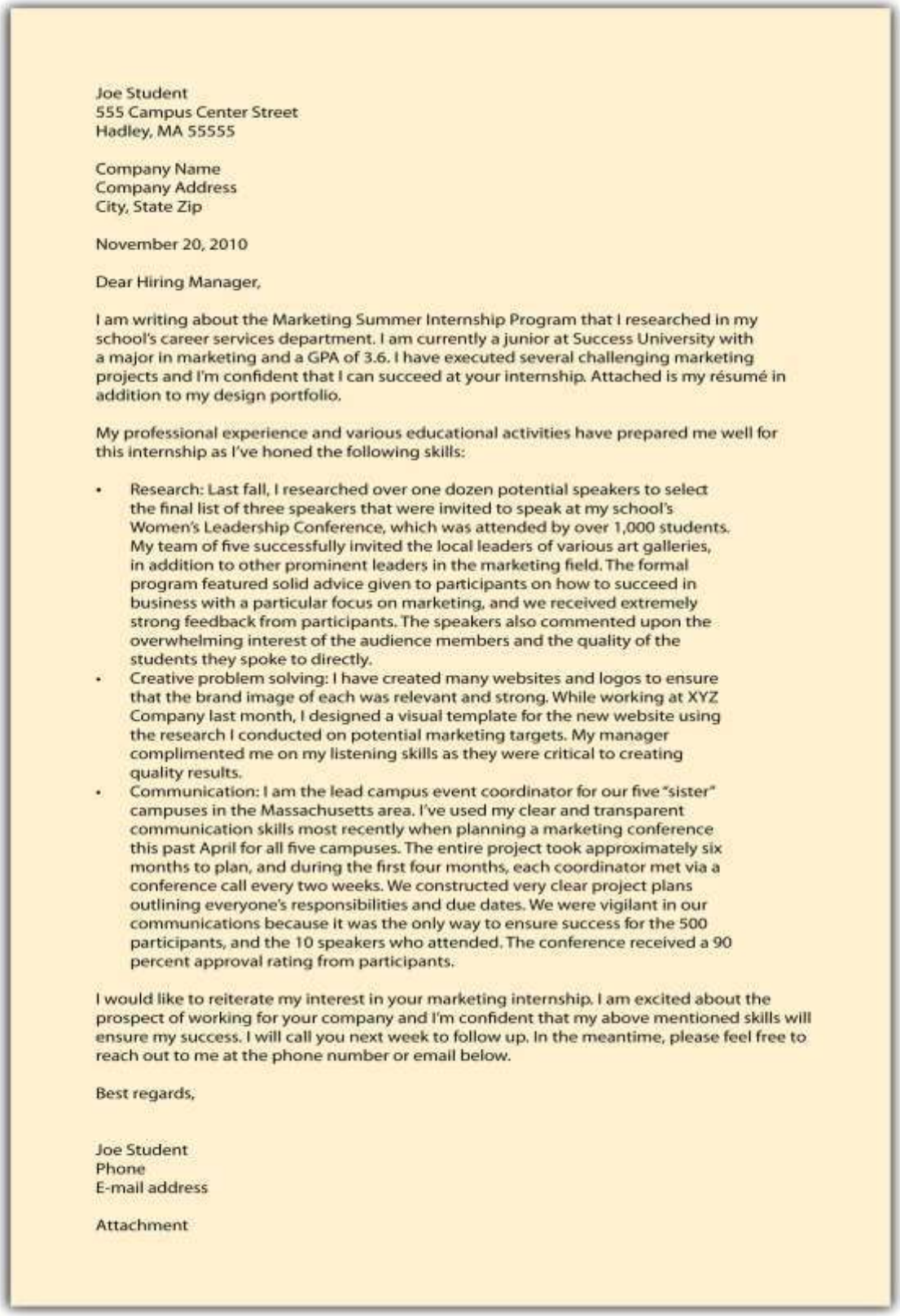
The Magic Middle

The middle of the cover letter is magical because it makes the case for why you'd be an exceptional hire. Select three strengths necessary to excel and assign each strength to a bulleted section or brief paragraph. Boldly indicate your strengths and include your best examples of how you excel at each strength. See the following sample cover letter as an example of how to highlight your strengths.

Sample Cover Letters

Figure 5.2 "Cover Letter Sample 1" and Figure 5.3 "Cover Letter Sample 2" are sample cover letters. There are more sample cover letters at the end of this chapter, and some of them correspond to the sample résumés at the end of the previous chapter.

Figure 5.2 Cover Letter Sample 1



Joe Student
555 Campus Center Street
Hadley, MA 55555

Company Name
Company Address
City, State Zip

November 20, 2010

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing about the Marketing Summer Internship Program that I researched in my school's career services department. I am currently a junior at Success University with a major in marketing and a GPA of 3.6. I have executed several challenging marketing projects and I'm confident that I can succeed at your internship. Attached is my résumé in addition to my design portfolio.

My professional experience and various educational activities have prepared me well for this internship as I've honed the following skills:

- Research: Last fall, I researched over one dozen potential speakers to select the final list of three speakers that were invited to speak at my school's Women's Leadership Conference, which was attended by over 1,000 students. My team of five successfully invited the local leaders of various art galleries, in addition to other prominent leaders in the marketing field. The formal program featured solid advice given to participants on how to succeed in business with a particular focus on marketing, and we received extremely strong feedback from participants. The speakers also commented upon the overwhelming interest of the audience members and the quality of the students they spoke to directly.
- Creative problem solving: I have created many websites and logos to ensure that the brand image of each was relevant and strong. While working at XYZ Company last month, I designed a visual template for the new website using the research I conducted on potential marketing targets. My manager complimented me on my listening skills as they were critical to creating quality results.
- Communication: I am the lead campus event coordinator for our five "sister" campuses in the Massachusetts area. I've used my clear and transparent communication skills most recently when planning a marketing conference this past April for all five campuses. The entire project took approximately six months to plan, and during the first four months, each coordinator met via a conference call every two weeks. We constructed very clear project plans outlining everyone's responsibilities and due dates. We were vigilant in our communications because it was the only way to ensure success for the 500 participants, and the 10 speakers who attended. The conference received a 90 percent approval rating from participants.

I would like to reiterate my interest in your marketing internship. I am excited about the prospect of working for your company and I'm confident that my above mentioned skills will ensure my success. I will call you next week to follow up. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me at the phone number or email below.

Best regards,

Joe Student
Phone
E-mail address

Attachment

Figure 5.3 Cover Letter Sample 2

Jane Smith
555 East 28th Street, Apartment 9E
New York, NY 10022

Company Name
Street
City, State, Zip

September 25, 2011

Dear Hiring Manager:

I would like to express my interest in the full-time position with your company which was posted on your website. I will graduate this spring from Fordham University with a BA in public accounting. My classmate, Alicia Smith, has shared with me her tax internship experience at ABC Company and she spoke very highly of her experience there. I am interested in this position because you have the largest tax practice in the United States, and I excel in large companies with a culture that is both inclusive and proactive.

My previous experiences make me a very strong candidate. I had two summer internships with XYZ Accounting, and partnered closely with my manager to set up the internal control system which helped us to meet regulatory requirements. In addition to improving the efficiency of our process, it saved our company significant time and money.

At EFG Inc., I organized and analyzed large amounts of data using excel and access. This work was shared with all accountants and strategies were created to compensate for areas of weakness. I'm proud to say that these programs and processes are still being used today, even though I worked at the company two years ago.

At Fordham University, teamwork and leadership are critical to our learning. I have been the vice-president of our accounting club for the past year. I managed the budget of $7K but more importantly, worked closely with other student clubs leaders to hold a successful recruiter's panel discussion, which was attended by over 100 students. The panels resulted in many positive career discussions and will hopefully result in full-time jobs for my fellow students. This successful event would not have been possible without the teamwork of the accounting club, and the partnership we built with Career Services and the companies that were represented.

My experience and skills in addition to my enthusiasm for taxes, will allow me to make an immediate and meaningful contribution to your company. I am very interested in discussing my qualifications with you.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jane Smith
xxxxx@fordham.edu
(xxx) xxx-xxxx

Attachment

Creating a Portfolio: Show and Tell

If you have examples of your expertise in a particular discipline, consider creating a portfolio of that information to share with potential employers. For example, perhaps you are a communications

major and have written several documents that showcase your talent in this area. Include five or six samples of your communications to help build the case for why you should be hired. Perhaps you are a graphic design candidate, and you created several visuals that were used by neighborhood businesses, or for a class project. Include those visuals in a portfolio to help prove your talent to a future employer. How would you share this information with future employers? You can either attach your samples, along with your résumé and cover letter, in your e-mail to a future employer, or bring them with you when you have secured an interview. Either method is an acceptable way to impress a future employer. A portfolio that you can carry to an interview could simply be a neat and professional-looking folder that contains hard copies of your work. Or you can include a virtual portfolio of online work with a link an employer can use to view your samples. You can include this information in a cover letter and you can also include it in a résumé. Either way, having samples and presenting them can prove to future employers that you have the talent to succeed.

Miscellaneous Things to Consider

Format

Formatting is important and must be neat and professional. It's recommended that you flush all text to the left, as various software programs can wreak havoc with indentations and tabs.

Greeting

Put extra effort into identifying the name of the hiring manager, so that your letter can be appropriately addressed to the specific person who will be reviewing résumés. Employers do not make this an easy step for you, and you have to do your research. Helpful exercises include researching the company website, reading news releases, and even calling the company to ask. Laziness will hurt your job search effort if this special effort is not made. If, after doing all the preceding, you still do not know the name of the person to whom you are sending your information, by all means, address it using Dear Hiring Manager or Dear Recruiter.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A cover letter should not repeat a résumé.
- You need to specifically align your strengths with the job qualifications to create a compelling cover letter.

- A cover letter includes three things: the introductory paragraph, the closing paragraph, and the magic middle, where you highlight how your strengths align with the job.
- Simple is best when considering a cover letter format.

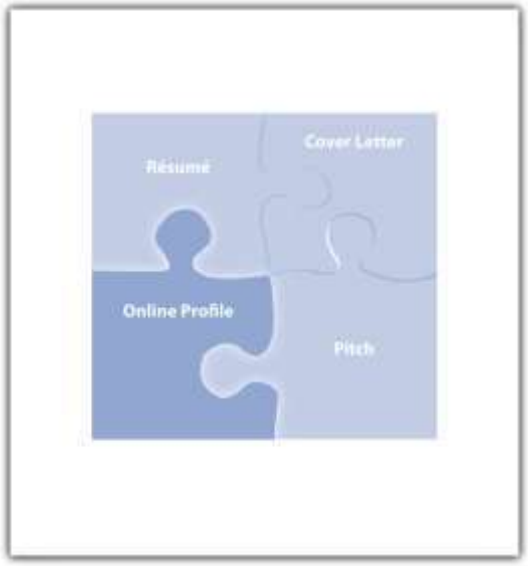
EXERCISES

1. What are your top ten strengths, and what examples will you use to prove those strengths?
2. Identify three to five weaknesses (or areas you'd like to strengthen). Create a plan to strengthen each of your weaknesses.
3. Find a job description that interests you and decipher it into each individual skill.
4. Find at least two to three job descriptions where you are a strong match.
5. What resources can you use, in addition to this textbook, to write your cover letter?
6. Draft your cover letter and pair up with a peer in your class and critique each other's letters.

5.2 The Online Profile

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn why an online profile can help your job search.
2. Be knowledgeable about all aspects of having an online presence.



Your online profile is the third component of a compelling marketing campaign. An online profile serves two functions:

1. It's a marketing tool for the passive job search because the majority of recruiters use online profiles to find qualified candidates.
2. It's a great networking tool because you can connect with friends, family, former coworkers, and current schoolmates and stay in touch with them easily regardless of where you or they live or work.

Digital Dirt

Various social networking sites allow you to post anything you would like in cyberspace. Twitter, Facebook, and Second Life are a few examples. Four hundred million individuals have a Facebook presence, which enables them to connect and reconnect with current and past friends. Facebook allows you to post pictures of yourself, your friends, your animals, your vacation, and anything else you would like to include. You can post your birthday, your relationship status, your taste in music, and your interests and hobbies. Most employers look to LinkedIn for professional information because LinkedIn is often described as the professional version of Facebook, but employers still will look at your Facebook profile. When three candidates seem equally suited for a position, researching the candidates on Facebook may provide information that becomes the deciding factor. A word to the wise: Ensure that information on your Facebook page can only help your job search. Foul language and inappropriate pictures of social parties and activities will hurt your ability to land the job you are seeking. Do not rely on privacy settings that you think filter individuals from viewing your information because those settings have often failed job

search candidates. Facebook remains a wonderful tool for social networking, however, once something is in cyberspace, it's virtually impossible to delete, so proceed with caution!

Overview of LinkedIn

More than 100 million people are on LinkedIn, the leading online network for professional profiles, and that number grows every day. LinkedIn is different from Facebook because it's intended only for professional use and to focus on your career. To get started with initial online marketing efforts, LinkedIn is a great first step.

Visit LinkedIn at http://www.linkedin.com and follow the tutorial to learn aspects about the site and create an account. Use a thumbnail sketch of your résumé for your profile. Create a summary section, and bear in mind that this is a great place to include specific keywords on which recruiters and employers may search (e.g., specific technical skills, languages, brand-name companies, industry knowledge).

Who Can You Link To?

Think of ten to twenty people you'd like to connect to, such as peers from past jobs, friends and family, and peers at school. Go line by line through your résumé and think of all the people you know from each stage in your career. You can use the LinkedIn search function to search by school, organization name, or other keyword. As you populate your profile, LinkedIn makes recommendations for people you may know based on the names and keywords you enter. This gives you additional ideas for connections.

Send an invitation to the ten to twenty people you'd like to connect to. Write a personalized request to connect that reminds them how you know them, rather than using the generic templates that LinkedIn provides. With LinkedIn, all the people connected to a profile are visible to people who view that profile (you can shut off this feature, but it is helpful for networking, so most people do not). This means that for your connections, you can see their connections. This also means that the more people you are connected to, the more profiles you can view and the more your profile can be viewed. Increasing your connections improves your marketing reach.

On a regular basis, think of another ten to twenty individuals you can connect to and invite them. You can also upload some contact databases and e-mail accounts, such as Outlook, Yahoo!, and Gmail, into LinkedIn so that you can invite your entire existing network in one effort. Some open networkers will link to anyone who requests a link, or they will reach out to a variety of individuals they don't know and ask to

link to them. Either way is acceptable and whether you link only with people you know well or are willing to link with people you barely know or don't know depends on your comfort level.

Having your résumé details in your LinkedIn profile and connecting to people is the bare minimum for an online profile. To have a profile that is a comprehensive marketing platform, you should consider the next sections, which detail additional options.

Include a Professional Picture or Head Shot

Professional photos are helpful as you start meeting more and more people because some people may remember your face more easily than your name or background.

Add a Summary to Your Thumbnail Sketch

Your LinkedIn profile is basically a thumbnail sketch of your résumé. It's important for you to include a short, succinct summary of your background and where you are now in your career. You should also include each school you've attended, along with the years. Include each work experience you've been a part of, again, along with the years, in a professional and formal format. This will allow individuals to identify how they have known you in the past.

Include Recommendations

Include recommendations from two or three individuals who know your work. You must be connected to people to request they provide a recommendation. Recommendations help your marketing because they add a dimension to your profile that is not included in your résumé.

Join Groups

Join groups with which you share a common interest. Groups are formed from common associations, such as college alumni groups (be sure to join your school's alumni group, even if you've yet to graduate), industry groups, and mutual goal groups, such as people interested in finding employment. Groups enable you to connect to more people, translating into even more people who will see your profile. You can join approximately fifty groups, and you can also elect to have your group memberships displayed or not displayed on your profile. Tailor your groups to reflect specific professional interests as another way to market yourself as being involved with that area.

Use Applications

Use LinkedIn applications such as reading lists and presentation or blog sharing. With a paper résumé, it is unwieldy to include a lot of attachments, such as aportfolio of your work. An online profile allows you to

link to an online collection of your work and create a comprehensive view of everything you offer. You can share a list of what you are reading with the Amazon reading list application. Listing books related to your career targets shows that you are staying current about your target industries and functions and are committed to training and development. You can use the SlideShare application to post PowerPoint presentations you have created. Perhaps as part of a class assignment, you have done a group project that is relevant to prospective employers. If you have a blog and your blog showcases examples of your work, your LinkedIn profile can be set to update with samples of your work whenever you post to your blog. While this level of detail seems onerous for a paper résumé, when online it is easy to page through and access as much data as you'd like, so you can offer the reader (in this case, recruiters and employers) much more information.

Maintain Your Profile

Remember that it is important to maintain your online profile. Continually update your LinkedIn profile because as your career grows and changes, so should your LinkedIn profile. Link to new people you meet. Update your summary and experience. LinkedIn also has a status section for more frequent updates that are broadcast to your connections. In this way, you can market your activity on an ongoing basis.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Social networking sites have both benefits and disadvantages. Make sure anything you put in cyberspace only supports your job search efforts.
- Take special care to ensure your Facebook presence gives a positive impression to anyone who may view it.
- LinkedIn is an online network with over 100 million users worldwide and provides specific connections for career-related and professional networking.
- Recruiters and employers use LinkedIn to search for candidates, making it a key marketing tool for a passive job search.
- At a minimum, you should have your résumé details online and start connecting with people.
- For a comprehensive campaign, you should also include a professional photo, recommendations, group memberships and the resulting connections and applications, such as reading lists, presentations, or blogs, that demonstrate your expertise.

EXERCISES

1. Look up five or six individuals on http://www.linkedin.com who are employed in the industry you are most interested in joining. What have you learned from their profiles?
2. Create an account on LinkedIn (if you don't already have one).
3. Connect with ten to twenty individuals.
4. Think of one or more additional features on LinkedIn you will add to your marketing campaign.

5.3 Your Networking Pitch

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the key components of an effective pitch.
2. Follow a template to craft your individual pitch.

A networking pitch was originally termed an elevator pitch because in the time an elevator takes to go between floors (generally thirty to forty seconds), you should be able to articulate your value proposition (the skills you have and the position you are seeking). The elevator pitch is now also called the professional pitch, the networking pitch, or simply the pitch.

This thirty- to forty-second summary should be spoken, or delivered, in a confident and convincing manner, making a strong impression. If your pitch is too long and drawn out, it lacks conviction. When meeting networking contacts, recruiters, and hiring managers, this is your one chance to make a great impression and present yourself with clarity. No one wants to listen to a long, drawn-out speech. Make your pitch clear and concise, enabling the person who is listening to know exactly what type of job search candidate you are.

How do you craft an effective pitch? Three steps will ensure your success:

1. Write your pitch.
2. Edit your pitch until it sounds just right.
3. Practice delivering your pitch verbally, and further edit it as needed because we do not write the same way that we speak. Continue rehearsing and repeating your pitch to ensure that your delivery is natural, convincing, and authentic.

Any information you can share that distinguishes you from others is very helpful. Perhaps you have something unique in your background:

- You speak two or three languages.
- You lived abroad for a particular length of time.
- You achieved something significant athletically or musically.

- You volunteered in a meaningful way and perhaps raised extraordinary funds for various charities. Distinguish yourself from others in whatever way you can to ensure you are remembered in a positive light.

You will deliver your pitch at different times and occasions, including the following:

- Career fairs present an opportunity to meet representatives from various firms. These individuals will meet many students or candidates, so it is important that you make sure your pitch is short and crisp. Also be certain to do your research on their company, as many candidates do not.
- Networking events enable you to first meet someone in a more relaxed setting.
- Interviews often begin with the interviewer asking for a summary of your background or asking that you take one or two minutes to let them know about you. Include high-level themes in your past (e.g., you've always been involved in health care at some point in your schooling and in your career). If themes are not apparent, talk about your achievements and the quality of your efforts.

Step 1: Write Your Pitch

Your pitch should answer the following five questions:

1. *What is your educational background*? Detail every college or university you attended, your major and minor, and your expected degree and graduation month and year (include your GPA if it is 3.3 or higher).
2. *Do you have any pertinent experience in the field in which you are interested*?
3. *What are your critical skills and strengths*? Highlight your top two or three skills.
4. *What do you want to do*? Be specific regarding industry, function, and geography (see Chapter 3 "Step 1: Identify Your Job Search Targets").
5. *Why would you be good at the position*? Focus on presenting your top two or three skills, and the skills you have that are necessary to succeed at the job you are targeting.

Type the answers to the preceding five questions, filling one complete page (8½ × 11).

Step 2: Edit Your Pitch

Once your pitch is written, review and edit it accordingly. You should use words that come naturally to you because the more natural the delivery, the more impressive the pitch. Here are some steps you can consider while editing your pitch:

- After you edit the one-page answers to the pitch questions, ensuring that you've covered all the important items, cut it to half a page; this forces you to prioritize the essential elements.

- After you edit the half-page document, ensuring that you've covered all the important items, cut it in half again (it's now one-quarter of the page); this forces you to be even more ruthless in prioritizing.
- After you edit the quarter-page document, ensuring you've covered all the important items, cut it in half again, leaving only four or five key bullets; this forces you to be concise and select just the most important items.

Step 3: Practice Delivering Your Pitch

Once you have the final pitch in writing, you'll need to practice, then practice, then practice some more. Your pitch should be spoken in a confident and compelling manner.

- Deliver your speech out loud to ensure it flows smoothly and addresses your career highlights. Practice it until you have it memorized. Practice until you can repeat it when someone shakes you from your sleep at 3:30 in the morning and you maintain your passion when saying it.

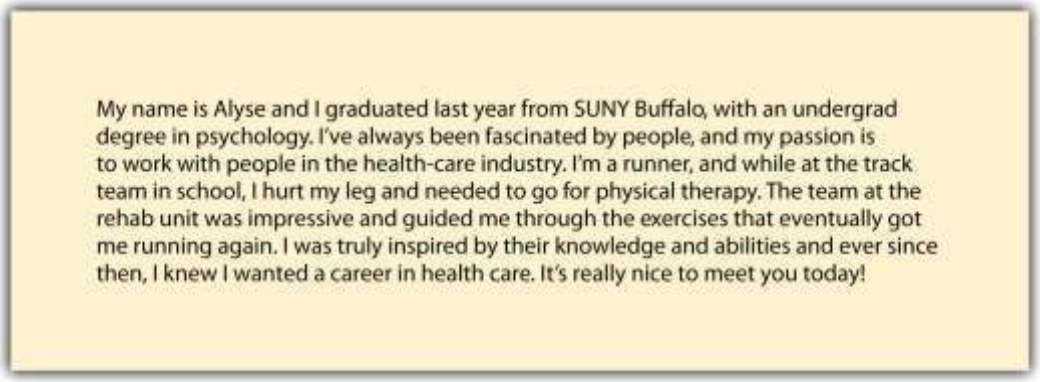
Figure 5.4 "Sample Pitch 1" through Figure 5.7 "Sample Pitch 4" are four sample pitches.

Figure 5.4 Sample Pitch 1

Figure 5.5 Sample Pitch 2

Figure 5.6 Sample Pitch 3

Figure 5.7 Sample Pitch 4



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A networking pitch articulates your value proposition (i.e., the

skills you have that match the position you are seeking).

- Your pitch should contain your education background, experience related to the field in which you are interested, your critical skills and expertise, what you want to do, and why you would be good at it.
- Writing your pitch and editing it will enable you to get the right content and tone.
- Practicing the delivery of your pitch will ensure your delivery is natural and confident.

EXERCISES

1. Type your pitch on a one-page document, and trim it until it's just four or five bullets in length.
2. Pair up with a pitch buddy to practice with each other and critique and strengthen your pitch. Does your buddy understand your value and what you want to do? Does your buddy's pitch give you any ideas on how to improve yours?
3. Practice your pitch until you can say it naturally, without any hesitation.

5.4 Chapter Review and Exercises

Creating a compelling marketing campaign is a vital step in your job search because it markets your skills and abilities to future employers, in most cases, before you meet them. The four components of this step are the following:

1. Creating a résumé
2. Writing a cover letter
3. Creating an online profile
4. Composing a pitch

Your marketing campaign will be more effective when you are more specific, targeted, and thoughtful of how to construct your marketing campaign elements:

- Your résumé will prove your success with your past employers, which then proves your worth to your future employers.
- Your cover letter makes the case for why you should be hired because it highlights the two or three critical skills necessary to succeed in the job you are seeking.
- Your online profile works behind the scenes to ensure you are seen by recruiters who seek talent. In addition, your profile provides a great way to stay connected with your network.
- Your pitch allows you to introduce yourself in a clear and concise way, highlighting the strengths you have that will enable you to succeed.

Remember that the better you market yourself, the more successful your job search will be. Apple's marketing campaign leaves no doubt about the quality of what they offer. You should do the exact same! The next step, step 3, is research, which will help you gather vast amounts of information about your industry, your function, your geography, and the companies you are targeting.

Chapter Takeaways

- Creating a compelling marketing campaign is vital to your job search and is composed of four things: a résumé, a cover letter, an online profile, and a pitch.
- Your marketing campaign must have high-quality standards because it represents you when you are not there.
- Even though some recruiters do not read cover letters, it is always worthwhile to write a compelling cover letter, just in case the recruiter who reviews your information values them.

- You should do five things before writing a cover letter: (1) assess your strengths, (2) assess your weaknesses, (3) decipher the job description, (4) compare your strengths, weaknesses, and the job description for alignment, and (5) select the top three skills you will include in your cover letter.
- The cover letter template includes three sections: (1) the introductory paragraph, (2) the last paragraph, which reiterates your interest, and (3) the magic middle (which highlights your top three skills).
- Your online profile serves two functions: (1) it's a passive job search strategy because recruiters search online profiles, and (2) it's a great networking tool because you can connect with friends, family, former coworkers, and current schoolmates and stay in touch with them easily regardless of where you or they live or work.
- A pitch should be short (less than one minute), concise, and include the following: (1) your educational background, (2) any pertinent experience in the field in which you are interested, (3) your critical skills and strengths, (4) what you want to do, and (5) why you would be good at it.

Chapter Review

1. Why is quality so important when crafting a marketing campaign?
2. Why is it important to assess your strengths and weaknesses when preparing to write a cover letter?
3. Why do you need a cover letter when some recruiters don't read them?
4. How do you decipher a job description? How do you identify most important criteria needed for this position?
5. What are the three main parts of a cover letter?
6. What are the two main benefits to having an online profile?
7. What is the minimum to get started with an online profile? What are some useful additional features?
8. Why is a pitch important to your job search?
9. What components are included in your pitch?
10. Why should your pitch be short?
11. Why do you have to practice your pitch?

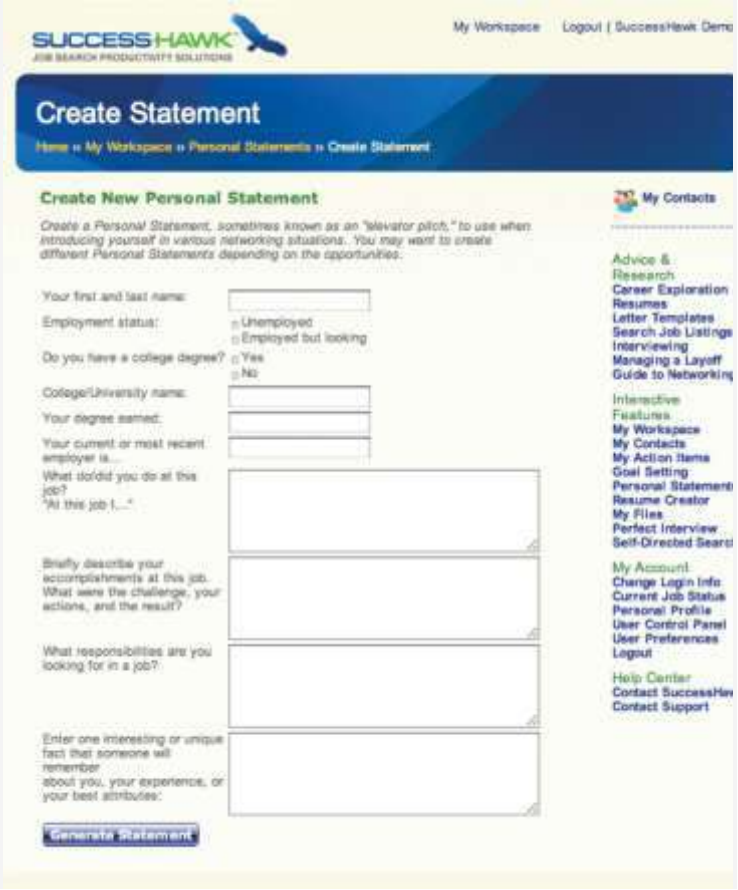
SuccessHawk: Cover Letters

To get started on preparing cover letters, thank-you notes, and references, go to the menu bar on

the right and click on Letter Templates.

SuccessHawk: Networking Pitch

For assistance in writing your personal statement, go to the bar on the right, and click on Personal Statements.



menu

5.5 Sample Cover Letters

Figure 5.8 Sample 1—Brian Thanis

Brian Thanis
50 Dairy Street
Austin, Texas 55555

Mr. Avis, Director of Campus Recruiting
Novartis
555 Health Way
Parsippany, New Jersey 55555

May 6, 2011

Dear Mr. Avis:

I am writing to apply to your summer intern program that I researched via the Vanderbilt Career Services Office. Novartis is a company I have followed for many years and I am impressed with your drug pipeline and your culture of excellence. I am currently a freshman at Vanderbilt, with an expected graduation date of Spring 2014. I am currently a biomedical engineering major, with classes in chemistry, multivariate calculus, physics, and programming.

The strengths I bring to your company include:

- Analytical Skills: I am confident in my knowledge of advanced math and science. I received a 5 on my Advanced Placement BC Calculus exam at SI Academy (high school), as well as two 4s in both Physics exams. At Vanderbilt, I currently have an A in physics, and am looking forward to the various engineering courses that I will be taking that will require me to use my knowledge of math and science.

- Leadership: I served as a representative in student government throughout all four years of SI Academy (high school), was elected Sophomore Vice President, and I served as the Vice President of my Economics Club. I led in my extracurricular activities as well. I was the trumpet section leader in band for all four years and the J.V. Basketball Captain my sophomore year. I also served as a member of the School Safety and Leadership Committee and I was one of only fourteen students from my school selected to participate in a Russian exchange.

- Communication and Teamwork: In my first semester at Vanderbilt, I took a class that was split into three individual engineering modules and my teams built a toy car, a model building, and researched various types of medical equipment, making presentations on all of them. In every instance, deadlines were met, and my teams received two grades of an A and one of a B. In addition to the great work we accomplished, we ensured we helped each other at every turn!

In closing, I am a strong match for your internship program as it fits very well with my biomedical engineering studies at Vanderbilt and I am confident that I would make a perfect candidate for your team. I am excited at the prospect of working for Novartis and should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at the e-mail address or phone number below.

Sincerely,

Brian S. Thanis
brian.s.thanis@vanderbilt.edu
555.555-5555

Refer to matching resume at the end of Chapter 4

Figure 5.9 Sample 2—Alyse Day

Alyse Day
34 East Terrace
Staten Island, New York 10312

August 11, 2011

Dear Dr. Stella:

I'm writing to you regarding your Dental Assistant and Dental Receptionist position that I researched on CareerBuilder. I currently attend college in the evening, and I am excited about this full-time opportunity. I would be an excellent fit because I have the strengths necessary to succeed, including interpersonal and communications skills in addition to a passion for the health-care industry. My strengths are demonstrated in the examples below:

- My interpersonal skills are exceptional. Last summer, I was a camp counselor at Child Activities Unlimited. My day-to-day responsibilities included working closely with children who had all types of issues, from being homesick to not feeling well, to wanting to explore every single activity we offered. I interacted well with them and their parents, ensuring open communication, a focus on safety, and a caring attitude for all.
- I respect and am inspired by health-care professionals, so I have genuine interest in this work. I was a runner on my school's track team, and when I had a leg injury last year, I was amazed by how the team of rehab professionals partnered with me until I was able to run again.
- My work ethic is very strong, as I ensure the gift store at University Hospital is impeccably clean and in complete order. There isn't a job too small or too big for me to manage, and I appreciate adding responsibilities to what I already manage.

In reviewing your job description, I am confident in my ability to complete all of the tasks mentioned. The only qualification I do not currently have is proficiency in taking x-rays, however, I am a very quick study, and I know I can do well with minimum training. In addition, I'm energetic, very willing to learn, and always give a 110% effort. I will call you in a week to follow up, but in the meantime, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Alyse Day
555.555.5555
alyse.day555@verizon.net

Refer to matching resume at the end of Chapter 4

Alyse Day
34 East Terrace
Staten Island, New York 10312

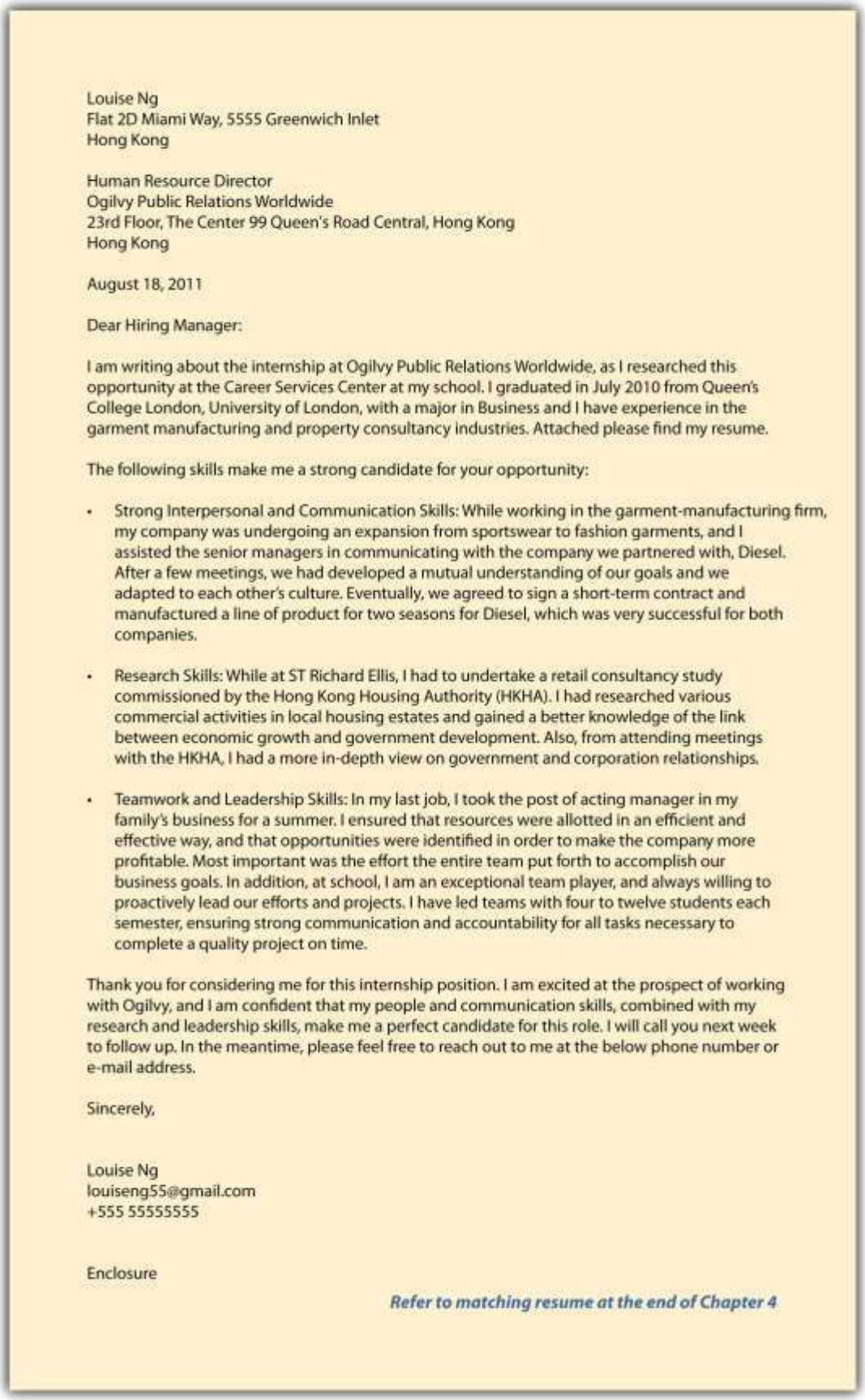
August 11, 2011

Dear Dr. Stella:

I'm writing to you regarding your Dental Assistant and Dental Receptionist position that I researched on CareerBuilder. I currently attend college in the evening, and I am excited about this full-time opportunity. I would be an excellent fit because I have the strengths necessary to succeed, including interpersonal and communications skills in addition to a passion for the health-care industry. My strengths are demonstrated in the examples below:

- My interpersonal skills are exceptional. Last summer, I was a camp counselor at Child Activities Unlimited. My day-to-day responsibilities included working closely with children who had all types of issues, from being homesick to not feeling well, to wanting to explore every single activity we offered. I interacted well with them and their parents, ensuring open communication, a focus on safety, and a caring attitude for all.

Figure 5.10 Sample 3—Louise Ng



Louise Ng
Flat 2D Miami Way, 5555 Greenwich Inlet
Hong Kong

Human Resource Director
Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide
23rd Floor, The Center 99 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong
Hong Kong

August 18, 2011

Dear Hiring Manager:

I am writing about the internship at Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, as I researched this opportunity at the Career Services Center at my school. I graduated in July 2010 from Queen's College London, University of London, with a major in Business and I have experience in the garment manufacturing and property consultancy industries. Attached please find my resume.

The following skills make me a strong candidate for your opportunity:

- Strong Interpersonal and Communication Skills: While working in the garment-manufacturing firm, my company was undergoing an expansion from sportswear to fashion garments, and I assisted the senior managers in communicating with the company we partnered with, Diesel. After a few meetings, we had developed a mutual understanding of our goals and we adapted to each other's culture. Eventually, we agreed to sign a short-term contract and manufactured a line of product for two seasons for Diesel, which was very successful for both companies.

- Research Skills: While at ST Richard Ellis, I had to undertake a retail consultancy study commissioned by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA). I had researched various commercial activities in local housing estates and gained a better knowledge of the link between economic growth and government development. Also, from attending meetings with the HKHA, I had a more in-depth view on government and corporation relationships.

- Teamwork and Leadership Skills: In my last job, I took the post of acting manager in my family's business for a summer. I ensured that resources were allotted in an efficient and effective way, and that opportunities were identified in order to make the company more profitable. Most important was the effort the entire team put forth to accomplish our business goals. In addition, at school, I am an exceptional team player, and always willing to proactively lead our efforts and projects. I have led teams with four to twelve students each semester, ensuring strong communication and accountability for all tasks necessary to complete a quality project on time.

Thank you for considering me for this internship position. I am excited at the prospect of working with Ogilvy, and I am confident that my people and communication skills, combined with my research and leadership skills, make me a perfect candidate for this role. I will call you next week to follow up. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me at the below phone number or e-mail address.

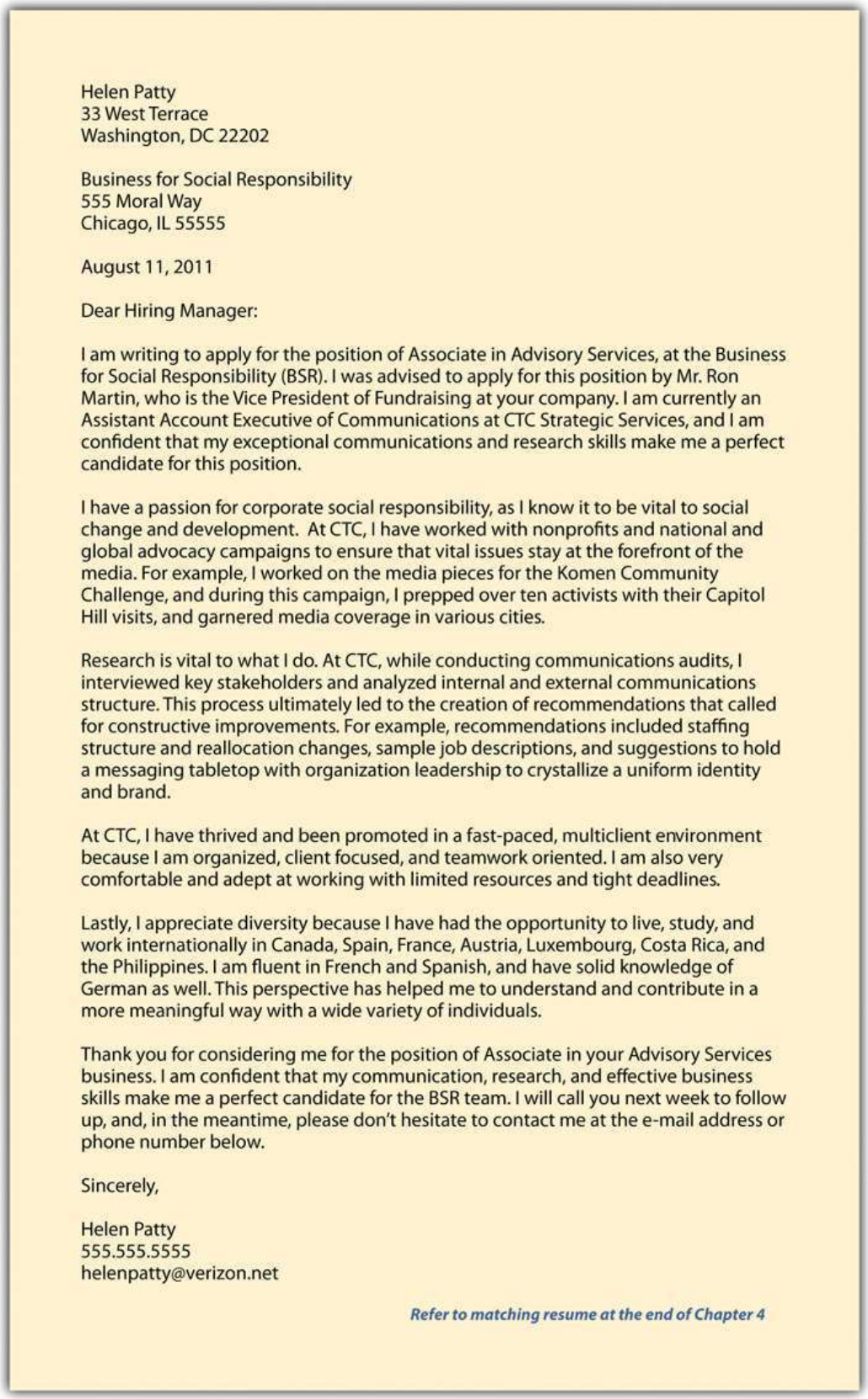
Sincerely,

Louise Ng
louiseng55@gmail.com
+555 55555555

Enclosure

Refer to matching resume at the end of Chapter 4

Figure 5.11 Sample 4—Helen Patty



Helen Patty
33 West Terrace
Washington, DC 22202

Business for Social Responsibility
555 Moral Way
Chicago, IL 55555

August 11, 2011

Dear Hiring Manager:

I am writing to apply for the position of Associate in Advisory Services, at the Business for Social Responsibility (BSR). I was advised to apply for this position by Mr. Ron Martin, who is the Vice President of Fundraising at your company. I am currently an Assistant Account Executive of Communications at CTC Strategic Services, and I am confident that my exceptional communications and research skills make me a perfect candidate for this position.

I have a passion for corporate social responsibility, as I know it to be vital to social change and development. At CTC, I have worked with nonprofits and national and global advocacy campaigns to ensure that vital issues stay at the forefront of the media. For example, I worked on the media pieces for the Komen Community Challenge, and during this campaign, I prepped over ten activists with their Capitol Hill visits, and garnered media coverage in various cities.

Research is vital to what I do. At CTC, while conducting communications audits, I interviewed key stakeholders and analyzed internal and external communications structure. This process ultimately led to the creation of recommendations that called for constructive improvements. For example, recommendations included staffing structure and reallocation changes, sample job descriptions, and suggestions to hold a messaging tabletop with organization leadership to crystallize a uniform identity and brand.

At CTC, I have thrived and been promoted in a fast-paced, multiclient environment because I am organized, client focused, and teamwork oriented. I am also very comfortable and adept at working with limited resources and tight deadlines.

Lastly, I appreciate diversity because I have had the opportunity to live, study, and work internationally in Canada, Spain, France, Austria, Luxembourg, Costa Rica, and the Philippines. I am fluent in French and Spanish, and have solid knowledge of German as well. This perspective has helped me to understand and contribute in a more meaningful way with a wide variety of individuals.

Thank you for considering me for the position of Associate in your Advisory Services business. I am confident that my communication, research, and effective business skills make me a perfect candidate for the BSR team. I will call you next week to follow up, and, in the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me at the e-mail address or phone number below.

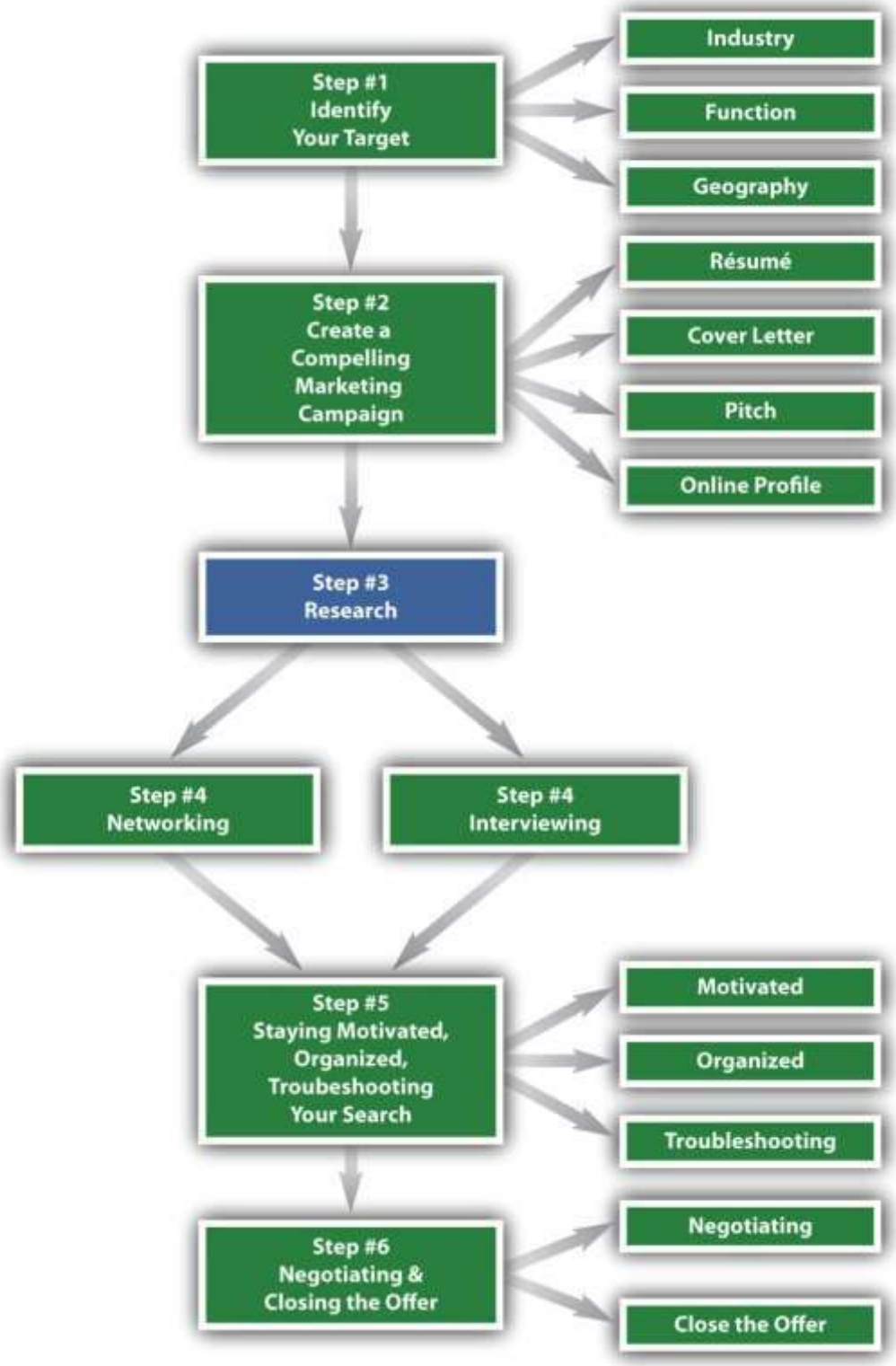
Sincerely,

Helen Patty
555.555.5555
helenpatty@verizon.net

Refer to matching resume at the end of Chapter 4

Chapter 6: Step 3: Conduct In-Depth Research

Figure 6.1 The Six-Step Job Search Process: Step 3



Overview

What Do We Mean by Conduct In-Depth Research? At this point in your search,

you have done the following two steps:

1. Identified your targets and have a list of organizations to approach (step 1)
2. Created your marketing campaign, for example, résumé, cover letter, online profile, and networking pitch, to position yourself to these prospective employers (step 2)

This chapter covers what you are looking for when you research.

You might be tempted to take your marketing campaign public—broadly distributing your résumé, posting it on job boards, and sharing it with everyone you know. You definitely need to put yourself out there via networking and interviewing in order to get a job. However, networking and interviewing is step 4. Before you go out on the market in front of people as a legitimate job contender, you need to complete step 3, conduct in-depth research.

Every time you put yourself in front of someone, it is a potential job interview situation. You don't know whom people know or if they may know of a job opening. So you want to make the best impression whenever you speak to anyone. If you use face-to-face interaction for your research, you risk coming across as a novice to someone who can really help you. On the other hand, if you take time to do some secondary researchbeforehand, you demonstrate knowledge of the job, organization, or industry, and you can use the personal interaction to research above and beyond what you can find in published material. Therefore, research must precede networking of any kind.

Research is often undervalued in the job search. Recruiters often complain that candidates come into interviews with little knowledge of the position, organization, and industry for which they are interviewing. Are you guilty of too little research?

- Have you gone to job interviews where you know little about the job, organization, or industry beforehand?
- Do you think reviewing the job description or visiting the organization's website is enough research?
- Do you use the interview itself as a main source for your information?
- Why might more research be beneficial?

According to Holly White, HR manager for United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "I am impressed by a candidate that intimately knows the organization, the current focus/strategy and is able to engage the interview panel in a thoughtful discussion about issues and opportunities." [1]

Table 6.1 Things to Know about Your Target Job, Organization, and Industry

Job	Organization	Industry
	Financials	
Responsibilities	Staff	
Day-to-day activity	Locations and structure	Top organizations
Reporting structure	Culture	Market characteristics
Growth prospects	Strengths and weaknesses	Growth prospects
Compensation and lifestyle	Growth prospects	Upcoming challenges
Backgrounds required	Upcoming challenges	Trends

This chapter includes how to conduct in-depth research. Yes, it includes reviewing the job description and organization website. Yes, interviews are a source of information. But as you can see from Table 6.1 "Things to Know about Your Target Job, Organization, and Industry", you need more information than is likely to be found in just the posting and the website. There are many other additional resources to consult:

- Internet: job boards, online career information providers, Google Alerts
- Library: *Encyclopedia of Associations*, business trade publications, research databases
- Financial statements: Hoovers, Guidestar, Dun & Bradstreet
- Social media: LinkedIn, Facebook, niche communities

This chapter details why in-depth research is critical to your job search:

- In-depth research differentiates you from the many job seekers who do not research thoroughly and who therefore know less.
- In-depth research is tangible proof that you have taken the time and made it a priority to get to know your target employer.
- In-depth research enables you to prepare talking points and specific examples that match the requirements of the job and organization.
- In-depth research enables you to find and start a relationship with the people who will make the hiring decisions.

Finally, this chapter talks about informational interviews. Informational interviews are meetings where you are the interviewer, and the person with whom you are meeting has information that you want—for

example, about a specific job, organization, or industry. Informational interviews are a type of networking, but since the primary aim is to uncover information, we are including informational interviewing in the research chapter.

Informational interviews are a bridge between steps 3 and 4 because they enable you to test your research from step 3 before you more broadly go out into the market as a job seeker in Step 4, Networking and Interviewing. Many job seekers treat informational interviews like an interrogation, with a long list of questions to extract information from the interviewee. In this chapter, we take a more sophisticated approach to informational interviews. These interviews occur *after* some research is already completed, so the interview is not simply a series of questions to gain more information but rather a way to verify, refine, and test the information already researched. It is a two-way conversation, and you will be giving as well as receiving information.

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[1] Author interviewed Holly White directly for a post she did on her website:http://www.sixfigurestart.com/recruiter-interview/recruiter-interview-holly-white-unicef

6.1 What Do You Research?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the different types of information you need to know for your job search.
2. Understand what you are looking for and how this information can be applied to your search.

Information about the Job Helps You Understand What You Will Do Now and in the Future

Job
Responsibilities
Day-to-day activity
Reporting structure
Growth prospects
Compensation and lifestyle backgrounds required

Information about the job tells you what you will do in the immediate term. Ideally, you have a clear understanding of what you are responsible for—in what areas you can make decisions and which people, resources, or budget you need to manage. You want to have a picture of what a typical day, week, and month look like, in terms of your activities and how you spend your time.

Having a clear sense of your responsibilities and day-to-day activities enables you to see if this aligns with what you want to be doing. This helps to confirm that your targets from step 1 are correct. Information about the job also helps refine your marketing from step 2. Your cover letter can highlight how your past experience matches what this job requires, now that you know more about it.

The reporting structure of the job is also important because your boss, or the person to whom you will be reporting, greatly impacts your immediate job satisfaction and your future career prospects. It is very different to report to a seasoned manager than to an inexperienced one. Great managers have to start somewhere, so an inexperienced manager isn't always a bad thing, but all things being equal, having an experienced manager implies better development for you.

You also want to look at the reporting structure overall—that is, where your job fits within the rest of the organization. In a small organization, there are fewer levels, and you may be reporting into senior management or even the head of the organization. This means you are close to the decision making and

you have a higher likelihood of participating in or having a deeper understanding of the strategy of the organization, given your proximity to the highest levels. In a big organization, there may be several layers before you get to the top, so you may only see a small portion of what is happening in the organization overall. Understanding the reporting structure helps you confirm that this job matches your decision criteria established in step 1.

Growth prospects, compensation, lifestyle, and the backgrounds required of people in the job can vary from job to job and among the same job across different organizations. Growth prospects, compensation, lifestyle, and the backgrounds required of people in the job impact your immediate work and your future prospects:

- Is the demand for this job growing or shrinking?
- If you are targeting a specific industry, is this job critical to this industry? For example, if you want to work in accounting for media organizations, all media organizations need accountants. But accounting is not critical to operating a media organization, so it can be done in-house or outsourced to external firms.
- What does this job typically pay? What are the components of the compensation?
- Is compensation growing or shrinking? How else is it changing?
- What is the lifestyle of people who do these jobs—long hours, volatile hours, lots of travel?
- What are the education backgrounds of people who hold these jobs? Do they all have similar degrees or certifications?
- What are the past experiences of people who hold these jobs? Do they all have internships in this field? Do they all have a certain number of years of experience, management or leadership experience, or other specific experience?

Understanding the preceding will help you confirm that you are targeting the right job. It will also help you position your marketing so that you talk about your background and interests in a way that aligns with the job.

Information about the Organization Helps You Understand if You Want a Job There and if You Can Contribute to That Company

Organization
Financials

Organization
Staff Locations and structure Culture Strengths and weaknesses Growth prospects Upcoming challenges

Even if you have confirmed you want a specific job, you have choices on where to do that job. You want to know the organization you select is right for you now and has staying power in case you want to establish your future career there.

- Is the organization healthy financially? Financials of an organization include revenues, operating costs, profitability, and reserves.
- How many people work there? Is this a small or big organization compared to its peers?
- How many offices does it have? Does it have a well-defined headquarters? Is it a small part of a much larger organization? Does it have international offices?
- What are the people like? Is it a team-oriented culture, or do people work very independently? Is it a competitive or nurturing culture? Are people very ambitious and driven or laid back?
- What is management like? Do bosses micromanage or allow a lot of autonomy? Is it a flexible or structured workplace?
- What are the values of the organization?
- Is the organization highly regarded? Is it known for innovation, progressive work policies, cutting-edge research, best in class?
- What are the organization's strengths compared to its peers? Weaknesses?
- Is the organization growing or shrinking? How does this compare with its peers?
- What challenges is the organization facing either internally or within its industry?

Once you can answer the preceding questions, you can compare your findings to your decision criteria in step 1 to confirm that this is a target organization:

- Is this organization of the size that you want?

- Does it have offices in the geography you want? Is there an opportunity to work internationally if that is a priority for you?
- Do the culture, management, and mission fit your values?
- Is the brand name and history of the organization what you want?
- Are the challenges and opportunities facing the organization aligned with what you want to work on?

You can refine your marketing in step 2 to match what this organization requires:

- Highlight experience in similarly sized or structured organizations, or identify other experiences or skills that translate.
- Give examples of working with similar people, management, and environments.
- Show the specific skills and achievements that will enable you to contribute to the challenges and opportunities facing the organization.

The more you know about the organization, the more specifically you can show you belong there.

Information about the Industry Helps You Understand the Job and the Organization

Industry
Top organizations
Market characteristics
Growth prospects
Upcoming challenges
Trends

An accountant for a media company has a different job than an accountant for a nonprofit or a school or a toy store. Some things will be the same (e.g., working with numbers, the overall accounting standards and regulations), but there will be nuances (e.g., types of transactions, types of reports to file). The industry impacts the job responsibilities, day-to-day activity, growth prospects, compensation and lifestyle, and the backgrounds of the people in those jobs.

The industry also impacts the organizations within it. Disney ABC is a stand-alone organization within media, and it has its own financials, staff, structure, culture, strengths, and challenges. However, the media business as a whole has a financial picture, a type of person it attracts, a culture, strengths, and

challenges. What is happening with media overall impacts each individual organization, and therefore, to understand Disney ABC or any stand-alone media organization, you need a grasp of what is happening in the media industry:

- Who are the top players?
- Are there few, but very large top players? Are there many smaller players?
- Is the industry new or very established?
- Is the industry growing or shrinking?
- Is the industry experiencing many changes? Are new competitors or new technologies changing the way business is done? Are there more or fewer customers? What is happening to prices?

Understanding the industry will give you more organizations to target. It will enable you to better understand the individual organizations and the job. At a minimum, industry knowledge will help you confirm that the industry is healthy and solid for long-term career prospects. Furthermore, industry knowledge will help position you as someone who thinks more broadly than just his or her specific role and therefore can make higher-level contributions.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Job seekers need to research information about specific jobs, specific organizations, and the overall industry.
- The information you gather enables you to confirm your targets from step 1 and tailor your marketing from step 2 to match the jobs, organizations, and industries you want.

EXERCISES

1. Review the questions that apply to each job, organization, or industry in your areas of interest. How much do you already know about your areas of interest?
2. Have you discovered areas of interest you were unaware of or did not consider, yet now want to research in depth? Where might you need to focus your research—understanding the job more, finding more organizations or deeper knowledge about individual organizations, or learning about the industry as a whole?
3. How will you incorporate research into your job search going forward?

6.2 How Do You Find the Critical Information?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand research resources for information about jobs, organizations, and industries.
2. Get specific research ideas for background, as well as ongoing, research.

Figure 6.2 Possible Research Resources

Job-Specific Research Resources

The ideal is to know a job for its day-to-day activities and over time, so you have both an immediate and longer-term perspective. It is helpful to talk to someone experienced in the job, as he or she will have a broad perspective. We will cover researching information by speaking directly to people in the informational interview section later in this chapter. However, remember that every live interaction, even if the intent is information gathering, is a possible job interview. So you want to do some research before speaking to anyone to present yourself in the best light. Here are several resources to familiarize yourself with a job:

- Job boards such as Vault.com and Monster.com
- Trade or professional associations
- Biographies and business and news profile stories
- Social media and niche online sites
- University career services offices

Job boards publish job descriptions that are great sources for the responsibilities, activities, and requirements of jobs. You also may be able to get some compensation information there. Job boards often also publish career information. Some resources are free but others are paid, and most boards offer both. For example, Vault.com offers "Day in the Life" write-ups of different types of jobs. People in the actual jobs write these, and they write them in diary style from the time they start their day until the time they go home. Monster.com offers Career Snapshots where they list different types of jobs with the job's definition and statistics on historical and future growth. The*Occupational Outlook Handbook* (http://www.bls.gov/oco) is published every two years by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and details more than 250 jobs, including descriptions of the job and the hiring outlook.

Trade or professional associations represent people in a specific job. Depending on the job, there can be many different associations. Accountants can join the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, and other accounting associations. You want to find one relevant to your target job. Associations will likely have member publications and statistics that can give insight into growth prospects, compensation statistics, and other trends in that job. Trade and professional news groups often cover who is coming and going and who has been promoted within their member companies. Often these news releases summarize people's backgrounds en route to that job. To find trade or professional associations for your targets, look at the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, a reference set available at the library. You can also look for professional associations online at http://www.weddles.com/associations/index.cfm.

Biographies and business and news profile stories can give insight into day-to-day activities and the arc of a career. Stand-alone biographies are typically written for the most senior positions, but still might mention different functional areas. For example,*One Day, All Children* is the story of Wendy Kopp and the founding of Teach For America. In the strictest sense, it provides insight into starting a nonprofit. The book also mentions the different areas of the organization, which is helpful to anyone interested in nonprofit and education. There are also anthologies of biographies that might profile various business owners, marketers, or financiers. These show a range of careers. Finally, magazines and newspapers often profile people's careers and backgrounds. Look at *Fortune*, *BusinessWeek*, *Inc.*, and *Fast Company* for career profiles. Sometimes publications profile top lists, such as Crain's 30 Under 30, where you can see a summary of profiles.

LinkedIn (http://www.linkedin.com) is a social media site aimed at professionals who want to share information about their work and education backgrounds. You can search using specific keywords, such as accountant or grant writer, to find profiles of people who have jobs you want. You can then look at their profiles to see their education, early jobs, how they describe their jobs, and other skills and information. LinkedIn also has groups, some of which are organized around specific types of jobs. You can read discussions and view profiles to get a better sense for that profession. In addition to LinkedIn, there are niche career sites, such as eFinancial Careers for finance or MediaBistro for media that post articles about job trends.

Finally, some university career services offices have a physical and online library of resources. These offices are open to students and often to alumni.

Organization-Specific Research Resources

The same resources you use for information about jobs are also useful for information about organizations. Job boards often have information about the organizations in their job postings and also in the career information sections. Another benefit of browsing job postings is that you may get ideas for organizations that are not household names. In addition to Vault.com and Monster.com, which have mainly private sector jobs, you want to look at USAJOBS (http://www.usajobs.gov/), the federal government's official job site for information on public sector jobs. Idealist (http://idealist.org) is a good resource for nonprofit jobs.

Trade or professional associations usually have member directories, which are not just useful for finding people (at the networking stage in step 4) but also good for finding companies. A local chamber of commerce can help identify companies in a specific geography.

Business and news publications do profiles of organizations as well as people. These publications often produce top lists that also are useful organizational resources.*Fortune* magazine lists the largest companies in its *Fortune* 500 issue. It then segments the companies by geography and industry and profiles select companies.*Fortune* also tracks Most Admired Brands, Top Companies to Work For, and other categories. *Fast Company* lists the most innovative companies. *Inc.* lists the fastest-growing private companies. These lists are a great way to familiarize yourself with individual organization names and their relationship within their peer groups.

Organizations create groups or pages on social media sites, such as LinkedIn and Facebook. You can follow these groups or pages to get breaking news about your organizations of interest. By looking at profiles attached to these organizations, you can get a feel for the culture and environment.

For financial information on organizations, you have several options:

- Private companies are not obligated to disclose their financial information. Dun & Bradstreet's *Million Dollar Directory* has information on larger private companies. You might also look at industry reports for mentions of specific private companies.
- Public companies are required to file financial statements with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). You can request these statements with the investor relations department of the company, or some may have their statements available online. Some companies collect this data for many organizations and make it available in a one-stop shop, such ashttp://www.annualreports.com or http://www.annualreportservice.com. In addition to just financial data, the 10-K financial statement is useful because a company is required to explain its business and to disclose challenges and trends in its business that may materially impact the numbers and data they are reporting. This section, often called risk factors, is a great summary of the critical issues for that company.
- Nonprofit companies have to file Form 990 with the IRS that lists operating costs, reserves, and salaries for top staff. Organizations that review charities, such as Guidestar (http://www2.guidestar.org), often have the 990 forms available.

Figure 6.3 Sample 10-K Financial Statement

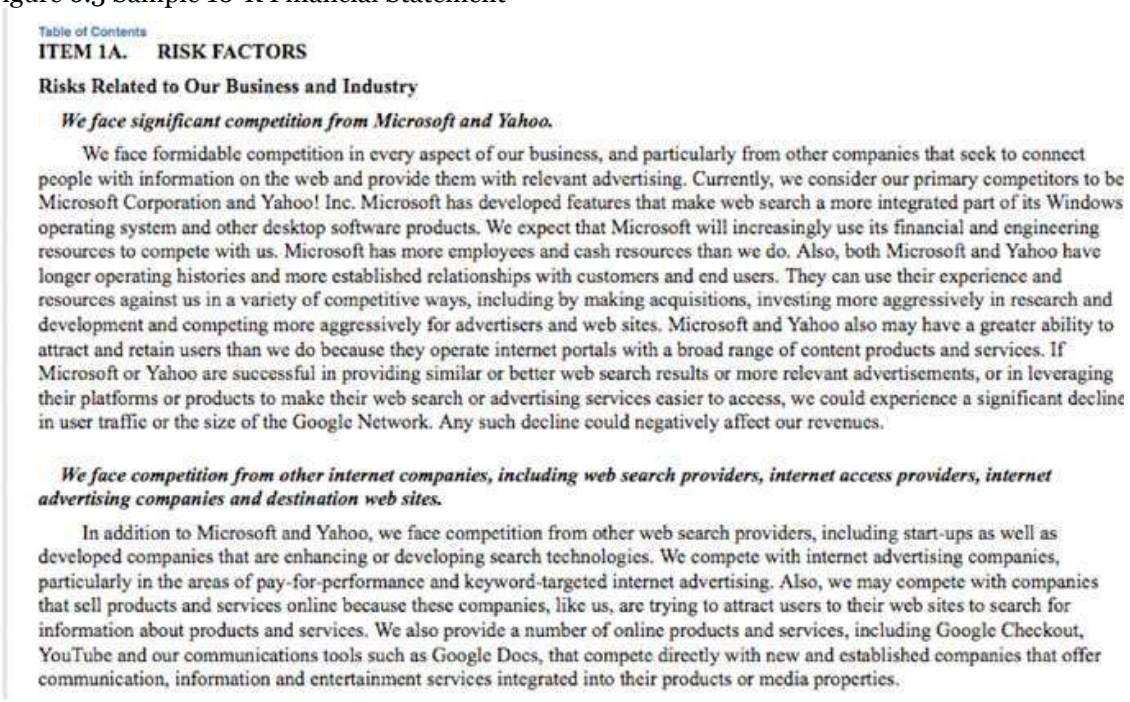

Table of Contents

ITEM 1A. RISK FACTORS

Risks Related to Our Business and Industry

We face significant competition from Microsoft and Yahoo.

We face formidable competition in every aspect of our business, and particularly from other companies that seek to connect people with information on the web and provide them with relevant advertising. Currently, we consider our primary competitors to be Microsoft Corporation and Yahoo! Inc. Microsoft has developed features that make web search a more integrated part of its Windows operating system and other desktop software products. We expect that Microsoft will increasingly use its financial and engineering resources to compete with us. Microsoft has more employees and cash resources than we do. Also, both Microsoft and Yahoo have longer operating histories and more established relationships with customers and end users. They can use their experience and resources against us in a variety of competitive ways, including by making acquisitions, investing more aggressively in research and development and competing more aggressively for advertisers and web sites. Microsoft and Yahoo also may have a greater ability to attract and retain users than we do because they operate internet portals with a broad range of content products and services. If Microsoft or Yahoo are successful in providing similar or better web search results or more relevant advertisements, or in leveraging their platforms or products to make their web search or advertising services easier to access, we could experience a significant decline in user traffic or the size of the Google Network. Any such decline could negatively affect our revenues.

We face competition from other internet companies, including web search providers, internet access providers, internet advertising companies and destination web sites.

In addition to Microsoft and Yahoo, we face competition from other web search providers, including start-ups as well as developed companies that are enhancing or developing search technologies. We compete with internet advertising companies, particularly in the areas of pay-for-performance and keyword-targeted internet advertising. Also, we may compete with companies that sell products and services online because these companies, like us, are trying to attract users to their web sites to search for information about products and services. We also provide a number of online products and services, including Google Checkout, YouTube and our communications tools such as Google Docs, that compete directly with new and established companies that offer communication, information and entertainment services integrated into their products or media properties.

We also compete with web sites that provide their own or user-generated content and provide advertising to their users. These destination web sites include those operated by internet access providers, such as cable and DSL service providers. Because our users need to access our services through internet access providers, they have direct relationships with these providers. If an access provider or a computer or computing device manufacturer offers online services that compete with ours, the user may find it more convenient to use the services of the access provider or manufacturer. In addition, the access provider or manufacturer may make it hard to access our services by not listing them in the access provider's or manufacturer's own menu of offerings, or may charge users to access our web sites or the web sites of our Google Network members. Also, because the access provider gathers information from the user in connection with the establishment of a billing relationship, the access provider may be more effective than we are in tailoring services and advertisements to the specific tastes of the user.

There has been a trend toward industry consolidation among our competitors, and so smaller competitors today may become larger competitors in the future. If our competitors are more successful than we are at generating traffic, our revenues may decline.

We face competition from traditional media companies, and we may not be included in the advertising budgets of large advertisers, which could harm our operating results.

In addition to internet companies, we face competition from companies that offer traditional media advertising opportunities. Most large advertisers have fixed advertising budgets, a small portion of which is

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Industry-Specific Research Resources

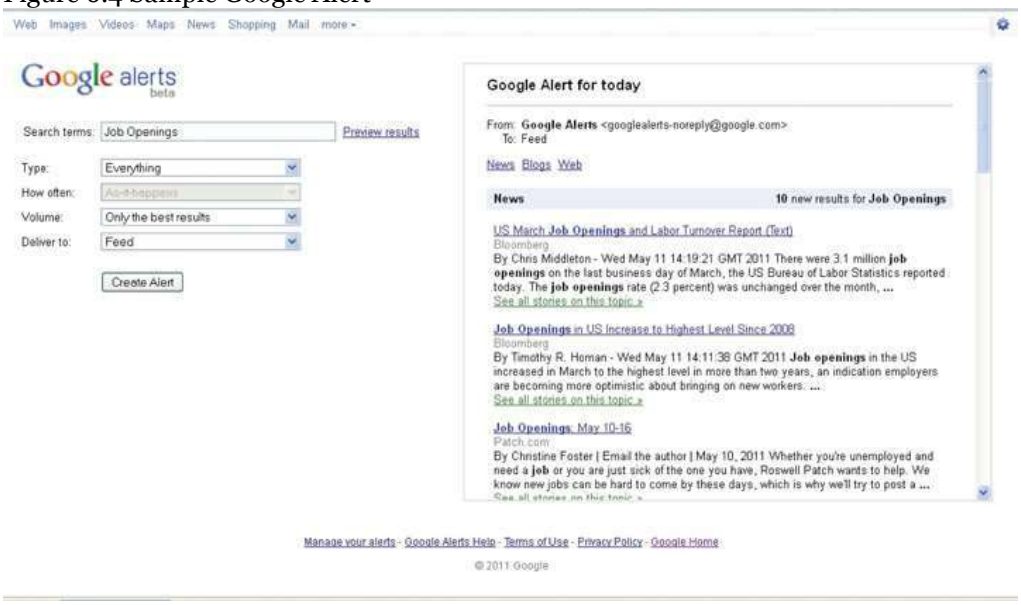
Again, some of the resources helpful to job and organization information also are helpful for industry information: job boards, trade and professional associations, business and news publications, and social media and online communities. In addition, you want to look at industry-specific associations and online communities.

Tracking Ongoing News

Even after you do overall research on a specific job, organization, or industry, you need to be able to track any current events or developments. You can consciously remember to search the Internet for news and media mentions of jobs, organizations, and industries of interest, or you can set up an automatic search

via Google Alerts. With Google Alerts, you can select specific keywords, phrases, or names for Google to search on and send back to you (daily or weekly) with Internet mentions containing those keywords, phrases, or names. You want to use this sparingly and with very specific search terms because you may receive too many results. At the same time, this is a very useful tool to ensure that you capture the latest developments for jobs, organizations, or industries you are closely following.

Figure 6.4 Sample Google Alert



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Job-specific research resources include job boards, trade and professional associations, biographies and business and news publications, and social media and online communities.
- For organization research, you also want to look at financial statements available via investor relations of a specific company, the SEC, the IRS, or aggregators such as Dun & Bradstreet, annual report providers, or Guidestar.
- For industry research, in addition to the resources listed for job and organization information, you want to look at industry associations.
- For ongoing news, set a Google Alert for keywords and specific organization names.

EXERCISES

1. Do you have fast and reliable Internet access, and are you comfortable with Internet searches and social media?
2. Do you have access to a good business or reference library?

3. Do you know how to access your current learning institution's or your alma mater's career services office?
4. Pick a specific job, organization, or industry target that interests you. Imagine that you have an interview relating to your target in the next three days. Come up with a research report that would enable you to speak intelligently about your target.
5. Where do you need support in your research efforts?

6.3 Why Research Is the Key Differentiator to a Successful Job Search

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Review how research can be used to support all stages of your job search.
2. Understand how research can be used to access the hidden job market.

Research Is Useful at All Stages of Your Job Search

Table 6.2 How Research Can Help You at Each Step of the Job Search

Six Steps to Job Search Success	Research can help you…
Step 1: Identify your targets.	Confirm that your targets fit your decision criteria.
Step 2: Create a compelling marketing campaign.	Tailor your marketing to fit your desired target's requirements.
Step 4: Network.	Establish your credibility as someone worth meeting.
Step 4: Interview.	Position yourself as the best candidate for the job.
Step 5: Stay motivated, organized, and troubleshoot your search.	Identify any gaps that may lead to search problems, or find additional targets as needed.
Step 6: Negotiate and close the offer.	Determine customary compensation levels and structure so you know what to negotiate for.

In Section 1 of this chapter, we mentioned how the different items you research help you confirm and refine the work you did in steps 1 and 2. Research also helps to drive your job search forward into job-related networking and interviewing opportunities. The knowledge gained from the research lets people know you are committed to your search and career. When busy senior people decide who to grant networking meetings, this preparation is a key differentiator. When you get the meeting or job interview, the research enables you to give legitimate reasons for your interest in the job and to talk intelligently about how your skills and experience relate.

If your search has problems to troubleshoot in step 5, research will help you find additional characteristics to emphasize or to add more targets to your list. As you negotiate your offer in step 6, the research you did on what is customary for compensation levels and structure enables you to know what to negotiate for.

Research Lets You Access the Hidden Job Market

The hidden job market refers to jobs that are not posted publicly. This happens a lot more often than you may think. The Five O'Clock Club, a national outplacement and coaching firm, estimates that most jobs are filled outside job postings. [1] Put yourself in the position of the hiring organization:

- They need to hire because they are busy.
- They are too busy to spend time hiring.
- They may want to post the job and do an exhaustive search.
- If someone walks through the door and fits exactly what they need, they can just take that person and solve their problem immediately without all the hassle of a job search.
- Furthermore, the person who knows about the need (the hiring manager) is not human resources (unless the need is in human resources, of course).
- There are always at least three steps before a job is posted: (1) the need is discovered, (2) HR is called in, and (3) the job is posted.
- Keep in mind that the job may not ever be posted, even if HR is called in. Maybe HR has a candidate already in mind, for example, someone who was interviewed for another position. If taking someone already known to the organization and already qualified means a faster hire, an open job may never be posted.

If you have researched your organizations and know either the hiring manager or HR, then you get a jump on everyone else who is waiting for the posting.

The Best Research Gets You to the Hiring Manager

Look back at the research suggested in Sections 1 and 2, and recall that it focuses on getting an inside understanding of jobs, organizations, and industries. You are trying to understand exactly how the job, organization, or industry works and how it is structured so that you can interact in and among people of that job, organization, or industry, ultimately landing in the exact department and in front of that hiring manager where you'd like to work.

For a specific job within a specific organization, you want an organizational chart that answers the following questions:

- What is the exact title of this job?
- What is the name of the department where this job resides?
- Who manages the people in this job?

- Who runs the department? What is the relationship among the people in the job, the direct manager, and the department head?
- Are there other departments that interact with this one?
- Are there other decision makers who will influence the hiring decision?
- How does the department report into senior management?
- Will senior management be involved in the hiring decision?

As you research the responsibilities, day-to-day activity, and reporting structure of a job and the locations and structure of an organization, you want to keep this organizational chart in mind and try to fill in as much as you can. Sometimes you will see specific names cited in a news article or as part of an online community. Mostly, however, you will have just overall department head names and the senior-most staff, and you will need to use networking to get the actual names of people beneath the senior staff. Even though you need networking to get the rest of the way, the research to date is crucial to get an overall outline and to establish your credibility as an insider who people are willing to help.

The Hidden Job Market Resides within the Individual Departments

Once you are networked into the target department, it is a question of staying in touch with the departments where the jobs you want reside. This way, when they need to hire, they think of you right away. They don't need to worry about posting the job, as you are readily available to help them. Remember that the jobs reside in these individual departments, not in a general job board overall or even in a specific organization's job board. You want to get as close to where the job originates as possible.

A good example of finding a job in the hidden job market by getting close to the job originator is Luisa B. Luisa had an interest in health-care finance, specifically working in the accounting area of hospitals. She joined a trade association that focused on health-care finance issues. She researched the market of hospitals in her area to determine all of the hospital names, the department names where they handled finance, and the names of the finance officers. She conducted informational interviews of these finance officers and kept in touch with news from the trade association. A few weeks after starting this process, one of her early interviewees called her back: there was a position opening up and they thought of her. She got the job.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Research is helpful in all stages of your search.

- Research can drive your search forward to networking meetings and interviews.
- Research into the hiring departments and managers can help you access jobs that aren't posted—the hidden job market.

EXERCISES

1. Do you know decision makers who hire, even for jobs you don't want? If you have a friendly relationship with people in a position to hire, ask them about the reporting structure within their own firm. Ask about decision making during the job search process. Practice with them filling out an organizational chart. Of course, this is just a sample for an organization and role you may not want, but it's good practice.
2. For jobs you do want, do you have a basic understanding of how you might find your way to the decision makers?
3. What research resources will you use to get an organizational chart that reveals the decision makers for the jobs you want?

6.4 Informational Interviews

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the purpose, structure, and protocols of informational interviews.
2. Understand how to use informational interviews to move your job search forward.

Informational Interviews Are Two-Way Exchanges of Information

Most job seekers see informational interviews as a shortcut to research. Why not find someone who does the job, works at the organization, or works in the industry so they can give you a summary of the job, organization, or industry, instead of plowing through secondary data yourself? There are several reasons it is a bad idea to jump right to informational interviews without conducting your own research first:

- It's harder to land good informational interviews without having done some research first. Potential interview targets are going to think it's not worth their time if you are just there to take information from them, rather than having an interesting two-way exchange.
- Just because someone does the job or is part of an organization or industry doesn't mean that they have an exhaustive command of the information for that job, organization, or industry. You will not get an objective, comprehensive view of your target just by talking to a few people.
- Unless your interview target is skilled at tailoring advice across a range of backgrounds, what they will share is based on their specific experience, skills, and personality. It may not be relevant to you or your situation.
- You get just the basic information because you do not know enough to ask probing questions or to confirm or refine information you gather beforehand. It is a wasted opportunity for you to get more nuanced information.
- You come across as knowing nothing about the job, organization, or industry. You wasted an opportunity to demonstrate your interest and knowledge, and therefore market yourself as a possible person to work in that job, organization, or industry.

The best informational interviews are two-way exchanges of information, more like a conversation than an interrogation. You are offering the information you have collected via your research and the interviewee is adding his or her thoughts and ideas. You come across not as the novice looking for a favor and more as a colleague brainstorming ideas. People are busy and don't always take the time to read business news, attend trade association meetings, or do the in-depth research you will be doing. They will

appreciate you bringing to them the latest news. By being well researched and prepared, you do not have to feel like you are imposing on someone when asking for an informational interview. You will be giving back as well, in terms of information on breaking news, trends, or innovations.

Sample Informational Interview Questions

You want to get to know your interviewee by asking questions such as the following:

- How did you get involved in this job, organization, or industry?
- What do you like most about it? What has been most rewarding?
- What is most challenging? Was there anything that surprised you?
- What is a typical day, week, or month?
- What skills are most critical to have, develop, and maintain to be successful?
- What personality types are most successful?
- What do you know now that you wished you knew when you started?

Interest in their specific background establishes rapport because it shows you care about them specifically. It also gives you a foundation for questions to ask later because you know more about their experience.

You want to get broader information about the industry, so you ask questions that reflect your research:

- According to my research, the top competitors are [name the competitors]. Am I missing anyone you think is significant? Is there a new player I should know about?
- According to my research, [name a trend, challenge, or innovation] is a major trend, challenge, or innovation. Is this affecting your job or organization? Is this overestimated in the media? Are there are other trends, challenges, or innovations I should be concerned about?

This is why research prior to the informational interview is so critical. You use your research findings as a springboard for conversation. You are not relying on the interviewee to think of everything and be the sole source of information. You are offering ideas, too. Informational interviews also enable you to dive deeper into what you previously researched.

Pick several research findings to test, and choose what to ask based on what level and type of experience your interviewee has. If your interviewee is very experienced and senior, you can ask broad strategy questions. If your interviewee is focused on a very specific area, say technology, focus on technology-related issues in the discussion.

You want to get career-related information, such as salary and environment, and a candid sense of your chances in this job, organization, or industry:

- According to my research, it is customary for people in this job to make [name salary range] and experience [name lifestyle, travel, or work culture]. Is that accurate? Are there any nuances to this that are not publicized in general media?
- According to my research, the typical career trajectory is [name different titles you have seen for the job]. Is this accurate? Does this differ by company?
- How would you describe the culture of your organization? Does this vary greatly for companies in the industry?
- According to my research, it is customary for people in this job to have [name skills and experiences]. Is my background of [summarize your skills and experience] competitive? If you knew of an opening for this type of job, would you consider me or refer me?
- What about my background is most relevant to this job? What would I need to do to improve my chances?

These questions enable you to get information on the touchy issues of compensation and lifestyle, as well as candid feedback on your hiring prospects. By offering ideas, you take the pressure off the interviewee to reveal sensitive information. Instead, you give them something to react to. People will also appreciate that you have done some salary research, as they might not have time to see what is happening in the market, and they will want to reciprocate by sharing something they know.

Asking about the competitiveness of your skills and experience is not the same as asking for a specific job. You should never ask for a job in an informational interview. It is disingenuous because you asked for a meeting to focus on gathering information, not to ask for a job.

In the previous example, you are asking for candid feedback about your job potential. You will not get candid feedback from recruiters or prospective employers during an actual job interview. Recruiters and prospective employers will be concerned about being too critical too soon, angering the candidate, and having the candidate bad-mouth the organization or even sue. Since you will not get explicit feedback during the interview process, try to get that feedback in an informational interview. Asking if your informational interviewee would consider hiring or referring you is much more direct than just asking if your background is good. The measure that matters is whether you are competitive for an open job. Asking for job potential is still, however, not as presumptuous as asking for a job outright.

For people from a specific organization, you want to fill in your organizational chart with answers to the following questions:

- What department are you in (i.e., the specific name if it's not revealed in their introduction or on their business card)?
- Who oversees this department?
- How does it fit in with the rest of the organization?
- Is this structure typical, or are your competitors organized differently?
- I am doing research on [name another organization] and trying to find who runs the [name department you want]. Do you know anyone there whom I could ask?

If you are trying to fill out spaces in your organizational chart, you should ask these questions if your interviewee would likely know the answers. If your interviewee is very junior or works in a department with little other contact, he or she may not know, so don't take it personally if they don't share any information. You should also ask about other organizations because sometimes insiders do know their competitors. You also might get referrals to additional potential informational interviews.

Don't Just Ask Questions; Test Hypotheses

Sample informational interview questions include the following:

- How did you get involved in this job, organization, or industry?
- What do you like most about it? What has been most rewarding?
- What is most challenging? Was there anything that surprised you?
- What is a typical day, week, or month?
- What skills are most critical to have, develop, and maintain to be successful?
- What personality types are most successful?
- What do you know now that you wished you knew when you started? (This is a great question to ask because it forces people to reflect on the arc of their career. It is unexpected, and people appreciate this question.)
- According to my research, the top competitors are [name the competitors]. Am I missing anyone you think is significant? Is there a new player I should know about?

- According to my research, [name a trend, challenge, or innovation] is a major trend, challenge, or innovation. Is this affecting your job or organization? Is this overestimated in the published research? Are there are other trends, challenges, or innovations I should be concerned about?
- According to my research, it is customary for people in this job to make [name salary range] and experience [name lifestyle, travel, work culture]. Is that accurate? Are there any nuances to this that are not publicized in general media?
- According to my research, it is customary for people in this job to have [name skills and experiences]. Is my background of [summarize your skills and experience] competitive? If you knew of an opening for this type of job, would you consider me or refer me? What about my background is most relevant to this job? What would I need to do to improve my chances?
- What department are you in (i.e., the specific name if it's not revealed in their introduction or on their business card)?
- Who oversees this department?
- How does it fit in with the rest of the organization?
- Is this structure typical, or are your competitors organized differently?
- I am doing research on [name another organization] and trying to find who runs the [name department you want]. Do you know anyone there whom I could ask?
- According to my research, it is customary for people in this job to make [name salary range] and experience [name lifestyle, travel, or work culture]. Is that accurate? Are there any nuances to this that are not publicized in general media?
- According to my research, the typical career trajectory is [name different titles you have seen for the job]. Is this accurate? Does this differ by company?
- How would you describe the culture of your organization? Does this vary greatly for companies in the industry?
- According to my research, it is customary for people in this job to have [name skills and experiences]. Is my background of [summarize your skills and experience] competitive? If you knew of an opening for this type of job, would you consider me or refer me?
- What about my background is most relevant to this job? What would I need to do to improve my chances?

If you look at the structure of the preceding informational interview, many questions use the secondary research as a springboard for the question. You want to give information so it is less presumptuous to ask for information in return. You want to establish your knowledge so the interviewee sees you as an insider and is more open to sharing. You want to save the interviewee from having to do all the work of thinking of what to talk about. You want to confirm and refine your research to date. In this way, you are not just asking a series of questions, but you are testing hypotheses that you have formed from your secondary research and other informational interviews.

When you invite your interviewee to an informational interview, make sure they know that you have done some interesting research and would like to share and confirm the results with them. Many job seekers do not do this research, so you differentiate yourself immediately and assure the interviewee that it is worth their time to see you. You are more likely to land informational interviews if the interviewee knows that you have done some work in advance and have interesting insights and questions to share.

Be Polite: Common Rules of Etiquette Apply

Common rules of etiquette apply in the protocols of informational interviews. When asking for the interview, you can approach your interviewee by phone, mail, or e-mail. There is no one right answer, but each has advantages and disadvantages:

Table 6.3 Possible Ways to Ask for an Informational Interview and Advantages and Disadvantages of Each

Approach by	Advantages	Disadvantages
Phone	Potential for immediate response For people who are difficult to reach, you cut through a lot of back and forth if you happen to reach them right away	Disruptive to the interviewee You have very little time to introduce yourself and make your request
Mail	Potential to stand out. Few people take the time to send mail anymore	Slow to arrive Cannot confirm that the recipient receives or reads it
E-mail	Fast but still gives you the opportunity to refine your draft Recipient can respond right away or wait until later Enables you to include hyperlinks for more information	Cannot confirm that the recipient receives or reads it

Approach by	Advantages	Disadvantages
	about you	

E-mail has the most advantages and fewest disadvantages and should work for most job seekers. If you are more confident in your phone approach or mail campaign, then you may want to try that as well. You might also tailor your approach to the recipient. If you get referred to someone and they tell you to call them, then call them, even if you'd prefer to e-mail. You want to approach based on what is best for the interviewee.

The content of your approach, whether by phone, mail, or e-mail, should include who you are and why you are making contact. If someone refers you, mention that right away. Regarding who you are, make your introduction compelling but brief. Do not attach your résumé; this is not a job interview, so that is presumptuous. An elegant way to share your résumé is to put your online profile hyperlink in your e-mail signature. This way, the interviewee can easily get more information about you without having to search, but it is shared in one line rather than a paragraph or more of detail. This is a key advantage of an e-mail approach.

Figure 6.5 Sample Informational Interview Approach E-mail

Subject: Follow up to Manufacturers' Accountants article and Market research on accounting and manufacturers *(mention how you know the person, in this case from an article. If you have been referred by someone, mention that instead)*

John,

I am a recent graduate of Williams College and conducting research into accounting at large manufacturing companies *(this establishes who you are and what you want)*. I read your interview in the Manufacturers' Accountants trade journal and would appreciate fifteen minutes of your time to learn more about your work *(this establishes why you are contacting them specifically)*. I am happy to share what I have been learning in my research to date *(this assures that it will not be a waste of time but rather a two-way exchange)*. Please let me know a good time to speak in the next week or so. I am happy to come by your office or talk by phone *(this gives flexibility and makes it easy for them to say yes)*.

Regards,
Mary Sample
http://www.linkedin.com/in/marysample

Com
mon
etiqu
ette
appli
es
durin
g and
after
the
infor
matio

nal interview as well. Be on time, and do not take too much time. Ask for fifteen minutes, be mindful of the time, and offer to end the interview right at fifteen minutes. Only stay longer if invited. Send a thank-you note—e-mail is fastest, handwritten by mail is a classy *addition*, but definitely send at least an e-mail so you know it arrives promptly.

Use Informational Interviews to Get More Networking Meetings and Interviews

Informational interviews lead to additional meetings. If you have a good interview, don't forget to ask the interviewee for referrals to other interviews: *Based on my research, I am planning to talk to [name specific people or at least companies]. Is there anyone else who should be on my research list? Can I use your name when I contact them*?

Ask for names directly. Your well-researched interview should have assured the interviewee that you will not waste other people's time, so they will be more confident about sharing names. Always try to get the contact information so you make the contact directly, rather than asking the interviewee to do an introduction. Otherwise, the interviewee, while well intended, may forget or just get too busy. Also confirm if you can use their name when you approach the new contact, as they will be more receptive to someone who has been referred.

If the interviewee insists on contacting people first before referring them, try to get specific agreement on when you can follow up. A good approach is to say, "Thank you for offering to speak to [person the interviewee referred] on behalf of my research. Can I check in with you [pick a specific date within a week or ten days] to follow up?" This confirms your understanding of what they promised to do, gives them a deadline, and gives you a reason to check back in with them in seven to ten days.

Remember to use information you gain from earlier informational interviews in future interviews. It is not just the secondary research you should allude to. In fact, it can help you land additional interviews if you mention to future interviewees that you have already spoken with their competitors and are happy to share what you have learned. You will not share anything sensitive or confidential or reveal specific names of your sources. But you can talk about what you have learned in general and the types of people you have interviewed—for example, "I have been speaking with people in accounting at leading manufacturers, and they are concerned about the recent changes to accounting regulations."

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Informational interviews confirm and refine existing research. They are not a shortcut or replacement for your own research.
- The best informational interviews are two-way exchanges of information where you share what you have learned but also get to know the interviewee, their background, and their ideas.
- Try to get candid feedback on your competitiveness as a candidate. It is easier to get this candid feedback during informational interviews than during real job interviews.
- Use your research as a springboard for the interview questions to assure the interviewee that you are an insider and to give them ideas of what to talk about.
- Be polite before, during, and after the interview. E-mail is ideal for requesting an interview and for the thank-you.
- Use your informational interviews to get referrals for additional meetings.

EXERCISES

1. Do you have some ideas for people you can interview now? Try to practice with family and friends before your first informational interview.
2. What are some questions you will use, based on your research to date?
3. If you are uncomfortable with informational interviews, what support and resources will you use to master this effective and important job search tool?

6.5 Chapter Review and Exercises

Conducting in-depth research is critical to all stages of your job search. The information you learn about your desired jobs, organizations, and industries helps to confirm the targets you selected from step 1. The research helps you better position your marketing from step 2. It enables you to land and conduct strong informational interviews, which is an important part of networking and interviewing in step 4. Research gives you data to troubleshoot your search as needed in step 5. It also gives you data to negotiate in step 6. Research is overlooked by many job seekers, so it is a powerful way to differentiate yourself as a candidate with genuine interest, commitment, and knowledge.

Chapter Takeaways

- Job seekers need to research information about specific jobs, specific organizations, and the overall industry.
- The information you gather enables you to confirm your targets from step 1 and tailor your marketing from step 2 to match the jobs, organizations, and industries you want.
- Job-specific research resources include job boards, trade and professional associations, biographies and business and news publications, and social media and online communities.
- For organization research, you also want to look at financial statements available via investor relations of a specific company, the SEC, the IRS, or aggregators such as Dun & Bradstreet, Hoovers, or Guidestar.
- For industry research, in addition to the resources listed for job and organization information, you want to look at industry associations.
- For ongoing news, set a Google Alert for keywords and specific organization names.
- Research is helpful in all stages of your search.
- Research can drive your search forward to networking meetings and interviews.
- Research into the hiring departments and managers can help you access jobs that aren't posted—the hidden job market.
- Informational interviews confirm and refine existing research. They are not a shortcut or replacement for your own research.
- The best informational interviews are two-way exchanges of information where you share what you have learned, but also get to know the interviewee, their background, and their ideas.

- Try to get candid feedback on your competitiveness as a candidate. It is easier to get this candid feedback during informational interviews than during real job interviews.
- Use your research as a springboard for the interview questions to assure the interviewee that you are an insider and to give them ideas of what to talk about.
- Be polite before, during, and after the interview. E-mail is ideal for requesting an interview and for the thank-you.
- Use your informational interviews to get referrals for additional meetings.

Chapter Review

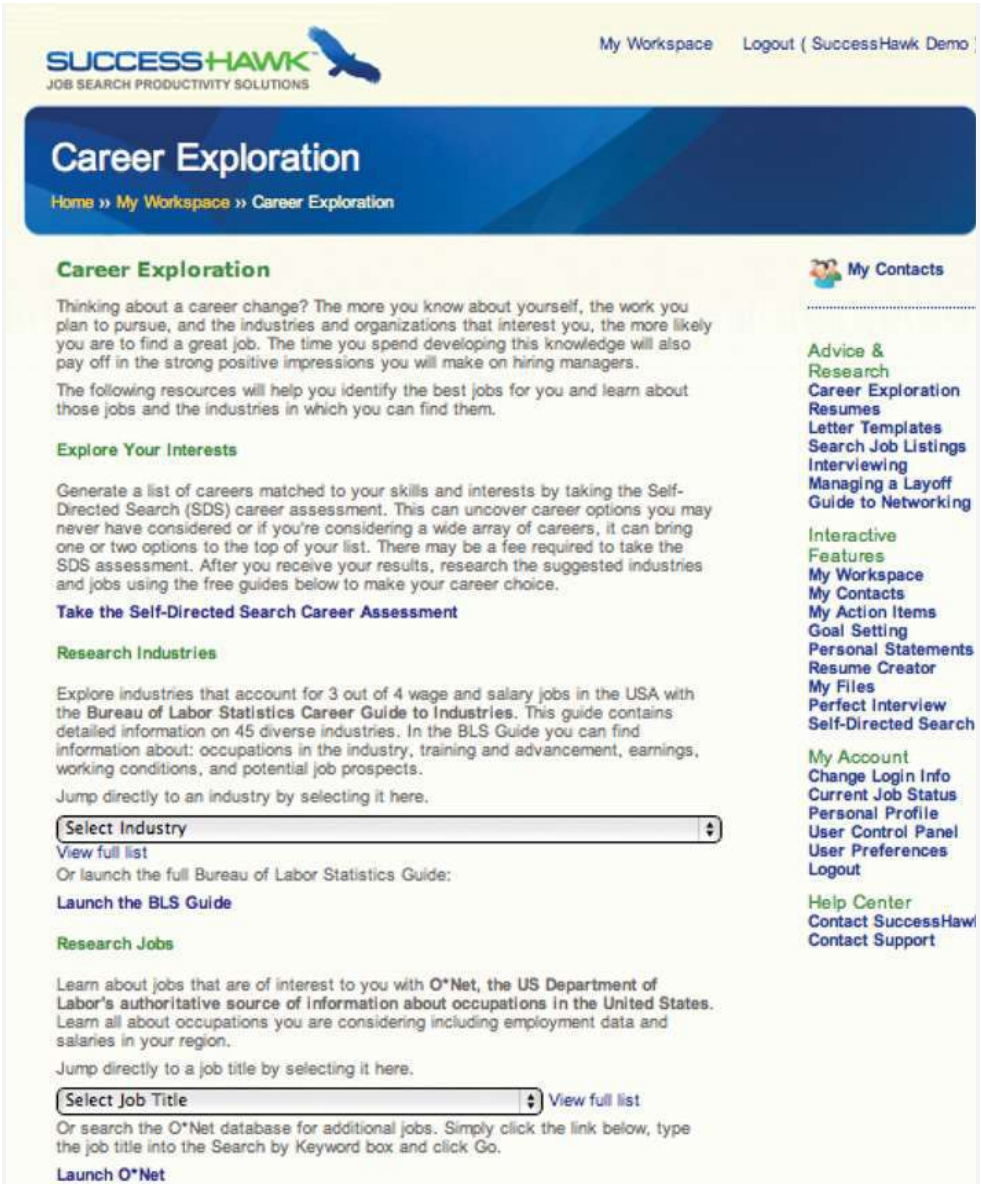
1. Why is research important to the job search?
2. In what three areas do you want to focus your research?
3. What resources will you use to find information about jobs, organizations, and industries?
4. What is the hidden job market?
5. How can research help you access the hidden job market?
6. Why are informational interviews an important component of research and networking?
7. How do you structure informational interview questions for maximum effectiveness?
8. What are some sample informational interview questions?
9. How do you use informational interviews to get additional meetings?

SuccessHawk: Research Jobs

Learn about jobs that interest you with O*Net, the US Department of Labor's authoritative source of information about occupations in the United States, including employment data and salaries in your region. To access O*Net, click on "Career Exploration" in the right-hand menu bar under "Advice and Research" and scroll down the page to "Research Jobs."

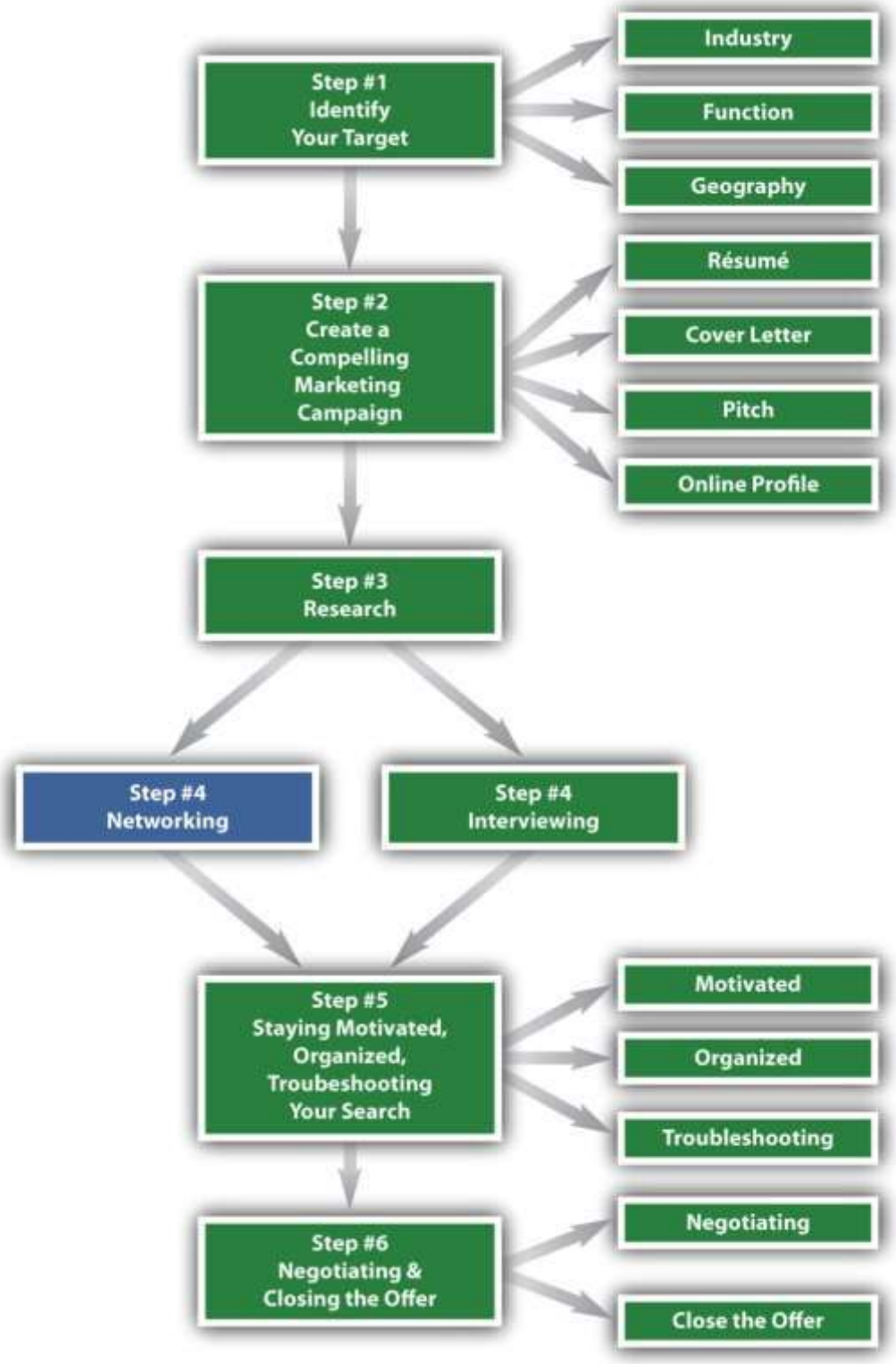
SuccessHawk: Research Industries

Use the Bureau of Labor Statistics's Career Guide to Industries to explore industries that account for three out of four wage and salary jobs in the United States. This guide contains detailed information on forty-five diverse industries, including information about occupations in each industry, training and advancement, earnings, working conditions, and potential job prospects. To access the Career Guide to Industries, click on "Career Exploration" in the right-hand menu bar under "Advice and Research" and scroll down the page to "Research Industries."


SUCCESSHAWK
JOB SEARCH PRODUCTIVITY SOLUTIONS
My Workspace
Logout (SuccessHawk Demo)
Career Exploration
Home » My Workspace » Career Exploration
Career Exploration
Thinking about a career change? The more you know about yourself, the work you plan to pursue, and the industries and organizations that interest you, the more likely you are to find a great job. The time you spend developing this knowledge will also pay off in the strong positive impressions you will make on hiring managers.
The following resources will help you identify the best jobs for you and learn about those jobs and the industries in which you can find them.
Explore Your Interests
Generate a list of careers matched to your skills and interests by taking the Self-Directed Search (SDS) career assessment. This can uncover career options you may never have considered or if you're considering a wide array of careers, it can bring one or two options to the top of your list. There may be a fee required to take the SDS assessment. After you receive your results, research the suggested industries and jobs using the free guides below to make your career choice.
Take the Self-Directed Search Career Assessment
Research Industries
Explore industries that account for 3 out of 4 wage and salary jobs in the USA with the Bureau of Labor Statistics Career Guide to Industries. This guide contains detailed information on 45 diverse industries. In the BLS Guide you can find information about: occupations in the industry, training and advancement, earnings, working conditions, and potential job prospects.
Jump directly to an industry by selecting it here.
Select Industry
View full list
Or launch the full Bureau of Labor Statistics Guide:
Launch the BLS Guide
Research Jobs
Learn about jobs that are of interest to you with O*Net, the US Department of Labor's authoritative source of information about occupations in the United States. Learn all about occupations you are considering including employment data and salaries in your region.
Jump directly to a job title by selecting it here.
Select Job Title
View full list
Or search the O*Net database for additional jobs. Simply click the link below, type the job title into the Search by Keyword box and click Go.
Launch O*Net
My Contacts
Advice & Research
Career Exploration
Resumes
Letter Templates
Search Job Listings
Interviewing
Managing a Layoff
Guide to Networking
Interactive Features
My Workspace
My Contacts
My Action Items
Goal Setting
Personal Statements
Resume Creator
My Files
Perfect Interview
Self-Directed Search
My Account
Change Login Info
Current Job Status
Personal Profile
User Control Panel
User Preferences
Logout
Help Center
Contact SuccessHawk
Contact Support

Chapter 7: Step 4: Network Effectively

Figure 7.1 The Six-Step Job Search Process—Step 4



Overview

Networking Effectively is Crucial to Your Job Search In this textbook, we have co

mpleted the first three steps in a job search:

1. Identify your target.
2. Create a Compelling marketing campaign.
3. Research.

The next step is Step 4: Networking and Interviewing. The two are combined because they are complementary: the more effectively you network, the more effectively will your efforts result in an interview. In addition, networking can also be considered a mini-interview because the more you impress a contact, the more likely it is that person will help you secure a real interview. For the purposes of this chapter, however, we'll focus on networking only and Chapter 8 "Step 4 (Continued): Master the Interview" will focus on interviewing only.

Definition of Networking. You can look up the word "networking" in many dictionaries, and you'll find many different definitions. One of the best definitions for networking comes from an extremely talented speaker and business coach, Bob Burg, who defines it as such:

"Networking is defined as establishing a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship of give and take, with the emphasis on the give." [1]

This is an exceptional definition for the following reasons:

- Relationships are to be established for the long term, throughout your college years and business career.
- Relationships should be mutually beneficial because such relationships are more likely to be sustained.
- Relationships in networking emphasize the give versus the take. This may not seem intuitive because we network to get a job—right? Wrong. Focusing only on getting a job gives networking and you a bad reputation. Focusing on the other person's interests and pursuits will build a network for you that will always be there when you need something.

Another universal truth is that the more you give, the more you will get. A genuine quality of giving will separate you from other networkers. Being genuinely interested in finding out about a person and wanting to know them well enough to positively affect their career, their lives, and their interests is a huge differentiator.

Quality, Not Quantity!. Networking isn't about quantity; it's about quality. We all know more people than we realize and we have numerous opportunities to meet new people every day. Just don't forget that

after you meet someone, unless you maintain and expand that relationship, that person isn't really part of your core network. Networking isn't just about approaching people; it's about following up.

The Power of Networking. People naturally want to network with people who they know, like, and trust. Once these criteria have been met, people will generally open their networks up to you.

It's a given that one person knows 250 people, give or take. Most people could invite about 250 people to their wedding and have approximately 250 visitors at their funeral.

If you know, like, and trust another individual, and therefore open your network up to that person, they will have access to a network of 500 individuals:

their 250 contacts + your 250 contacts = 500 contacts

- Multiply 500 by 10 people, and you will now have access to 2,500 individuals.
- Multiply 2,500 by 100 people, and you will now have access to 25,000 individuals.
- Multiply 25,000 by 250 people, and you will now have access to 625,000 individuals.

Your need to know 250 people might be intimidating, but let's start with about 100 people you may know:

- Friends
- Family
- Schoolmates (fraternity, sorority, athletes, classmates)
- Professors, teaching assistants, school administrators, coaches
- Past and current coworkers
- School reunion attendees
- Neighbors
- Owners of neighborhood businesses (deli, coffee shop, dry cleaners, hardware stores, and so forth)
- People with whom you have volunteered
- People from a religious organization to which you belong
- Societies you might want to join that provide information about careers that are meaningful to you (e.g., Public Relations Student Society of America, National Society of Hispanic/Black MBAs, Society of Human Resources Professionals, Society of Speech and Drama Professionals, Society of Tennis Medicine, Society of Pharmacists)

In addition to who you know now, this chapter will give you strategies for building more networking contacts. Some useful venues include the following:

- Family events (weddings, birthdays, barbeques, and so forth)
- Alumni events (great opportunities to network with professionals with whom you have something in common)

The power of networking is limitless. Most individuals will use LinkedIn.com to keep in contact with their networks. Some individuals are open networkers and will connect with anyone who wants to connect with them. Others will be more discriminating and connect only to those people they know well. Either way, it's a huge benefit to keep in touch with your contacts when they move from company to company and as they change e-mail addresses. It's estimated that Generation Y (anyone born between 1980-1995) will change jobs close to twenty times in their lifetime. Keeping in touch with individuals this way can be very convenient and beneficial.

The Benefits of Networking. Networking has countless benefits. Aside from the social benefits of building relationships and keeping in touch with friends and valued acquaintances, networking yields other advantages:

- You will have insider information before things are public knowledge. This could pertain to the right companies to join or the right departments to consider. Often, before jobs are even posted, your networking contacts can let you know of opportunities.
- You will have access to individuals you otherwise might never meet or get to know, and your reach will extend to opportunities others may not ever hear of.
- You will know news before it reaches the general public, thus increasing your credibility.
- You might get the opportunity to lead others in your field. You could participate in a panel discussion or on a task force.

Networking enhances our lives in many ways. You can meet interesting people who share their life experiences, you can gain access to information you may never have known, and you can have access to career opportunities that otherwise would be out of your reach. The more effectively you network, the more opportunities will be presented to you. This chapter will outline strategies to build and expand your network so those opportunities are within your reach.

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[1] Bob Burg, "Endless Referrals" (lecture, East Elmhurst, NY, October 22, 2008).

7.1 The Four Stages of Networking

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the four stages of networking and why you need to follow the steps sequentially.
2. Learn why follow-up could be the most important component of all four stages of networking.

Networking consists of four stages, and the sequential order of the four stages is extremely important:

1. Research
2. The approach
3. The follow-up
4. The request

We all know individuals who call us only when they need something. They use only two of the four steps: they go from the approach right to the request. We know how we feel when this happens. When these people contact us, we no doubt say to ourselves, "I wonder what they want now." To avoid this annoying behavior, you must follow the four steps sequentially. Let's review each one in the order they should be used.

Research

Research enables you to identify key things and key people with whom you should be networking. In a job search, you should aim your research to answer the following questions:

- What details are available about the company of interest?
- What specific departments exist within the company?
- Who are the individuals who run those departments (the decision makers)?
- Does this company recruit on campus?
- Does HR lead the company's recruiting efforts, or do the hiring managers find their own talent (for the most part)?
- What is the profitability of each department?
- What companies compete against the main company and against the specific departments (they might be different)?
- What are the top products and services produced?
- What are the goals of the company or the department?
- What recent challenges and trends are they are experiencing?

Once you identify these items, research everything about them through company websites, Google, LinkedIn, and the people in your network. The more information you gather, the more knowledgeable you will be about your job search, and the more likely you will impress those with whom you meet and network.

The Approach

Once you have identified the individuals with whom you would like to network or contact, think about how you would like to contact them. Great care should be taken with this step because first impressions matter. Things to consider include the following:

- Do you know anyone who can make a *warm* introduction? Cold contacts are clearly not as effective as an introduction from someone who knows both parties. If you are fortunate enough to have such a contact, approach them to make the connection. Never ask for a job. Instead, ask that they make an introduction. People you already know can make introductions:
  - Friends and family
  - Current or past employees of the company (this includes classmates who have interned at companies of interest)
  - Peers at school
  - Career services
  - Other school contacts, including professors, administrators, and so on
- If you must make a *cold* contact, your research can be used to impress. In a cover letter, you may write intelligently and compellingly about how you can be instrumental in the company because you can do x, y, or z. Be specific about your knowledge of the company, the departments, and the company's competitors. Know why another company is challenging them, or why they are clearly the industry leader with no close second. Refer to Chapter 5 "Step 2 (Continued): Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign, Part II: Cover Letter, Pitch, and Online Profile", part II of this textbook, for complete information on how to write a compelling cover letter.

Reconnect with Old Contacts

If you have great contacts, but you haven't kept in touch with them, you can use different ways to reconnect, but take care to not offend. The first time you reconnect, it cannot be about your job search. You cannot ask for anything that first time, except how the other person is doing. The point of

reconnecting is to reestablish the relationship. The other person is the focus and by listening to them and being interested, you actually help yourself because you will learn about what's going on in the market and what people care about, and you can act on this *later*.

This is why maintaining your network is so critical when you don't need anything. It takes the time pressure off you to accomplish anything. If, however, you have waited until you are in need to work on your network, then you must discipline yourself to make those early contacts about your network and not about yourself. One good exercise is to take three to five contacts per day and just say hello. This gets you in the habit of regularly reaching out to your network, so that when you actually have a question to ask or even a favor, the request isn't the only time you have reached out.

When using LinkedIn, remind people how you know each other. Don't use those template connection invitations. Compose a personal message about where you met, when you last spoke, or something else that shows genuine interest. Add an updated and professional-looking picture of yourself so that old connections who may have forgotten your name can recognize you visually.

The Follow-Up

A networking paradox is that you cannot get a job without networking, but the biggest networking pet peeve is when someone asks for a job. Remember that no one wants to be contacted only in times of need. That's what gives networking a bad reputation.

Once you have made the contact, the very next step is to follow up and maintain the networking contact. Immediately after meeting someone, following either a marketing event of some kind, a networking meeting, or an interview, you should send that person an e-mail that mentions that you were happy to see or meet them, references something you discussed (to at the very least remind them of your conversation), and asks for nothing in return.

Recruiters and hiring managers appreciate e-mails that reiterate interest or share an item that may be of interest to them, but what isn't appreciated is requiring that they get back regarding a date or detail of some kind. Avoid if it at all possible. The best way to build a solid network is to contact people when you don't need anything. Even if you are a job seeker and are networking to jump-start your search, you don't want your first contact (or even your second) to be a request for help. Instead, maintain (or restart) your network by reaching out to people regularly—without asking for anything.

If you plan to add someone to your network for the long term, you should follow up with that person several times a year. Asking for help or just talking about yourself doesn't count. Follow up in a way that focuses on them and what you can do for them, not the other way around. Focus on giving away—not selling. Here are some creative ways to reach out:

- *Say thank you*: Thank them for their time in meeting with you, and for the information they shared. Add something you discussed to the thank-you note to support the fact that you were listening and comprehending. Set the stage for future networking contact.
- *Give a results update*: If someone gave you advice, let them know what you did with it. Perhaps someone made a connection that resulted in another connection. Keep them updated and thank them again for the connection.
- *Spread holiday cheer*: Send holiday cards, and include some information about yourself to keep people updated. Remember to note information you receive in return (e.g., changes of address, changes of employment). Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year's Day, Easter, the Fourth of July, Passover, Memorial Day, and Thanksgiving are great times to keep in touch, but you might even use the arrival of spring as a reason to reach out.
- *Announce a life change*: You might announce the end of the school year, entrance to an internship, entry to a graduate degree program, a promotion, or just an e-mail change. When you send out announcements, include news about other areas of your life. Always be upbeat. Job seekers can let their network know they are looking in specific industries, but shouldn't immediately ask for help. For job seekers who have already announced they are looking, consider a follow-up contact letting people know where you are in your search.
- *Offer an interesting article*: Pick something about their industry and company, and it shows you are on top of news that matters to them. This works well for professional contacts, with whom you may not be on a familiar enough basis for a holiday card or personal announcement. An insightful article lets the contact know you are thinking of them and you understand what's important in their industry.
- *Introduce a new contact*: When you introduce people to your network, not only do you expand the contacts of the person you introduce, but you also get an opportunity to catch up with your network. Like sending an interesting article, an interesting referral lets the contact know you are knowledgeable about their needs and willing to help.

- *Simply say hello*: Sometimes a person just pops into your head. Maybe they resemble someone on TV. Maybe you heard a joke they would enjoy. Follow your instinct and call or e-mail to say hello. It is always nice to know people are thinking of you.
- *Offer congratulations*: Did they make one of those business magazine top lists (e.g., Most Innovative, Most Admired, Best Places to Work)? If you hear good news about someone or their company, point it out.
- *Make a recommendation*: If you read a good book, try a good restaurant, and so forth, pass that on. (Make sure to keep it professional because your referrals are always a reflection on you.)

Use these nine methods, timed six to seven weeks apart, and you have almost a year of follow up. Now you have no excuse not to maintain your network. Figure 7.2 "Example Follow-Up Note 1" and Figure 7.3 "Example Follow-Up Note 2"are examples of a follow-up note after a networking meeting.

Figure 7.2 Example Follow-Up Note 1

Dan,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me yesterday. Our conversation was very informative and reinforced my commitment to pursuing an internship in brand management at Nestlé.

After speaking with you I am even more confident that Nestlé would be the best possible place for my career to begin. Your goals for next year of 20 percent brand expansion and creative client focus fit my background very closely.

During my last internship, my team brainstormed on how to focus on our niche market of 35 to 40 year olds, and some of our recommendations are being considered for implementation this year. In addition, my strengths include an exceptional work ethic, strong marketing and teamwork skills, and very clear communication skills. I am confident that I would be a strong contributor to the Nestlé organization from day one.

Additionally, as per our discussion last night, I've attached the article that ran in my school paper which covered the marketing competition held at my school. My team came in second place amongst 17 teams and the competition was fierce.

I appreciate all the advice that you gave me and plan to use it to the utmost. Your enthusiasm for working at Nestlé left a very strong impression on me.

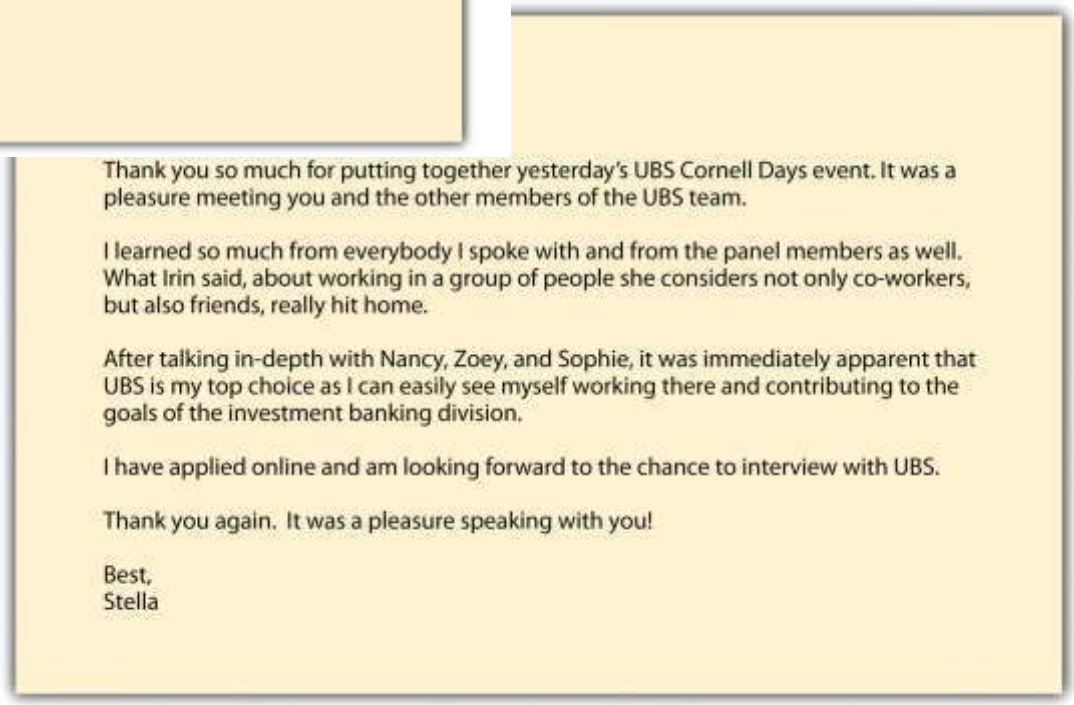
I hope to be selected to interview in October, and once again, I thank you for all of your guidance and your time.

Thank you again.

Regards,
Christina

The Request

Only when you have completed the first three steps should you make a request. The quality of your network depends on



Thank you so much for putting together yesterday's UBS Cornell Days event. It was a pleasure meeting you and the other members of the UBS team.

I learned so much from everybody I spoke with and from the panel members as well. What Irin said, about working in a group of people she considers not only co-workers, but also friends, really hit home.

After talking in-depth with Nancy, Zoey, and Sophie, it was immediately apparent that UBS is my top choice as I can easily see myself working there and contributing to the goals of the investment banking division.

I have applied online and am looking forward to the chance to interview with UBS.

Thank you again. It was a pleasure speaking with you!

Best,
Stella

following this checklist. It is tempting to jump from step 2 (the approach) to step 4 (the request), but you do so at the risk of not building a quality network on which you can rely for your professional success.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Networking has four distinct stages. Effective networkers shouldn't take shortcuts.
- Research, the first stage of networking, enables you to identify the key things and key people with whom you should be networking.
- Warm introductions are almost always more effective than cold calls.
- Reconnecting with old contacts is important, but take care when doing so.
- Follow-up is perhaps the most important part of networking because it helps the relationship to grow.

EXERCISES

1. Select a company of interest and begin to research key players at that company using the company website, http://www.linkedin.com, and your networking contacts.
2. Think about how to contact key decision makers at the companies in which you are most interested.
3. Follow up quickly and effectively after meeting new people. Think about how to continue the relationship, and focus on the giving aspect of the relationship.

7.2 Your Networking Pitch

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand why a networking pitch must be worded in a precise way that will both introduce you and create a very strong impression of your value proposition.
2. Learn how to craft a highly effective networking pitch.

Earlier in this textbook (in chapter 5) the networking pitch was covered extensively. A shortened version is included here.

A networking pitch was originally termed an elevator pitch because in the time an elevator takes to go between floors (generally thirty to forty seconds), you should be able to articulate your value proposition (the skills you have and the position you are seeking). The elevator pitch is now also called the professional pitch, the networking pitch, or simply, the pitch.

An pitch is crucial to your job search: it's a thirty second introduction and overview of what you are about, including your education, your work experience, and your unique value proposition. Typically, it's also your first chance to impress. You can also use it in a variety of ways:

- Whenever you meet someone new in person or by phone
- At the very beginning of an interview, to give an overview of your background
- As an introduction during networking events (mostly business, but some personal as well)

This thirty- to forty-second summary should be spoken, or delivered, in a confident, convincing manner, making a strong impression. If your pitch is too long and drawn out, it lacks conviction. When meeting networking contacts, recruiters, and hiring managers, this is your one chance to make a great impression and present yourself with clarity. No one wants to listen to a long, drawn-out speech. A pitch should be clear and concise, enabling the person who is listening to know exactly what type of job search candidate you are.

How do you craft an effective pitch? Three steps will ensure your success:

1. Write your pitch.
2. Edit your pitch until it sounds just right.
3. Practice delivering your pitch verbally, and edit it further as needed because we don't write the same way that we speak. Continue rehearsing and repeating your pitch to ensure that your delivery is natural, convincing, and authentic.

Write Your Pitch

Your pitch should answer the following five questions:

1. *What is your educational background*? Detail every college or university you attended, your major and minor, and your expected degree and graduation month and year (include your GPA if it's 3.3 or higher).
2. *Do you have any pertinent experience in the field in which you are interested*?
3. *What are your critical skills and strengths*? Highlight your top two or three skills.
4. *What do you want to do*? Be specific regarding industry, function, and geography (see Chapter 3 "Step 1: Identify Your Job Search Targets").
5. *Why would you be good at the position*? Focus on presenting your top two or three skills, and the skills you have that are necessary to succeed at the job you are targeting.

Edit Your Pitch

Once your pitch is in writing, review it and edit it accordingly. You should use words that come naturally to you because the more natural the delivery, the more impressive the pitch. Here are some steps you can consider while editing your pitch:

- After you edit the one-page answers to the pitch questions, ensuring that you have covered all the important items, cut it to half a page; this forces you to prioritize the essential elements.
- After you edit the half-page document, ensuring that you have covered all the important items, cut it in half again (it's now one-quarter of the page); this forces you to be even more ruthless in prioritizing.
- After you edit the quarter-page document, ensuring you have covered all the important items, cut it in half again, leaving only four or five key bullets; this forces you to be concise and select just the most important items.

Practice Delivering Your Pitch

Once you have the final pitch in writing, you'll need to practice, then practice, then practice some more. Your pitch should be spoken in a confident and compelling manner.

- Review your pitch to ensure it flows smoothly and addresses your career highlights, and then practice it until it's memorized. Practice until you can repeat it when someone shakes you from your sleep at 3:30 in the morning and you can maintain your passion when saying it.

- Using an accurate stopwatch or timer and a tape recorder (or answering machine) to record yourself, repeat the preceding exercise. Start with two minutes, then cut it to one minute, then cut to it thirty seconds, and, finally, cut it to fifteen seconds.

  The trick to a successful pitch is to practice it ten, twenty, thirty, even forty times. Practice until it rolls off the tip of your tongue. Practice until it has your exact tone and style. Practice until it's such a natural thing to say that you don't even have to think about it before and while you are saying it.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A pitch was originally called an elevator pitch because you should have a quick, succinct way to introduce yourself should you meet someone in an elevator.
- A networking pitch is a helpful way to introduce yourself while emphasizing the quality of what you bring as a candidate.

EXERCISES

1. Create your pitch, using the exercise provided in this chapter.
2. Fine-tune your pitch by typing it and practicing it aloud, ensuring it has the proper tone.
3. Pair up with a buddy to practice your pitch. Critique your buddy's pitch and listen to the critique of your pitch.
4. Once you have finalized your pitch, practice saying it ten, twenty, and even thirty times until it flows smoothly.

7.3 How to Build Your Network On a Regular Basis, Even If You Are Shy: Venues for Meeting People

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand why it's critical to build your network every day, whenever possible.
2. Learn how to focus your energies on building a network that will be effective throughout your college career and beyond.
3. Learn strategies for initiating great conversations at networking events, even if you are shy.

Build Your Network Every Day

Great networkers build their networks every day, while keeping in touch with those they have already met. Net**work**ing is **work**, but the rewards far outweigh the effort you will expend.

The most effective way to build a network is to have a genuine interest in every person you meet. Most individuals know when someone wants to know them for what they offer versus wanting to know them for what they can gain from the relationship. Don't fall into that self-serving trap. Genuine interest in others is the impetus for building long-term, mutually beneficial relationships of give and take, with the emphasis on the give.

If you are just beginning to build your network, or if you want to expand the network you already have, consider the following exercise:

Quadrant I *High Willingness to Help* *Low Relevance to Job Search*	**Quadrant II** *High Willingness to Help* *High Relevance to Job Search*
Quadrant III *Low Willingness to Help* *Low Relevance to Job Search*	**Quadrant IV** *Low Willingness to Help* *High Relevance to Job Search*

Notice that the horizontal axis is relevance to job search. As you go from left to right, the relevance to your job search becomes stronger. Willingness to help is on the vertical axis; as you go higher, the willingness to help is greater.

Logically, you will want to expand your network with the people who represent the characteristics in quadrant II: high willingness to help and high relevance to your job search. These individuals include the following:

- Career services directors, career counselors, administrators
- Peers with whom you have good relationships and who could perhaps share information about their prior internships
- Professors who are impressed with your abilities and performance and who have ties to corporations of interest to you
- Alumni who want an increasing number of qualified candidates from their school to enter their company or industry
- Past employers who were very satisfied with your level of work, who have contacts at firms in which you are interested in, and so forth
- Your relative who works in a corporation, but not in your industry, who may be friends with those who do work in your industry

Logically, you will want to spend the least amount of time with people in quadrant III because they have no relevance to your job search and are not willing to help.

Quadrants I and IV remain, and very helpful networking contacts could be lurking in both of these populations.

Quadrant I: This is an excellent resource for networking contacts because these individuals are very willing to help, but perhaps their relevance to your job search isn't obvious or apparent. You never know who people know, so it's very much worth your while to get to know as many people as you can, no matter what the venue.

People in quadrant I include the following:

- A neighbor might be best friends with an administrative assistant at the company in which you are interested and that assistant could easily share your résumé with hiring managers.
- Someone with whom you are affiliated by attending a church, synagogue, or any other place of worship may have contacts in the industry in which you are interested, and can arrange for an informational interview.

- Your landscaper might have a brother who is a senior or top-level executive at the exact company in which you are interested.
- A diner owner could have a close friend who is a hospital administrator and can arrange an introduction into the health-care field.
- A teacher's husband might be a vendor to the company in which you are interested.
- Your dog groomer might have a neighbor who is a junior-level manager at a firm of interest.

The endless possibilities in this quadrant shouldn't be overlooked!

Quadrant IV's population could also represent fruitful opportunities, but you will need to ask yourself, "at what cost?" If someone highly relevant to your job search has a low willingness to help, could you turn that person around? What would it take? Often, it's best to funnel your energy and effort into the quadrants that will yield the best results: quadrants I and II.

Build Your Network Even If You Are Shy

If you are shy and the thought of networking wreaks havoc with your nervous system, certain strategies you can employ immediately will allow you to benefit from networking venues of all kinds.

Step 1: Observe the Networking Masters

We all know people who are natural networkers and who know how to work a room better than most. For those of you who are shy watch people who network effectively. Observe how they meet and greet a variety of people. Notice their body language, especially their smile, posture, handshake, and eye contact. You will naturally pick up pointers from these individuals.

Step 2: Pair Up with Someone Who Is a Good Networker

If you can pair up with a networking master, by all means do. If you have a friend who is extroverted, ask them to attend an event with you and pair up to meet as many people as you can. This can be a very valuable adventure that results in meeting quite a lot of new people.

Step 3: Ask Questions That Get Other People to Talk Easily

You can ask seven questions that will naturally elicit a great response from a person you want to get to know:

1. How did you get your start in this business?
2. What do you enjoy most about what you do?
3. What separates you from your competition?
4. What do you see as the coming trends in this business?
5. What is the strangest (or funniest) incident you have ever experienced in this business?
6. What three or four critical skills are necessary to succeed in this business?
7. What advice would you give to me knowing I want to get my start in this business?

(See http://www.burg.com for a list of exceptional networking questions, including some of the preceding.)

Step 4: Don't Take Things Personally

When you take the plunge and begin networking and meeting individuals, try to develop a thick skin and don't take things personally. Some individuals will not want to communicate with you, and that is fine. Move on to those who do. To a large degree, it's a numbers game, so the more individuals you meet and follow up with correctly, the more will join your network.

Meet People at Different Venues

Your college environment is rich with potential networking contacts. Earlier in this chapter, it was noted that everyone knows, give or take, about 250 people, and the more people you meet who give you access to their network of 250, the more you will multiply the people with whom you are connected. Here are some ways for you to network effectively:

- *Join school clubs*: Some schools have over two hundred clubs—everything from business clubs to tennis clubs to Asian heritage clubs. Join at least three or four that spark your interest so you have variety in your friends and network. Club

membership is a great way to get connected early on in your college career, meet people who have the same interests as you, and learn a tremendous amount. School clubs funnel information to their members about networking events, internships, and full-time opportunities.

- *Establish a relationship with career services*: Get involved with this group early on. People in career services have relationships with all the companies that come on campus to recruit. Check in with them in your freshman year and find out what opportunities exist and what the process is for applying.
- *Get to know your professors*: Professors are human beings, just like you. Ask them about their backgrounds and how they ended up teaching at your school. Ask what they like about it. You will be surprised at what you find out. Some professors will have worked in the business world and will have some good connections for you. You never know until you ask.
- *Be curious about people and ask open-ended questions*: When meeting someone new, ask them questions like "How did you pick this school?" and *listen*. A good listener is so hard to find. Open-ended questions often yield a story (sometimes a compelling story), and you learn quite a bit about a person. Ask about their family relationships. Be genuine because it is wonderful to find out about people, and you never know who they know or who their extended family knows.
- *Meet as many different types of folks at school as possible*: Your school presents opportunities to meet people from all walks of life. Try to meet the president of the university, various administrators, deans (the dean of students is a great contact because that person manages the school clubs), professors, teaching assistants, fellow students, cafeteria workers, the hot dog vendor on the corner, the stationary store owner and clerks, the workers at your favorite coffee shop, security, library staff, and so on. Get to know these folks by (a) being polite and pleasant, (b) being responsible, and (c) recognizing them and knowing them by name. Even if your new acquaintances don't further your networking objectives, perhaps some will become friends and make your stay at school all the better!
- *Keep in touch with your old high school friends*: Your high school friends are likely at different schools, but it's important to maintain contact. Your network will only grow this way, and you will enjoy continuing your friendships.

Networking is critical to your success throughout life. If you haven't networked well before, it's now a good time to start.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Effective networkers build their network every chance they get. This includes networking with individuals they meet daily, at business events, and at social events of all kinds.
- Proactively build your network during your job search. Rather than go to lunch alone, see such outings as networking possibilities. Participate in as many events as you can and meet as many individuals as you can.
- The most helpful individuals to meet are those who are highly relevant to your job search and very willing to help.
- Many strategies exist for meeting people, even if you are shy. Observe people who network well and learn from their behavior. Pair up with someone who is a natural networker and learn from their interactions. Do not take things personally.
- You can ask many simple networking questions that will elicit substantial information from networking contacts.
- On-campus contacts can be found in every corner of your college or university. Take advantage of school clubs, meet as many administrators as possible, and remember that professors are people, too, and often have had careers in business.

EXERCISES

1. Create your network of one hundred people, using the 2 × 2 matrix in this section. Type the names of the individuals and how you know them. Also include the last time you contacted each person to say hello.
2. Ensure you attend at least two to three networking events in the next month.
3. Follow up with all of the individuals you have met.

7.4 Networking with Executives and Recruiters

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand what networking strategies work best with senior people and recruiters.
2. Understand that networking works best when people are genuinely interested in people, versus getting to know others purely for personal gain.

Network with Executives

Your network should include people at all levels: your family and friends, past peers, and past managers. Follow these three suggestions to include senior people at all different levels into your network:

1. Participate in cross-functional task forces in any kind of work or educational situation. You will meet people at varying management levels and also get the chance to impress them and include them in your network.
2. Contact senior managers and thank them or compliment them on their presentation or speech at any other formal meeting. Mention something specific about what they said, especially if it helped you in some way (it increased your knowledge, made you think differently about something, gave you an idea to solve a problem, and so forth), so they know you listened and they know your comment is genuine. Continue to follow up with them in other ways (holidays, congratulate them should they get promoted, and so forth).
3. A mentor can give you perspective that is very objective and, in some cases, powerful. They can also make great introductions, so don't hesitate to explore this with them.

Network with Recruiters

Many job seekers feel uneasy about keeping in touch with recruiters and feel like they are being a pest. However, recruiters appreciate candidates who stay in touch, as long as it's in an unassuming way. For example, candidates should let recruiters know the latest news about them and their market, but shouldn't include a request or a need with that news.

Industry professionals offer the following networking advice regarding how job seekers can stay in touch:

- *Build the relationship before you need anything*. Xavier Roux, a partner at Redseeds Consulting, an executive search firm for management consulting, advises, "Strong candidates cultivate good relationships with recruiters when they are *not* looking for a job so that they can get help when they are."
- *Don't be afraid to follow up about a specific position that interests you*. AndrewHendricksen , a managing partner with OP/HR Group, an executive search firm focusing on technology and new media

advises, “If you are very qualified you should feel comfortable making one to two cold or follow-up calls no matter what stage you are in the process, but keep in mind too many will result in your being disqualified….[Send] a follow-up action plan once you understand a hiring manager’s expectations. This works especially well for people in sales and marketing or any job that requires results. If you are considered a top prospect, sending a high-level yet well-thought-out 90-day action plan can put you above your competition.”

- *Contact people via social media after you have done the research and are fully prepared*. Jennifer Sobel, a recruitment manager at Disney ABC Television Group advises, “Many job seekers are desperately trying to use social networking tools to search for jobs, which is a great idea. However, they are using the tools all wrong. I must get ten to fifteen ‘LinkedIn’ requests per day from people searching for a job at my company. Their requests usually sound something like this: ‘Hi, I don’t know you but would love to work at your company. Are there any openings for me?’ I would urge each job seeker to only reach out when they have identified an open position that they meet the minimum qualifications for….Not having your research done beforehand comes off as lazy and it doesn’t give a recruiter any reason to help you.”
- *Remember that being helpful is a two-way exchange*. Sarah Grayson, a founding partner of On-Ramps, an executive search for the social sector, advises, “It’s always impressive to me when candidates refer us other strong candidates and go out of their way to stay in touch….It shows me that they know how to network and value relationships.”

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Many opportunities exist to meet senior people and include them in your network. When they speak to a large group, you can send them an e-mail thanking them if you learned something from what they said.
- Mentors are a key part of your network. You should have constant interaction with them throughout your college and work career.

EXERCISES

1. The next time you participate in a senior-level presentation of any kind, write the presenter an e-mail or a note thanking them for their speech or presentation. Mention something specific that you learned.

2. If you have a mentor, create a schedule (every five to seven weeks) to touch base with them, inform them of your job search, or see what is happening with their career. If you don't have a mentor, think about who you would like to have as a mentor. Approach that person and simply ask if they could mentor you, and set up a time to talk with them. Remember that it's the mentee's responsibility to maintain the relationship. Such a relationship is one of give and take, and emphasizing the give makes the relationship stronger and more fruitful.

7.5 Social Networking

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn about the best social networking sites to use in your job search.
2. Understand what radical transparency means and how it can enhance or hurt your career prospects.
3. Learn about the multiple benefits of social networking sites, beyond the networking aspect.

Two main social networking sites should concern you during your job search:

1. LinkedIn
2. Facebook

Be Aware of Radical Transparency

Radical transparency was the phrase corporate firms used decades ago when they finally opened their books up to public scrutiny. Now, this phrase pertains to the radical transparency you experience by using social networking sites.

Facebook was started as a tool for college students, but companies started to enter this space in the 1990s. Companies, namely recruiters, started looking at Facebook pages and MySpace accounts when considering candidates for open positions. In fact, 40 percent or more of college admissions counselors reviewed Facebook pages before admitting candidates to their colleges and 40 percent of those who looked were not impressed by what they saw. Employers now review Facebook accounts before making hiring decisions.

A word of caution to all: Ensure your digital dirt is cleaned up. Your Facebook page should be professional and seek to impress anyone who reviews it, especially future employers.

Recruiters Use Social Networks

A high majority of recruiters use online social networks, such as LinkedIn, to find candidates, so job seekers absolutely need to take advantage of these tools. However, so many options are available and they are all so time consuming that job seekers risk being overwhelmed.

Make a Choice and Go Deep

Rather than spending a little time here and there on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter,Doostang, blogging, or building a personal website, decide what you want to accomplish and research your options to see what best suits your objectives. Devote the bulk of your time to the area that will most help you accomplish your objectives.

Place an Overall Time Limit on Online Search Activities

A thorough job search encompasses many different activities, including research, expanding your network, following up with your existing network, updating your contact database, troubleshooting your search, and more. Online networking is helpful for research, networking, and maintaining contact information, so it's worth a substantive time commitment, but not all of your time.

Offline Networking Etiquette Still Applies

The most successful online networkers share much in common with successful offline networkers. You can do several things to match their success. Be respectful of people's time. Write engaging (and grammatically correct) business communications. Ask intelligent questions. Focus on giving and helping others. Remember that online social media is one tool in the broad umbrella of networking, and common sense networking etiquette still applies.

Social Networking Isn't Just about Networking

LinkedIn and Facebook are referred to as social networking, so most job seekers use them primarily or even exclusively as networking tools. However, social networks are valuable at every stage of the job search, not just networking.

Social Networks Help with Target Identification

Use the detailed profiles in LinkedIn to get a better understanding of different job functions and career paths. If you think you want to work in corporate philanthropy, find people who have these jobs and review their experience, skills, and projects. Use what you learn as a guide to what you might need in your career, or at least as good issues to research.

Research Companies and Industries

Again using the profile data, pay attention to how people talk about their work. Projects on which people are working hold invaluable clues to deciphering exactly what a company does, especially when it's a small, privately held company with little published information about clients or

projects. Group discussions are another way to get a sense for a company or industry. Find a company alumni group or industry niche and follow the discussions or ask questions.

Gather Salary Data

Use the Q&A function or specific group discussions on LinkedIn to collect data on salary, lifestyle, growth prospects, and other useful information for your own offer negotiation. Many geographies and industries are represented on online social networks, so you can specify exactly what you are looking for and likely find a close proxy.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Social networking sites like Facebook and LinkedIn are valuable networking tools.
- Radical transparency means that people can see anything you place in cyberspace. Transparency can present challenges if you have information or material that is unprofessional.
- Cleaning up your digital dirt is important when you are conducting a job search and building your career.
- Social networking sites are great networking tools, but they have many other uses as well. You can research different positions when trying to decide which would be best for you, you can get a sense for what companies are truly like directly from their employees, and you can find out salary information via the various online groups.

EXERCISES

1. If you don't have an account on LinkedIn, create one. Use the instructions in Chapter 5, Section 5.2 of this textbook.
2. If you have an account on LinkedIn, but it's not 100 percent complete, ensure that it is by adding a professional photo, getting recommendations from a variety of individuals, and joining groups.
3. Google yourself to clean up any digital dirt that exists in cyberspace.
4. Use LinkedIn to conduct research on a company or an industry.
5. Join various groups, such as alumni associations at your school, or industry groups of interest. Find out salary information about positions of interest.

7.6 Networking Case Studies

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Practice networking case studies to better understand how to build a sustainable network.
2. Appreciate the nuances that are involved when you build relationships during your career search.

Case studies are a great way to "practice" your networking skills, which is always a wise thing to do. They teach you how to network better in a variety of situations.

Case Study 1

Your mentor introduces you to her colleague who introduces you to a business lead (say Jane Smith), who consents to an informational interview. You send your mentor's colleague a nice thank-you and schedule the interview. The interview is substantive, and you send Jane Smith a nice thank-you. Two weeks later you get a formal interview, which you schedule for later. Are you done for now?

Case Study 2

You get an informational interview with a managing director, Jeff Roberts, in the boutique firm that specializes in exactly what you want to do. He asks you to coordinate with his assistant to get on his calendar. You call her to schedule the meeting. After the interview, you send Jeff Roberts a nice thank-you. Have you completed the interview etiquette?

Case Study 3

You are late for a 1:30 interview at a company's headquarters and by the time you get there, it's about 1:25. You go to the security desk, but bypass the X-ray area, so they redirect you there. You get a bit huffy. You rush to the elevator and fail to keep it open for a woman who is trying to get in. When you finally make it upstairs, you are escorted to the office, and asked to wait for a moment or two. When the person with whom you are meeting finally arrives, you recognize each other: you didn't save the elevator for her. What do you do?

Case Study 4

You are scheduled for a second interview on a Friday, at 5 p.m. You are invited to attend the company's weekly happy hour and afterward meet with some of the team privately for one-on-one interviews. You wear an interview suit and discover everyone else is wearing jeans. At your first interview, they had all worn business casual. "Jeans are allowed on Friday," someone calls out. Are you appropriately dressed? What if you get called in the next Friday—what do you wear?

Case Study 5

You are very interested in working for two companies, and fortunately, you are in final rounds with both. You receive the first offer, and feel strongly that you will accept—in fact, you know you will if you get the second offer. The deadline for the first offer is a week away. The second company calls to schedule a final round. What do you tell them?

Case Study 6

You are in a two-on-one interview. One person is a line business manager and is taking the lead in the interview; the other person is an HR representative and does not say much. How do you conduct yourself during the interview and how do you interact with each person?

Case Study 7

You are attending a school-sponsored networking event with your classmates and representatives from a top marketing firm. You strike up a conversation with a company person and realize that several of your classmates have gathered to either contribute to your discussion or ask their own questions of the company representative with whom you are speaking. You first finish with the conversation before turning to your classmates and acknowledging their presence. Is this good or bad networking behavior? Why?

Case Study 8

You have accepted an invitation to attend training with the office of career services because a representative from a top company will be giving an overview of their business. At the last minute, you need to cram for an exam. In addition, you also do not feel well, so you decide not to attend. Is this is good or bad networking behavior? Why?

Case Study: Things to Consider

Here are key points to consider for each of these case studies, which will help you build upon your networking skills.

Case Study 1

The topic is “Mentor Introductions and Follow-Up”:

- Always keep your mentor in the loop. They want to know you are taking their advice and reaping the fruits of your efforts. Your mentor is there to help you succeed.

- Maintain good relationships with everyone with whom you come into contact, and you will benefit in the long run. Sending thank-you notes shows good manners and an appreciative attitude, and it's a good way to stay connected.
- Be aware of the matrix relationships all around you. When you land a position in a corporation, you can often have three or four different managers. Navigating these individuals with ease separates you from those who have difficulty doing so.

Case Study 2

The topic is "Informational Interview Follow-Up":

- It's always wise to thank everyone who has helped you to land interviews and coordinate schedules. This includes administrative staff.
- Administrative assistants often carry influence with their manager, so the extra step to extend thanks for their efforts is good manners and good career management.

Case Study 3

The topic is "Late for an Interview":

- You only get one chance to make a first impression!
- You have to apologize, give a short explanation, and move on quickly.
- You next redirect your focus to the interview at hand and do your very best.

Case Study 4

The topic is "Business or Business Casual Dress":

- When in doubt, always dress in business attire. You had no idea it was dress-down Friday, so it was wise for you to wear a suit.
- When you get called back the following Friday, you remember that jeans are allowed on Friday. Jeans are allowed, but that doesn't mean everyone wears them. The more senior people may wear khakis, and if you wore jeans, you could be dressed inappropriately (i.e., more casually than the senior managers). Remember that you are not yet an employee; you are still a candidate, so dress more conservatively.
- When interviewing in different industries, keep in mind that different dress protocols apply, for example, nuances in media are dramatically different from financial services.

Case Study 5

The topic is "Multiple Offers":

- The most impressive candidates communicate well and let recruiters and hiring managers know that they have options. It's especially impressive when they communicate deadlines so appropriate actions can be taken.
- If you know you want a position with a company and you know you will accept its offer, take yourself out of the running for the second opportunity. It shows (a) confidence, (b) goodwill, and (c) your thoughtfulness in giving other candidates a chance to interview. The positive qualities and effects of this decision just go on and on!
- On the other hand, it's always good to explore all options. Definitely let the second company know that you have received an offer from another company. Exploring this second company may help you decide which company you prefer. Perhaps they will expedite the interview process because they really want you, and then you can make a more informed decision.

Case Study 6

The topic is "Live Interviewing with Multiple Interviewers":

- Acknowledge the business manager and the HR representative and treat both with utmost respect. When answering the business manager's questions, direct your answer to both parties and maintain eye contact with both.
- Remember, at all stages of the interview and job search process, you are constantly marketing yourself and selling your abilities.
- You have no idea which person is the real decision maker.
- Ask each interviewer questions and tailor your questions to the interviewer.
- You may be in other situations when you are in a group, yet talking mostly to one person. Be polite and address and acknowledge all members in the group.
- Remember that the HR representative has the ability to direct you to another business, should your interview with this particular business not go as well as you would like.

Case Study 7

The topic is "Being Inclusive at a Networking Event":

- Always include others in your conversation; this is both thoughtful and polite.
- Encourage others to ask questions. You can always learn from their questions and the responses they receive.

Case Study 8

The topic is “Office of Career Services Training Session”:

- If you have accepted an invitation to attend an event, barring a medical emergency, you should make every effort to attend. Your attendance is a reflection of your commitment.
- If you absolutely cannot attend, make sure you contact someone in career services and let them know why you cannot attend. Simply not showing up is in poor taste and disrespectful of other people’s efforts on your behalf.
- If you don’t show and there is a poor turnout, the company sponsoring the business overview may decide to do fewer events with the school or pull out altogether.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Case studies are an excellent way to learn about proper networking etiquette.
- If you are in a position where you are not sure what to do, consult someone with the relevant expertise, including someone in career services if at all possible.
- Good networking behavior can influence your success in the job search.
- If in doubt, always dress professionally for networking activities with firms, even if it’s well known that their dress code is casual.

EXERCISE

1. Pair up with a team of five classmates to create your own networking etiquette case studies, preferably using something that truly happened. Share your case studies in class to continue the learning.

7.7 Chapter Review and Exercises

We know the importance of networking. For job searches and career advancement, networking enables you to hear about unadvertised jobs or plum projects that could propel your career forward. A strong network is also beneficial for day-to-day personal needs—finding a good doctor, checking on a contractor, discovering a good place for Mexican food.

How do you know your network is strong enough to support you professionally and personally? Every few months, you should test the strength of your network:

For example, if there is a position open at Pfizer and you think you would be a very strong fit for that position, is there someone in your network that you can contact that may lead you to someone within that company? It could be someone at Pfizer or at a company that recently merged with Pfizer. It could even be a competitor to Pfizer, as competitors often know and network with each other. Testing your network is a wise thing to do because you can then strengthen it proactively.

If you have fewer than twenty-five strong professional contacts you could reach out to now, your network is too small. If you have deep, quality connections with a small number, this is a good start, but you also need quantity in your network. Make it a priority to meet new professional contacts. If you have the quality and the quantity, but you don't feel like you could reach out today, then you have an issue with maintaining your network. Make it a priority to follow up with people you already know. As a bonus test, ask yourself how many people you could contact for personal needs. Look at the quantity but also the variety in your personal network.

> *When was the last time you had lunch or a cup of coffee with a contact other than your day-to-day colleagues or closest friends? If it is has been more than a month or you cannot remember, this is a danger sign that your networking is too*insular*. You are not exposing yourself to diverse perspectives. Remember the preceding point about how important it is to maintain your network. Earmarking some lunch hours for your networking contacts is a great way to follow up with your network.*

Mentors can be a tremendous help when you need to network. When you need some off-the-record advice or candid feedback, do you have people you can query who understand your role, your company, and your industry? If not, then you are not taking advantage of mentorship in your career. Mentors are more than senior people who can move you to the next level by sheer influence, although such a powerful type of

mentor can have a place in your career. Mentors can also be your peers and often are colleagues who have an insight you don't have and are willing to share it with you. Maybe they have been at the company longer and have a great sense of the politics; maybe they are superstrong presenters and can be your practice audience before you have a big meeting.

Networking isn't something you can cram into last-minute efforts. A strong network is built over time and with deliberate attention to the quantity and quality of the contacts. Audit your network on a regular basis (set Outlook to remind your quarterly) so that you consciously tend to your network before you face a crisis situation.

No one likes a person who reaches out only when they need something. No one wants to be the person who needs something, but feels all alone. Build a strong network so that you can make requests without imposing. Build a strong network so you don't have to go it alone.

Chapter Takeaways

- Networking is defined as establishing a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship of give and take, with an emphasis on the give.
- Networking is about quality and quantity.
- The power of networking is infinite because people who know, like, and trust you will open their networks to you.
- Networking has four stages: research, approach, follow-up, and request.
- Proactively reconnect with contacts, but your first reconnection should not include a request.
- Your networking pitch is crucial to your job search and should be written, edited, and practiced until it's delivered in a confident and proactive manner.
- Networks must be built consistently, on a daily basis.
- Even if you are shy, you can use simple strategies to build a network.
- Many on-campus venues exist for meeting people and building your network, including student clubs, career services, professors, and so on.
- Definite strategies can be used to include senior people and recruiters in your network.
- Social networking sites like Facebook and LinkedIn can be used in a variety of ways to increase your networking ability.

- Digital dirt can hurt your candidacy with recruiters and hiring managers alike. Present yourself professionally in person and online.
- Case studies can help to ensure business etiquette on your part and on the part of others.

Chapter Review

1. How do you define networking?
2. Why would a person open up their network to you?
3. What are the four stages of networking and why must they occur sequentially?
4. How do you reconnect with old contacts without seeming disingenuous?
5. How do you follow up with new and old networking contacts? Name three to four ways of doing so.
6. What are the key components of a networking pitch?
7. How do you construct a networking pitch?
8. How do you build your network on an ongoing basis?
9. How can you use a 2 × 2 matrix to build your network?
10. What questions can you ask during networking events to help get the conversation started?
11. What strategies exist for building a network, even if you are shy?
12. How can you build a network on campus and with whom?
13. How can you include senior people in your network? What about recruiters?
14. What social networking sites can help you network more effectively?
15. What is digital dirt and how can it hurt your job search strategies?
16. What are the differences among LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Doostang?
17. How can you create your own networking case studies to continue your learning? Reviewing case studies in effective networking behavior can be helpful in the overall process.

SuccessHawk: Network

Contact Manager

Contact Manager is the place to store information about your contacts, how you know them, their personal information, information about their organization, and a record of your interactions. Everything you need to know about each contact is conveniently located in one place.

Spend some time reviewing the kind of information you can save for each of your contacts. Note that SuccessHawk provides you sample icebreakers to get a conversation started and questions to ask to keep

conversations going. You will find that these features adjust as your relationship with the contact develops.

To populate Contact Manager manually, click on Add New Contact in the Contacts section of My Workspace and fill out as much information as you can in the forms provided. Or you can upload basic contact information from Microsoft Outlook, Apple Address Book, Gmail, Hotmail, and others by clicking on Import Contacts in the Contacts section of My Workspace and following the appropriate directions.

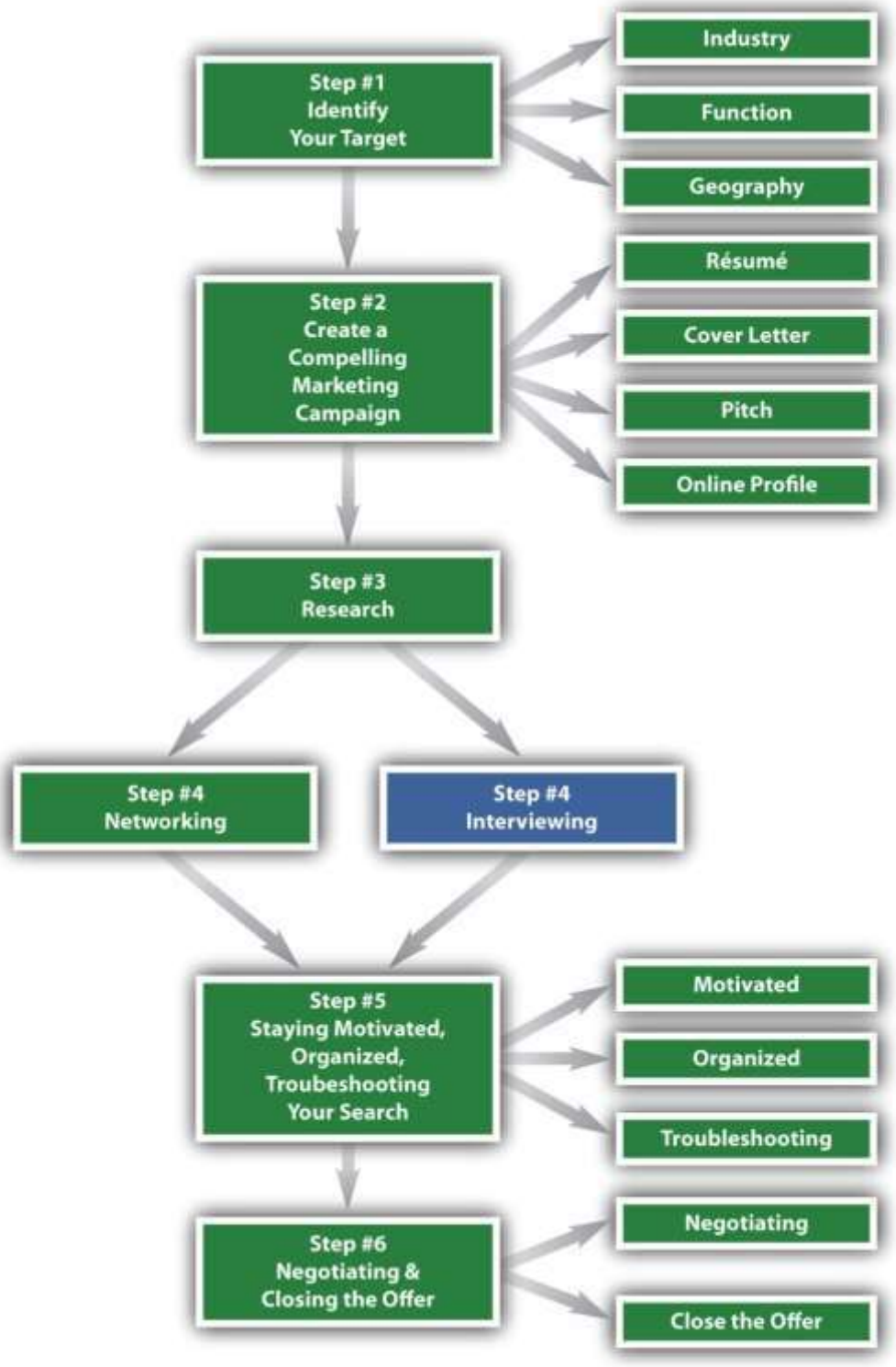
You can view a complete list of your contacts by clicking on View Contacts. Note that you can organize your contacts by the company for which they work, organizations to which they belong, your last interaction with them, or by the status of your relationship:

- People you know
- Referred contacts
- Opportunities
- Interviews

To open an individual's contact information page, simply click on the person's name.

Chapter 8: Step 4 (Continued): Master the Interview

Figure 8.1 The Six-Step Job Search Process—Step 4 Continued



Overview

You Can Become an Exceptional Interviewee

You have now completed three full steps of your job search and half

of the fourth step. You have accomplished four things:

1. Identified your target
2. Created a compelling marketing campaign
3. Conducted in-depth research
4. Networked

The second half of step 4 focuses on the interview process. Networking and interviewing are paired for two reasons:

1. A networking interaction is also a mini-interview that can easily turn into a legitimate interview; an interview is also a networking opportunity.
2. The more effectively you network, the more effectively you will interview. Interviews lead to job offers and acceptances, so it's vital that you network with people who have the influence to either arrange interviews or introduce you to people who can arrange interviews.

Each interaction with a company representative is a mini-interview. Future employers are constantly evaluating your behavior at every stage of the job search. For example, when they call you to discuss the potential of having a face-to-face interview, they note how you answer the phone and how you follow up. When you e-mail them information regarding your candidacy, they evaluate your writing ability and communication skills. While an interview is a formal meeting to evaluate your candidacy, the real interview begins much earlier.

An interview can be defined as a conversation between two or more people in which the interviewer asks questions to obtain information from the interviewee. A better definition might be an exchange of information between the interviewer and interviewee to assess if a match exists between a job's requirements and a person's skills and abilities.

The second definition is much more proactive in the case of the interviewee. As an interviewee, you should not passively answer questions, but should employ strategies so you are presented in the best possible light. As an interviewee, you also are responsible for highlighting your strengths in the interview and giving answers that are detailed and results oriented. This chapter will give you such strategies.

Key strategies for a successful interview will be explored in depth in this chapter, but as an overview, you should have three goals:

1. Know yourself.

2. Know your résumé well enough to enthusiastically speak about every minute detail.
3. Know the company, the position, and the industry for which you are interviewing.

Know Yourself. Know your strengths well enough to match them to relevant job descriptions. If you have strong analytical skills, then analyst or accounting positions may be of interest. If you have strong client-service skills, perhaps a career in retail would be a great match. Knowing yourself allows you to target positions accurately, which then results in successful interviews and suitable positions.

Know Your Résumé. You should be intimately aware of every detail on your résumé, including all past projects and the quantifiable results of those projects. If you arestumped on a question about your résumé, then it's almost guaranteed that you will not get a second-round interview.

Know the Company, the Position, and the Industry. The third job search strategy focuses on research. You should know extensive amounts of information about the industry, the company, and the position before the interview and be knowledgeable enough to speak fluently about the company, its goals, and its ranking among its competition.

Structure of a General Interview. An ordinary thirty-minute interview could have the following structure:

- Two to three minutes: greetings, small talk, interviewer sets the stage
- Twenty minutes: interviewer asks five to six questions
- Five minutes: interviewee has the opportunity to ask two to three questions
- Two to three minutes: discussion of next steps, closure of interview conversation

Although the preceding structure is the most common, you shouldn't expect this at all times. Interviews can veer from this typical structure for several reasons:

- The interviewer could try to throw you off your game and ask you only one question for the entire interview. That question could be "Tell me about yourself." If that happens, you should be prepared to take control of the interview and run with it.
- The interviewer could think you are too well rehearsed, and ask hypothetical questions that are difficult or impossible to practice before an interview.
- The interviewer could start by telling you to ask any questions you might have. In a typical interview, candidates ask questions at the end, but sometimes the interviewer has the candidate ask questions first.

If that happens, you should have walked into the interview with five to seven well-researched questions about the company, the position, and perhaps the interviewer.

Your Interview Strategy—Prepare and Practice. Multiple strategies will be reviewed to increase the chances of success during and after an interview, but the main strategy focuses on *preparation*. Prepare ahead of time and control what you can, so if something happens to throw you off your game, you will be much better prepared to deal with it.

The more prepared you are, the better you will perform. It's a universal truth that works for any skill or sport. If you play softball, you will be a better softball player if you practice as much as possible. It's the same with interview skills: the more you practice, the better your skills will be. Many other strategies can help you prepare, including knowing the types of interviews, interviewers, the types of questions you will be asked, and the types of questions you can ask. Being prepared will strengthen your interview skills, which, in turn, will strengthen your chance of receiving a job offer.

The Interviewer. The interviewer has a very important job: they need to find the very best talent. Interviewers build their reputations on the quality of the individuals they hire. The stakes are high for you as well as the interviewer.

Preparation on your part is critical as well. You probably hope every interviewer you meet is skilled, but that may not always be the case. If your interviewer is not an expert in the interview process, you should be prepared to highlight your strengths no matter what questions are asked. Again, preparation is vitally important. This chapter will give you the best strategies to prepare for meeting any interviewer, regardless of their skill level.

8.1 What to Do Before, During, and After an Interview

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn success strategies to employ before, during, and after an interview.
2. Understand that creating routines can improve your chances of success.
3. Learn effective follow-up skills that are critical to the interview process.

An interview is framed by what happens before, during and after.

Before

What happens *before* an interview will help you succeed. This includes taking the following steps:

- Assess your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes, and your goals
- Prepare and practice: know where you are going and get your interview suit ready in advance
- Have a routine that you will follow the day of the interview

Assess

Before you even walk into the interview room, you need to **assess** a few things:

- Your strengths and weaknesses
- Your likes and dislikes
- Your goals

Know Your Strengths and Weaknesses

It's vital that you know your strengths and weaknesses because you should compare them to the job description. Is there a match between what they are looking for and your skills and abilities? If some of a job's most important skills and abilities appear in your weakness column, there is no match. If your top three or four strengths appear in the job description, there is an obvious match.

Know Your Likes and Dislikes

A huge difference exists between spending your entire workday interacting with people versus sitting in front of a computer screen analyzing data all day. Creating a spreadsheet (or a dashboard) that highlights

sales figures and presenting that to your boss weekly is vastly different from standing in front of a group of twenty to thirty peers and managers and presenting that data.

You must know your likes and dislikes because a workday can be long, and you should at least like most of what you will be doing. Some people are motivated by the amount of money they will make in a job, however, and if that works for them, it's sufficient. It's also important, however, to like the type of work you will be doing. It makes for a miserable day, week, month, and year if you do not.

College internships are key because they expose you to work you might like, as well as work you definitely would not like. Having as many internships as possible is a goal every college student should have. It may be helpful to know that the vast majority of companies hire mostly juniors because they will graduate in one year and some companies would like to extend full-time offers to their summer class. But don't let that dissuade you from seeking an internship if you are a freshman or sophomore. It may be more difficult to obtain an internship, but it's definitely worth the effort if it gets you closer to what you do or do not want to do on a full-time basis.

Know Your Goals

While in college, it's beneficial if your internships help you understand exactly what you want to do, and exactly what you need to do to get there. For example, if you are interested in marketing, you might have a sophomore internship at an advertising firm. You might end up doing mostly administrative work, but you get some exposure to the creative team. One of the team members allows you into a couple of meetings (with your manager's permission), and you experience what their job is like. This is it for you! This is what you want to do.

Your next logical step is to discuss with your manager if the next summer is a possibility, especially if you could work with the creative team. You hope your manager is so impressed with your work, your attention to detail, and your passion that you receive the open slot next summer in the creative department. If you aren't guaranteed a job the following summer, make it your goal to target more advertising agencies and garner a job in a creative group. The more directed you are, the more likely it is you will get the job you want.

Prepare

Preparation is key to succeeding in the interview process. The following steps will help you get a second round of interviews:

- Research the industry, the company, the competitors, and the interviewer (if possible).
- Practice answering interview questions.
- Have a full dress rehearsal three days before the interview.
- Know where you are going in advance, and get there thirty to forty-five minutes early.
- Have a routine the day of the interview.

Know the Industry, the Company, the Competitors, and the Interviewer

Completing the research step ensures that you have fully researched the company, the industry, and the competition. Knowing how to interview well within the industry and company will help you get a second interview. You also might be able to research the interviewer using Google or http://www.linkedin.com. Having relevant background information might give you helpful hints on how to position yourself.

Practice Answering Interview Questions

The section of this chapter titled "Different Types of Questions" has a detailed list of the top questions asked during an interview and strategies to succeed with each question. Pay close attention to that section to help you prepare for an actual interview. For now, before you practice actual questions, you can do four things:

1. Check with your career services department. Do they have an interview guide? Do they hold interview workshops? Will they conduct a mock interview with you? If so, take advantage of what is offered.
2. Google additional interview questions and look in the mirror as you practice answering these questions. Get an interview buddy to ask you these questions, as well as probing questions, to dig deeper into your answers.
3. Be confident when answering (even if you don't feel confident), be positive, and don't undersell yourself.
4. Focus on the results of each of your projects, tasks, and courses. A results-oriented candidate has a better chance getting the second interview and potentially the offer.

Have a Full Dress Rehearsal Three Days before the Interview

Being prepared reduces stress and improves performance. Here is a checklist of things to do and consider before your interview day.

- Make sure your interview suit is clean and fits perfectly. You should feel very comfortable in the clothes you wear for an interview. This helps build your confidence.

- Pay attention to colors and style. If you are interviewing at a company where the dress is casual, it is still best to dress in a professional, conservative manner. Men and women should consider conservative suit colors such as navy, beige, and black. White or beige shirts give a very professional appearance. If you are not sure, it might help to shop at a professional clothing store.
- Shine your shoes and be certain they are in excellent shape. Women should wear closed-toe shoes with moderate-height heels.
- Take care in all aspects of your appearance, including your hair and nails.
- Bring extra copies of your résumé.
- Write down well-researched questions before the day of the interview.
- Carry a professional-looking briefcase that has an inside portfolio containing paper and a pen.
- Keep a small bottle of water in your briefcase in case your mouth gets dry.
- Carry a cloth handkerchief in case your face perspires (for any reason). Some people sweat more than others and using a handkerchief is more professional (and sanitary) than using your hand. Avoid tissues because they can leave a residue that doesn't make a very good impression. On a somewhat related note, if you happen to sneeze during an interview, sneeze into your sleeve versus into your hands. The interviewer will not want to shake your hand otherwise!

Know Where You Are Going

Getting lost on the way to an interview will only increase your stress, so know exactly where you are going, even if you must make a trial trip. Few things are worse than being late or arriving looking like you just did the one hundred-meter dash.

Routine

Establish a Routine to Follow the Day of the Interview

The most successful interviewees have a routine that includes the following:

1. Set two alarm clocks to make sure you wake up early enough to have plenty of time to get ready for the day.
2. Have your interview suit ready to go, your shoes polished, a portfolio with two to three copies of your résumé and a working pen, and five to seven questions already written down.
3. Arrive at least thirty minutes in advance to avoid the slightest possibility of being late. You may wait in your car or a coffee shop until fifteen minutes before the interview. You don't want to let the interviewer know you are there thirty to forty-five minutes early.

4. Read or listen to something inspirational before your interview.
5. Carry a small bottle of water in your briefcase in case your mouth gets dry.

During

The moment you have been waiting for has arrived—the actual interview. Keep six things in mind:

1. Body language
2. Networking updates
3. Focus
4. Authenticity
5. Questions to ask toward the end of the interview
6. Questions about the next step

Body Language

It is important to be aware of nonverbal impressions such as your handshake, eye contact and eye movement, posture, and facial and hand expressions. A sizeable percentage of what we communicate comes via body language:

- Eye contact
- Smile
- Handshake
- Posture

Eye Contact

Maintain good eye contact throughout the interview. It's OK to look away occasionally, but, for the most part, eye contact should be steady. It shows confidence and inspires trust in all that you say.

Smile

When you are feeling stressed, a smile usually relaxes your face, which usually helps you to relax overall. An introductory or occasional smile shows that you are enjoying the conversation, and it adds to your confidence factor.

Handshake

Practice your handshake. The Goldilocks approach is best: Don't crush the interviewer's hand, but don't give a soft, floppy handshake, either. Your handshake should be firm and businesslike. If you get nervous

to the point of having a sweaty palm, wipe it against your pants leg or skirt just before you shake your interviewer's hand.

Posture

Sit up straight with your shoulders back and your feet firmly planted on the ground. It's fine to cross your legs if you feel more comfortable doing so, but avoid looking too relaxed. You should be poised and fully focused on the interviewer, ensuring that you answer all questions to the best of your ability.

Networking

If you've met others in the company, mention that up front. It's a great way to open an interview because you establish that you've already met others at the company, and the interviewer also can contact them for feedback.

Focus

The more focused you are during an interview, the more successful you will be. Focus on the question asked and answer it directly. If you think you've gone off course for any reason, it's OK to ask the interviewer if you are on the right track. Your answer should have a beginning, a middle, and an end that includes a real, tangible, and preferably positive result. Here is an example of a question asked and an effective answer:

> *Question: Jenna, what was your biggest contribution to the company you interned with last summer?*
>
> *Answer: Throughout the summer, we had approximately five to six team meetings where the entire staff of ten engineers and their direct reports were present to discuss the major goal of the summer: the construction of a new courthouse.*
>
> *I was tasked with drafting the agenda of these meetings and the agenda notes, which verified all that was discussed and agreed upon. The agendas directed complex meetings, and the agenda notes served as key documents that verified and clarified what was discussed and agreed upon during the meetings.*
>
> *My first draft of the first agenda was much too broad, but with feedback from my manager, I ensured it included all the details necessary to hold a productive and effective meeting and created the structure for the agenda notes document. The agenda notes were typically three to*

five pages long, and by the second meeting, I was drafting the agenda and publishing the notes without any revisions from my manager.

I received exceptional feedback from several department heads because, in many instances, the notes saved countless hours of work. For example, during the third meeting, we reversed course on a previously agreed-upon strategy for the front columns of the courthouse. One of the key assistant engineers was not at the meeting, and when her peer brought her up to speed, he forgot to mention that the columns were changed from the Roman style columns to the Grecian columns, which needed a more intricate support system from the roof to the courthouse steps. Luckily, she read my agenda notes, which highlighted any course changes in red, and saved about two weeks' worth of work, which was easily several thousand dollars. It also kept everyone on track regarding the completion date, which is June 2014.

To improve this process overall, I loaded the agenda and the notes into the department's central files so instead of relying upon hard copies or e-mailed copies, everyone had one place to go for this important document that kept everyone on track. They are still using the improvements I implemented, so I'm very proud of that.

The answer's beginning set the stage:

- Throughout the summer, we had approximately five to six team meetings, where the entire staff of ten engineers and their direct reports were present to discuss the major goal of the summer: the construction of a new courthouse.
- I was tasked with drafting the agenda of these meetings and the agenda notes, which verified all that was discussed and agreed upon.

Notice it had a middle that allowed you to understand how things were working:

- My first draft of the first agenda was much too broad, but with feedback from my manager, I edited it to include all the details necessary to hold a productive and effective meeting and create the structure for the agenda notes document.
- By the second meeting, I was drafting the agenda and publishing the notes without any revisions from my manager.

Positive momentum was built throughout the answer, and Jenna shared the positive results of her work:

- I received exceptional feedback from several department heads because in many instances, the notes saved countless hours of work.
- To improve this process overall, I loaded the agenda and the notes into the department's central files, so instead of relying upon hard copies or e-mailed copies, everyone had one place to go for this important document that kept everyone on track.
- They are still using the improvements I implemented, so I'm very proud of that.

Authenticity and Honesty

Never misrepresent anything about yourself during the interview:

- Don't indicate you are fluent in a language if you aren't.
- Don't mention you know a computer program that you clearly don't know.
- Don't mention you've been to a certain city if you haven't been there.

Interviewers have a way of discovering any misrepresentations, so save yourself misery and humiliation by being authentic and honest.

Questions to Ask toward the End of the Interview

This important step in the interview process is relatively easy and can be done in advance of the actual interview. Use the research you've already conducted to formulate five to seven questions you'd like to ask at the end of the interview. Table 8.1 "Topics and Potential Questions" includes some topics and potential questions.

Table 8.1 Topics and Potential Questions

Topic	Question
Goals of the company, division, department	I understand that your main goal is to complete X.
	Are you pleased with your progress so far?
Goals for the position	I understand that should everything work out and I receive the offer, I would be responsible for Y.
	Would you expect that I will be able to do that in one month, three months, or six months?
Training program	Is there any training I would receive prior to my first day?

Topic	Question
	Would I receive ongoing training, or is it basically on-the-job training?
Critical skills needed	What two or three skills do you think are absolutely necessary to succeed in this role?
Culture of the company	I've researched your website and learned that the culture is x, y, and z.
	Would you agree? Can you add anything to this?
Questions about the interviewer	How did you get your start in this business?
	What are you most proud of in your time at this company?
	What is the one thing about this company that you are most focused on improving?
	To what do you attribute your success at this company?
Additional questions	I read the speech the chairman gave at the X conference last month. In that speech, she mentioned the importance of leadership and that this company is building a strong bench strength of leaders. How is that being done?
	I recently read a few articles about this company in *The Wall Street Journal* and on *BusinessWeek*'s website. The articles seemed to say X. Do you agree?
	I see that the stock has held steady lately. Can you tell me what you think caused this increase (or decrease)?

Remember to do two things when preparing your questions for the interview:

1. Match the proper questions to the proper interviewer:
   - If you are interviewing with a managing director, ask about the goals of the company, the division, or the department. Ask about the stock of the company and ask what keeps them up at night.
   - If you are interviewing with someone in human resources, ask about what is covered during the training program. You can also ask what skills are necessary for success, about past alums from your school, and so forth.
2. Research everything you can before the interview:
   - Research the company's, the division's, and the department's goals. Study the website, speak to alumni (if possible), and attend marketing events prior to the interview.

- Research your interviewer using Google and LinkedIn.
- Gather information from your network. Are your interviewers alumni from your school? If you knew someone else at the company, before the interview takes place, it's fine to mention who you know and where you met.

Question Your Next Steps

Your final interview question should pertain to the next steps you should take so you will know how to follow up. Be certain your last question accomplishes the following:

- It demonstrates that you are forward thinking and that you tie up loose ends.
- It clarifies the follow-up process.

After

You can take definite steps after an interview to improve your chances of being called back for a second round or getting an offer for the position. Four steps increase your odds:

1. Send a thank-you note.
2. Update all parties relevant to your search.
3. Create your follow-up strategy.
4. Set up additional targets.

E-mail a Thank-You Note before the Day Ends

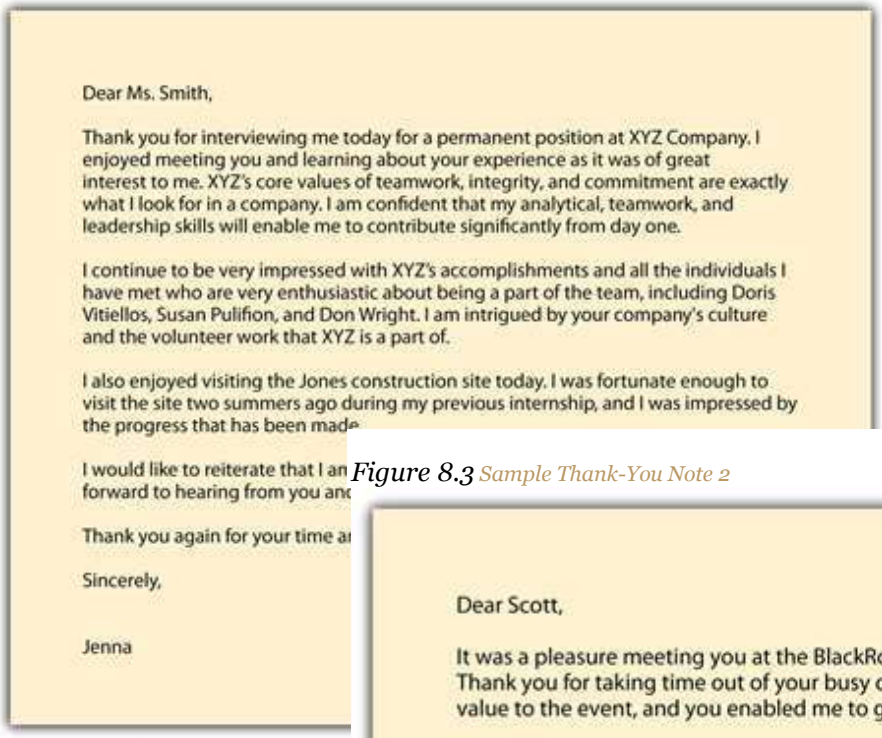
E-mail, versus a handwritten note, is preferred for many reasons:

- Your note will be immediately received by the interviewer. It's common courtesy to thank people for their time right away, and manners count quite a bit during the job search.
- Your ability to write a concise business note is demonstrated.
- Your quick communication keeps you at the top of the interviewer's mind.
- Your e-mailed thank-you note can be shared easily and often by everyone who interviewed you. This positive momentum keeps you in a positive light with all parties.
- Your e-mail is an opportunity to quickly confirm that you have the critical skills necessary to do a fantastic job. In the e-mail, you can reiterate the skills you have or mention something specific that was discussed in the interview, thus making an even stronger case for why you'd be a great hire.
- Your e-mail can include an attached article about the company or about an interest you share with the interviewer.

- Your e-mailed thank-you note is more likely to receive a response from the interviewer.

  Some individuals believe a handwritten note distinguishes you from others; while that may be true, you never know if it arrived. You could send an e-mail and a handwritten note to cover all the bases, but don't use the exact wording for both notes. Using a high-quality, professional notepaper or stationery is recommended.

Figure 8.2 *Sample Thank-You Note 1*



Dear Ms. Smith,

Thank you for interviewing me today for a permanent position at XYZ Company. I enjoyed meeting you and learning about your experience as it was of great interest to me. XYZ's core values of teamwork, integrity, and commitment are exactly what I look for in a company. I am confident that my analytical, teamwork, and leadership skills will enable me to contribute significantly from day one.

I continue to be very impressed with XYZ's accomplishments and all the individuals I have met who are very enthusiastic about being a part of the team, including Doris Vitiellos, Susan Pulifion, and Don Wright. I am intrigued by your company's culture and the volunteer work that XYZ is a part of.

I also enjoyed visiting the Jones construction site today. I was fortunate enough to visit the site two summers ago during my previous internship, and I was impressed by the progress that has been made

I would like to reiterate that I an
forward to hearing from you and

Thank you again for your time a

Sincerely,

Jenna

Figure 8.2 "Sample Thank-You Note 1" is a sample thank-you note an employer received after a first-round interview.

Figure 8.3 "Sample Thank-You Note 2" and Figure 8.4 "Sample Thank-You Note 3" are additional examples of a thank-you note.

Figure 8.3 *Sample Thank-You Note 2*

Dear Scott,

It was a pleasure meeting you at the BlackRock Cornell Days event on Thursday. Thank you for taking time out of your busy day to speak with us. You added a lot of value to the event, and you enabled me to get a better feel for the company culture.

After meeting many different people from BlackRock, I clearly see it as the place where I would be the best fit. I believe my analytical, teamwork, and problem-solving skills would allow me to contribute quickly, and in a meaningful way.

I was especially impressed with what Barbara West said about the importance of integrity, curiosity, and critical thinking, as it resonated quite a bit with me.

Once more, I really enjoyed the event this Thursday and hope to be selected to interview with Blackrock. It was a great pleasure to meet you.

All the best,

Jerry Solomon

I'm proud to say that my assistant teaching experience at P.S. 22 has resulted in increased grades and increased participation by students in the first, second, and third grades. I hope I'm given the chance to do that at your school, P.S. 23.

Thank you again for your time and consideration, and I hope to hear from you shortly.

Best regards,

Donna Right

Update All Parties Relevant to Your Search

If you've met other people during your job search and

Saylor URL: http://www.saylor.org

they've been helpful in any way, send them an e-mail update as to how you've progressed. It will mostly likely be shared with others, so take great care when writing *any* note to a company representative.

Map Your Follow-Up Strategy

Once you've interviewed for a position, note your expected follow-up on your calendar. If the company representative said you will be contacted in a week, mark that on your calendar. If you aren't contacted, add another three or four days onto your calendar and then follow up with the company. After that, maintain consistent communication to help produce positive results.

Different ways to keep in touch include the following:

- Thank the company's representative for either the interview or the update.
- Give a results update.
- Send holiday greetings (throughout the year).
- Share an article about the company or about a common interest.
- Express congratulations on positive news about the representative's career or the company.
- Make a referral.

Set Up Additional Targets

You should be working on no fewer than ten targets to ensure you have activity because some targets will get *cold*, while others get *hot*. The recruiting process is, to a large extent, a numbers game. Having more companies in play increases your chances of success.

When Things Go Wrong

Sometimes no matter how well you prepare, something still goes wrong. The following strategies will help you manage when things go amiss:

- If you forget to turn your cell phone off and it rings, apologize and quickly turn off the phone. Don't look at the number of the person calling you.
- If you are late, call in advance to notify the interviewer and ask if the interview can proceed. Apologize when the interview takes place.
- If you have a wardrobe malfunction—a popped button, a run in your stockings, or you spilled coffee on your clothing—a little humor might help.
- If you went on a tangent and did not answer the question directly, check to make sure you are on track or ask that the question be repeated.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Assess your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes, and your goals before you begin the interview process.
- Knowing what to do before, during, and after an interview is critical to your overall success.
- Having a routine that you follow during the days before and the day of the interview will lower stress and increase your chances to succeed.
- The more prepared you are for an interview, the more likely you are to succeed. Control what you can through preparation and practice and when the unexpected happens, you will be in a better position to manage it.
- If things go wrong during an interview, you can take specific steps to regain your composure.
- Sending a thank-you note is a perfect way to thank the interviewer for their time and keep the lines of communication open. Identify something in the interview that you want to highlight in your note, yet keep it short and concise.

EXERCISES

1. Compare your list of strengths and weaknesses with those of a friend or fellow student. Seek reinforcement that your strengths are indeed your strengths and vice versa.
2. Select your interview outfit, including your suit, shoes, and briefcase or portfolio. When selecting something to wear, make sure your suit is professional and fits well. Preferred colors are navy, beige, and black. In the spring or summer, beige is an acceptable color for women. If you are not sure, ask a salesperson at a professional clothing store.
3. Draft a list of everything that you must do one, two, or three days before an interview and leave nothing to chance.
4. Practice answering a few interview questions, emphasizing the results you have achieved in various situations. Act confident even though you may not feel confident.
5. Draft a thank-you note and ask a friend or someone from career services to review it. Ensure it is grammatically correct in every way: spelling, tenses, and so forth.

8.2 Different Types of Interviews

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the three types of interviews you will experience and learn strategies for succeeding at each of them.
2. Learn the difference between behavioral and case interviews.
3. Learn how informational interviews can lead to real interviews, and, at the very least, strong networking contacts.

You can experience three main types of interviews. Become familiar with each type and you will be more prepared and more successful:

1. Behavioral
2. Case
3. Informational

Behavioral Interview

The vast majority of interview candidates will participate in a behavioral interview. Behavioral questions focus on past performances versus hypothetical situations, following the premise that past behavior is a clear indicator of future behavior.

Later in this chapter, a comprehensive list is presented of the most-asked behavioral questions, along with strategies to answer them. Just about any other question asked is a derivative of these questions, so carefully review that section and practice your answers. Questions will relate to aspects of your past work and educational experiences. Here are four typical behavioral interview questions:

1. What was the toughest project you ever completed? Tell me about it.
2. Who was the most difficult customer you ever helped? Tell me about that situation.
3. What was your most challenging class? Tell me why it was challenging.

4. Were you ever a member of a team? What was your role, what was the goal of the team project, and did it go smoothly or was there an issue? What was the end result of the project?

The following strategies will help you answer behavioral questions successfully:

- Never mention anything negative about your past managers, past professors, or past clients. Even if a particular individual was difficult, speak instead about the challenge and the subsequent approval you received when you succeeding in satisfying that person.
- Focus on presenting an image of an enthusiastic and optimistic problem solver. Interviewers aren't interested in someone who was downtrodden or didn't get along with the team in general.
- Answer questions directly, and include a beginning, a middle, and an end in your answer.
- Quantify your answers whenever possible. For example, if you worked in your school's library and you are asked about this work, include the number of books you managed per day, whether it was ten, one hundred, or one thousand. It's fine to estimate.
- Ensure your answer is tied to the bottom line. Using the library example once more, your answer could include that using the electronic checkout system decreased lost books by 75 percent.
- Focus on the question asked to help you avoid going off on tangents.
- Ask the interviewer to repeat the question if you think you have gone off on atangent or if you didn't quite understand the question.

Case Interviews

Case interviews are predominately used in management consulting, though they are sometimes used in a variety of fields, including financial services, healthcare, consumer products, and education. A case interview is a hypothetical business problem, or *case*, that the interviewee is expected to solve during the interview. The case tests a variety of the interviewee's skills and expertise, including analysis, logic, structuring of a problem, math, accounting or economics knowledge, specific industry knowledge, communication, creativity, and ability to deliver under pressure.

Case interviews might include short questions to estimate the size of a market:

- How many teenage Americans bought hiking boots last year?
- How many Christmas trees are sold in December in California?
- How many disposable cameras are purchased in London on a single day?

The interviewer does not expect you to know the specific answer, but that you estimate a final answer based on different facts (e.g., the population of the United States). The interviewer wants you to break down this broad request into smaller steps that can be calculated to see how you structure a problem. The interviewer is also testing your basic math skills and ability to work under pressure. The following information applies to the question on hiking boots:

- The population of the United States is about 300 million people.
- It is less obvious how many of those are teenagers, so you have to estimate. If life expectancy is approximately eighty years and equal numbers in each decade (ages zero to ten, eleven to twenty, and so forth) are estimated, then there are eight buckets of ages, including a teenage bucket, so the number of people in the teenage years represents 12 to 15 percent of the total population.
- Fifteen percent of 300 million is 45 million, but not every teenager wears hiking boots and not every teenager buys boots every year.
- If you estimate that 25 percent of teenagers wear hiking boots, then teenagers who purchase hiking books number about eleven million.
- If you estimate that a typical hiker buys a new pair every other year, then about five and a half million teenagers buy hiking boots each year.

Remember that the interviewer does not expect a specific answer, but rather wants to see the process you follow to estimate the answer.

Case interviews might also be as long as thirty to forty-five minutes of broad strategy or operations questions about a detailed problem. You may be asked how to manage a hypothetical teaching situation. You may be given a hospital scenario and asked how to streamline processes. You may be given data about the company or industry involved in the question presented. You may be asked to review charts, accounting statements, or other background material, such as in the following question: The CEO of a leading national toy company is considering acquiring a popular neighborhood toy shop in Austin, Texas. How would you advise the CEO whether or not to purchase the shop?

You might then be given more information about the national toy company, or you might be expected to ask for what you need. The questions you ask are part of what the interviewer is testing because your questions reveal the types of data you think are important to assess to make the purchase decision. You

are trying to assess if the neighborhood shop fits into the national company's strategy, and, if so, whether the cost of buying and integrating the neighborhood shop will be offset by potential future revenues.

Many large consulting firms, such as McKinsey and Bain, put sample cases and solutions on their websites. Books also offer sample cases and solutions. Many schools offer case-preparation workshops via either career services or extracurricular consulting clubs. Case interviews are very different from general job interviews but are rarely used except for management consulting jobs. Therefore, don't spend any time preparing for case interviews unless you want a management consulting job. If you do want a job in management consulting, case interview practice is absolutely necessary. You will not get hired by a consulting firm without successfully completing several case interviews.

If you are interviewing outside the consulting industry, meet with a friend who is in your chosen profession. Ask them to tell you about when they were interviewed, and ask them to interview you. This can be a tremendous learning experience and can prepare you for success, so your time will be well spent in arranging a mock interview ahead of time.

Informational Interviews

Informational interviews, by their very name, give you the opportunity to gather information about the career you think you want to pursue. The more prepared you are, the better your session will be because the best informational interviews are two-way exchanges, more like a conversation than an interrogation. Your research will allow you to share vital information with your interviewer, and you both will benefit from the time spent.

Some informational interview questions focus on the interviewer:

- How did you get involved in this job, organization, or industry?
- What do you like most about it? What has been most rewarding?
- What is most challenging? Was there anything that surprised you?
- What is a typical day, week, or month?
- What skills are most critical to have, develop, and maintain to be successful?
- What personality types are most successful?
- What do you know now that you wished you knew when you started? (This is a great question to ask because it forces people to reflect on the arc of their career. It is unexpected and people appreciate this question.)

These types of questions establish rapport and will help you dig deeper and learn more about the job, the industry, and the career.

Some informational interview questions focus on the job and career:

- According to my research, the top competitors are [name the competition]. Am I missing anyone you think is significant? Is there a new player I should know about?
- I've read that [name a trend, challenge, or innovation] is a major trend, challenge, or innovation. Does this affect your job or organization? Is this overestimated in the media? Are there are other trends, challenges, or innovations I should be concerned about?
- Compensation isn't the biggest factor in accepting a job, but I'd like to have a better sense of this. I've read that it is customary for people in this job to make [name salary range] and experience [name lifestyle, travel, work culture]. Is that accurate? Are there any nuances to this that are not publicized in the general media?
- According to my research, it is customary for people in this job to have [name skills and experiences]. Is my background of [summarize your skills and experience] competitive? If you had an opening in your group, would you consider me? What do I need to do to improve my chances?
- What department are you in (i.e., the specific name if it's not revealed in their introduction or on their business card)?
- Who oversees this department?
- How does it fit in with the rest of the organization?
- Is this the typical structure or are your competitors organized differently?
- I am doing research on [name another organization] and trying to find who runs the [name department you want]. Do you know anyone there whom I could ask?

Perhaps the most important question to ask during an informational interview is this one:

- I'm currently planning to speak to [name the people]. Should anyone else be on my list? May I use your name when I contact them?

Typical informational interviews lasting about thirty to forty-five minutes can be a vital part of the research you conduct to ensure you are targeting the right types of jobs.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Knowing the different types of interviews is important to succeeding at each.

- A behavioral interview is the most expected interview form for the vast majority of positions. Behavioral interviews rely on past performance as an indication of future performance.
- Case interviews are most widely used for consulting positions. The goal of a case interview is to test your logic and ability to problem solve quickly and effectively.
- Informational interviews, reviewed in Chapter 6 "Step 3: Conduct In-Depth Research", the section titled Informational Interviews, are a useful way to learn about an industry and a specific job through someone who has built their career in that area. You ask most of the questions, so you must prepare well in advance to get the most amount of information possible and impress the person with whom you are meeting.
- Some interviewers may merge aspects of behavioral and case interviewing into one interview session. Knowing how to succeed at each type of interview is a wise strategy.

EXERCISES

1. Participate in mock interview workshops given by career services.
2. Practice answering behavioral and case interview questions.
3. Prepare for an informational interview by deciding who you would like to interview and preparing the questions you will ask.
4. Pair up with an interview buddy to practice each type of interview. Critique each other's performance.

8.3 Different Methods of Interviewing and Different Interview Venues

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the pros and cons of live versus phone interviews.
2. Understand strategies that will allow you to maximize your impact during any type of interview.

Methods of Interviewing

One of four methods might be used to interview you:

1. Live interviews (one-on-one and a panel type)
2. Phone interviews (one-on-one and a panel type)
3. Video or Skype interviews
4. Taped interviews

Live (One-on-One and a Panel Type)

Live, or face-to-face, interviews, are the most common interview interaction. An increasing trend of recruiters is to pair up with another colleague and have two or more interviewers per interview candidate. Many candidates will end up interviewing before a panel of interviewers, so be prepared for that to happen as well.

You will need to employ all of the strategies outlined earlier in this chapter, in the section titled "Different Types of Interviews." In addition, here are some specific strategies to employ when you are interviewing with one or more interviewers.

When you are interviewing with only one person, the focus is clear—it's on one person. Ensure your nonverbal and verbal communication is focused, positive, and results oriented. The more you practice, troubleshoot, and improve, the more you will succeed.

If you are interviewing with two or more interviewers at the same time, focus and practice are just as important, but you can employ a few additional strategies:

- Focus on the person asking the question to ensure you fully understand the question. When you answer, however, look at all interviewers in the room (even if they are not speaking). Use the lighthouse approach, and just as a lighthouse's light scans from side to side, do the same with your eye contact and connect with everyone in the room.

- Practice and helpful critiques for improvement cannot be emphasized enough. Conduct as many mock interviews as possible because your skills will improve with each attempt. Practice also will help you strengthen your performance significantly, thus helping you succeed in either gaining a second-round interview or getting an offer.

Phone (One-on-One and a Panel Type)

Phone interviews are just as important, if not more so, than face-to-face interviews. In down economies, more companies choose to conduct interviews via the phone versus face-to-face to save time, money (if they have to pay your expense to come to their office), and effort. So preparation and practice are key to succeeding on the phone.

Prepare for a phone interview (similar to a regular interview) by taking seven important steps:

1. Research the industry, the company, the competitors, and the interviewer (if possible).
2. Match your strengths to the job description.
3. Practice interview questions, focusing on the results of your projects and tasks.
4. Ask a friend to interview you over the phone so you are used to the medium.
5. Be proactive about discussing your strengths and have concrete examples of how you have used them.
6. Prepare questions for the interviewer.
7. Ask what the next steps will be.

Phone interviews have several advantages:

- You can focus more on the actual questions because you have fewer distractions:
  - The surroundings
  - The interviewer
- You can treat the interview like an open-book test and have several items at hand to help you:
  - A copy of your résumé
  - A list of your strengths and examples of each one
  - A list of your weaknesses and your plan to strengthen each

Since many companies save time and money by conducting phone interviews, spend the time now to master success strategies as it will benefit you in the long run!

Phone interviews have some disadvantages:

- You lose your ability to make a first great impression visually.

- You lose the ability to impress with body language such as eye contact, a good handshake, and so forth.
- You cannot read the interviewer's body language.
- You might become confused if more than one person is asking questions, especially if a speakerphone is used.
- You might be left in the awkward position of not knowing what to do next if the recruiter doesn't value phone interviews as much as face-to-face interviews. They might reschedule or not call when they said they would.

Strategies for a successful phone interview include the following:

- Ensure your office or interview space will be quiet and uninterrupted.
  - Put a note over your doorbell—"Do not ring from 2–3:00 p.m."
  - Put a note on your door—"Do not disturb—interview in progress from 2–3:00 p.m."
  - Ask someone to walk your dog for the hour you are on the phone, or put it in a fenced backyard. If you have a cat with a loud meow, put it in another room where it cannot be heard.
  - Stop call waiting—check with your carrier as to how to do this.
  - Shut off cell phones.
- Dress up even though you don't have to:
  - You will feel more professional.
  - You will take the interview more seriously.
- Stand up during the interview:
  - Your voice sounds better.
  - Your focus will be keener.
- Have a glass of water handy.
- Have your important documents and whatever else you might need in front of you because the interviewer can hear you gather things during the interview.
- Remember that body language is important:
  - Smile when you would normally smile in a live interview. Interviewers can hear a smile and smiles enhance the interview experience.
  - Use inflection in your voice because a monotone makes for a dull interview.

Videoconference or Skype Interview

When you are at a more senior level, interviews might take place with someone in a different city, state, or even overseas. In such a case, a videoconference or Skypeinterview may be used. You will be seated in front of a computer with a camera and your interview will be live via that camera.

Strategies to succeed during a videoconference interview include the following:

- When answering questions, look into the camera instead of looking at the person on the screen. If you look at the camera, your eyes will meet the eyes of the person on the other end of the computer, making for a better connection. If you look at the person on the computer monitor when answering the question, you will appear to be looking down. It's tempting to look at the person's face versus the camera because you want to read their impression, but try to avoid this.
- Practice this technique by speaking to a friend via Skype. It's the exact same medium as a teleconferenced interview, and will give you the much-needed practice.
- Posture is very important, as it is with all interviews, but especially in a videoconference because the interviewer will see you from the shoulders up.

Taped Interviews

Taped interviews are so rarely used that you probably will not encounter them. They are primarily used to hire a large number of people for the same exact position, for example, sales positions. If a company has a goal to hire one hundred or five hundred salespeople, a taped interview saves them time in reviewing candidate answers, since all the questions might be the same. Taped interviews are also helpful when hiring salespeople in different parts of the country because taped interviews save the enormous expense of flying interviewers from city to city to find the best possible candidates.

Companies that use taped interviews may direct you to a satellite office where the taping takes place. You would be seated opposite a computer or computer kiosk, and you would be given an overview of the process. Taped interviews could involve timed responses, so the pressure could be high. Remember these types of interviews are rare, but it is good to know they exist and how they are formatted.

Strategies to succeed in taped interviews include the following:

- Practice taping yourself before a taped interview using a Flip Video or ask a friend to tape you. This can give you much-needed practice that other candidates might not have.
- Review the instructions carefully before proceeding because taped interviews are often timed.
- Focus intently on the question because you will not be able to clarify it.

Interview Venues

Knowing the four different types of interview venues will help ensure your success:

1. On campus
2. Off campus
3. In a corporate office or conference room
4. During a meal (breakfast, lunch, or dinner)

On Campus

If your interview takes place on campus, you will probably receive instructions from your career services office regarding the date and time of the interview. Check with the office to ensure you know how you will be notified. Most career services offices have a general check-in area, a waiting area, and very small interview rooms. It's best to practice in these rooms ahead of time, so you know exactly what to expect. Some rooms are literally five feet by five feet.

Off Campus

If your interview takes place off campus, the company with which you are interviewing will send instructions regarding where to report and when. Ensure you know exactly how to get there, and arrive early if at all possible because you probably will need to go through security. Bring the interview schedule with you; it should include the name(s) of the individuals with whom you will interview and their contact information.

If you need to travel via train or plane to an interview, dress professionally on the way there. Wearing yoga pants and flip-flops doesn't make a good impression, and there is always a chance you will bump into company representatives during your trip.

In a Corporate Office or Conference Room

Most often, candidates will be interviewed in the interviewer's office, but there are times when you will be interviewed in a conference room. Some conference rooms are glass-enclosed areas, and it can be distracting to interview as individuals look in and walk by. Regardless of the setting, maintain your focus on the questions asked and the interview at hand.

During a Meal

Mealtime interviews can be tricky situations because food and drink are involved. Strike a healthy balance of not being ravenous but not leaving your plate untouched either. Focus your full attention on the

conversation and interview at hand. It is wise to stay away from messy marinara sauces and long strings of pasta because they can easily stain your clothing. Forgo alcohol at all costs and certainly if you are not of legal age to consume alcohol. If you are not comfortable with dining etiquette, familiarize yourself with it to increase your comfort level. Know which fork is correct to use for salad versus dinner. Research this so you are prepared in advance. Interviews that take place during a meal can heighten nerves and cause you to spill a glass of water, which doesn't bode well for your confidence level. Practice can only help, so try to attend a dining etiquette class or study proper techniques to ensure a good impression.

No matter what the venue, dress well and take extra copies of your résumé, a portfolio with paper and a pen that works, a list of questions you will ask, and perhaps a bottle of water just in case you need it.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Knowing the different types of interviews is important to succeeding at each. Knowing the pros and cons to live and phone interviews can ensure you get a second interview or perhaps the job offer.
- Having a one-on-one interview is very different from having to interview before a panel of people. Researching the individuals who will interview you can decrease your stress and help you perform optimally.
- Some interviewers may merge aspects of behavioral and case interviewing into one interview session. Knowing how to succeed at each is a wise strategy.
- Your interview venue affects the interview dynamics, so preparing in advance can only help.

EXERCISES

1. Participate in any mock interview sessions held by your school's career services office.
2. Find a peer at your school with whom to practice, if workshops aren't available in career services. Interview your classmate and then critique their responses. Also have your peer interview you and critique your responses.
3. Practice a phone interview with a friend and vice versa. It's great practice before a live phone interview.
4. Practice interviewing on campus in the career services office so you can be comfortable with the venue.

5. Ask someone in career services to interview you in their office so you can be comfortable with that particular setting.
6. Practice a mealtime interview with your interview buddy during breakfast or lunch.

8.4 Different Types of Questions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the three distinct types of interview questions.
2. Understand how to answer each type of question confidently and stress a results-oriented approach.

Interviewers are most likely to ask one of four types of questions:

1. Open-ended questions
2. Specific questions
3. Motivation questions

Unconventional questionsLastly, we'll review illegal questions that hopefully will not be a part of your interviews.

Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions don't have specific answers. They include questions like the following:

- Tell me about yourself. Walk me through your career. Why did you make the choices you made?

  Such questions present an opportunity to tell your story in an engaging, articulate, and compelling way. Explain why you selected the school(s) you selected, your major and your minor, and your GPA (if it's above 3.3). Describe the jobs you've had and how you got them. Did you apply directly or did you get them through networking? What were your most significant accomplishments at each job? Highlight significant accomplishments that may or may not be explicit in your résumé. Often, a theme will emerge, but if that isn't the case, talk about your decisions in a positive light.
- With which skills and functions are you most comfortable? If I were to assign you a project based on your expertise, what would I give you?

  If you enjoy working with clients, talk about your specific achievements and how you helped your clients. Have you served them well enough for them to be repeat customers? Have they referred other clients to you? If you are very strong analytically, give an example of the most analytical project on which you've worked and the project's outcome.

- What are your weakest skills, and how are you addressing them? What areas would your supervisors say you need to develop?

  Everyone has strengths and everyone has weaknesses. You should do a substantive assessment of your weaknesses prior to an interview. A weakness should never be a critical component of the job for which you are applying. If there is a trick to answering this question effectively, it's to highlight what you are doing to strengthen each weakness. For example, if public speaking is something you consider a weakness, you can say that to improve this, you raise your hand as much as possible in class, and you volunteer to present whenever possible. The more prepared you are with the content of your presentation, the better you perform.
- What do you do for fun? What do you do in your free time? What do you like to read?

  These questions present an opportunity to enthusiastically and specifically discuss what you enjoy doing in your spare time. If you enjoy tennis, talk about how long you have been playing and your favorite player. If you enjoy reading, mention the last great book you read.

Specific Questions

Specific questions have concrete answers and might include the following:

- Tell me about this [the interviewer can point to anything on your résumé, whether it be a project, an employer, a class, a skill, or a hobby].

  You must be able to quickly and completely discuss any topic from your résumé and its relevance to your professional career. You should be able to recount every detail about each project, and enthusiastically relay those details to your interviewer. If you are not enthusiastic about your work, they will not be either. Also highlight the result of your work or any project about which they want to know more.
- Tell me about your favorite project, your most significant project, or a project that demonstrates your leadership, project management, analytical, research, or communications skills.

  When answering this question, remember who sponsored the project, the project's objective and deliverable, steps you took to complete the project, and the results of your efforts. Note your role as well as the roles of other team members. Be specific and quantify the results.
- Tell me about a project where something went wrong or tell me about a difficult client.

  Everyone has worked on projects where something went wrong. If we procrastinated, we learned to become more disciplined in our approach to projects. If someone didn't do their part of the project, which

then caused us to do extra work, we learned to communicate more clearly and check the project's progress on a regular basis.

We also have worked with difficult clients. The trick is to not say anything negative about a client. If a client was demanding, remember that all clients have a right to make demands. We need to raise our game to ensure they are pleased with the service and our level of professionalism. Never make negative comments about a client, a boss, a peer, or a company. Doing so sends an immediate red flag to the interviewer, so avoid such negativity at all costs. Position everything in a positive light, which can only help your candidacy.

- What do you think about current events or significant events in the employer's industry?

  Interviewers want to know that you are knowledgeable about current events, especially those pertaining to their industry. The very best candidates are well versed in the current news, so be prepared to discuss one or two items. It's important that you cite the source of the news and what you learned from it. If you did subsequent research about the topic, discuss that as well. It's an opportunity to highlight your research and your passion for this industry.

Motivation Questions

Interviewers often want to know about a candidate's motivation by asking the following questions:

- With which firms are you interviewing? What positions are you seeking? How will you choose?

  The most savvy interviewers know that the best candidates interview with multiple companies. Many candidates are comfortable discussing specific companies with which they are interviewing, and, from a recruiting perspective, it's fine to mention the company names. If you would rather not discuss this, mention that you are currently interviewing with other companies, but this company is your number one choice and highlight why you want to work there. They should get the hint that you don't want to mention specific companies.

  No matter what company is interviewing you, ensure that you know why you want to work for that particular company. Know their strong points and know their competitors. Know clearly why you want to work for them versus their competitors.

- What do you hope to accomplish in your career? Where do you see yourself in one, five, or more years?

  Your research will help you answer this question. If you've conducted some informational interviews, you will have a clear idea of what a career can look like in one, five, and ten years. It is also important to

network with peers who have interned at the companies in which you are interested because they can share specific information with you. For example, consulting, investment banking, and brand management have well-defined career paths. Advertising has a defined career path, but it may not be as defined as other businesses and industries.

Additional sources of information on this topic can be gathered on various job-seeker sites such as http://www.vault.com and http://www.wetfeet.com. Career services can be a huge resource, as can alumni who are in the industries in which you are most interested.

- What questions do you have for the interviewer?

  This can be a make-or-break question because some interviews consist of just this one question. Every interview candidate should enter an interview with five to seven questions written down in advance. These questions should come directly from your research.
- Why do you want this position? Why do you want to work with this company?

  Answers to these questions will come from your research. Have a specific reason you want to work at the company doing the exact job for which you are interviewing. Is the brand name very strong, giving you an opportunity to work with the best? Is the brand name not yet a household name, giving you an opportunity to make it so?

  It's also important to know what skills you will gain in this specific position and which will enable you to be successful. Will the position strengthen your analytical skills? Will it enable you to become a subject-matter expert? Be specific in your answer.

Unconventional Questions

Some interviewers may think you are too rehearsed and may want to inject a bit of stress; perhaps they want to shake you up a bit by asking what may seem to be crazy or certainly bizarre interview questions:

- If you were a tree, what kind of tree would you be? Why?
- If you were a car, what color would you be? Why?
- If you were an item in the supermarket, what item would you be? Why?
- If you were an animal, what kind of animal would you be? Why?

  Note that these questions are rare and you probably will not be asked them, but since preparation is key, it's worth examining why they are asked. These types of questions are asked to get a true glimpse into your

personality. The “If you were a tree, what kind of tree would you be and why?” question could be answered the following way:

- If you were a corporate research analyst who relied purely on your research to describe a stock, and that research would be shared with hundreds of portfolio managers, you might say you were a redwood tree. A redwood is one of the strongest trees on the planet and has roots that grow hundreds of feet into the ground. Not even the strongest of winds can cause the redwood to sway.
- If you were applying to be a technology customer service representative who troubleshoots during their entire day, you may say that you were a palm tree. A palm tree bends and yields to gentle breezes and hurricanes alike, but it survives almost anything that comes its way and stands tall and straight the minute the wind stops.

The two types of trees have very different characteristics, yet they both survive and thrive.

Unconventional questions have no correct answer, but when asked them, four strategies can help you succeed:

1. Practice answering a few of these types of questions. If you need a few minutes to consider your answer during an interview, it’s fine to ask for a bit of time.
2. Answer by showing something positive or beneficial about you and your personality.
3. Avoid humor and answer the question seriously and sincerely.
4. Work backward to the answer. Think about a characteristic that is important to the job, and then match it to a tree, a fruit, or an item in a supermarket.

Illegal Questions

Illegal or discriminatory questions include references to the following:

- Age
- Birthplace

- Childcare arrangements
- Ethnicity and race
- Disability
- Marital and family status
- National origin
- Religion
- Sexual orientation

If you are asked any question relating to the preceding topics, it could be for one of two reasons. Either the interviewer is asking an illegal question or the interviewer might not be well versed in interview techniques. Many hiring managers have not been formally trained in interview techniques, and that lack of training can result in asking an illegal question.

It is hoped that the question would be harmless enough so that you can answer it without feeling uncomfortable. If you feel uncomfortable answering something, tactfully say that the question doesn't relate to the job. Try to move onto another question or ask a question pertaining to the job to get the interview back on track.

If you feel that you were subjected to discrimination, speak to someone at your career services office. They could provide the guidance necessary at this stage of your job search. If that is not possible, consult a friend or professor and ask for guidance in your next steps. This is not a matter to be taken lightly, so it's important to get help from someone who is familiar with these issues.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Interviewers are most likely to ask one of three types of questions: (1) open ended, (2) specific, and (3) motivation questions.
- Unconventional interview questions might be asked, and you must be able to spontaneously answer them.
- It's wise to know what questions are illegal in case they are asked.

EXERCISES

1. Practice answering each of the open-ended, specific, and motivation questions, ensuring that you use specific examples for each.

2. Practice the unconventional interview questions as well. Ensure that you tie the positive traits of the object (such as a tree) to key components of the skills needed for the job.
3. Review questions that are illegal. If you are asked one of these questions during an interview, follow up with your career services office.

8.5 Avoid Interviewer Pet Peeves

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand why recruiters might be annoyed at certain interview behavior and learn how to avoid unpleasant interactions of any kind.
2. Learn about the importance of body language and practice until your body language is positive and impressive.
3. Learn strategies to keep your energy positive and strong throughout the interview day.

A number of things can annoy an interviewer and must be avoided at all costs. The following includes a list of things you should not do. Mock interviews are especially helpful at this stage because sometimes candidates are not aware they are doing things that are clear turnoffs to interviewers, so proceed with caution.

Not Being Prepared

Being unprepared is an insult to the interviewer who is investing their time and energy into meeting with you. You should be there on time, have several copies of your résumé in your portfolio, focus on answering any question asked, and have a list of questions to ask at the end of the interview.

Negative Body Language

Positive body language such as looking the interviewer in the eye and shaking their hand firmly when saying hello inspires trust. Poor body language can eliminate you as a potential candidate. Practice answering questions with a friend and look them straight into the eye. Smile when you talk about big goals that you have achieved. You may look away now and then, but for the most part hold their gaze throughout the interview. Sit up straight in an attentive position to help ensure you make a good impression.

Appearing Tense

Stress is a vital component of an interview because you want the job and you need to impress. Using that stress to perform better is key, and, with practice, you can appear more relaxed than you actually are. For example, if your palm sweats a bit, discreetly wipe your hand on your pants leg or skirt before you shake the interviewer's hand. Preparing in advance usually lowers stress, but if you still need additional methods to calm yourself before an interview, try listening to soothing music before entering the building or read something inspirational before the interview. Taking deep breaths before you enter the building can lower stress a great deal.

Not Focusing on the Question and Not Answering It Directly

If your interviewer asks for a one- to two-minute overview, don't spend six to eight minutes regurgitating your résumé. Focus and listen carefully to everything the interviewer asks you. If they ask for a one- to two-minute overview, make sure you give them one to two minutes. If you feel you might be going on a tangent and not answering the question, it's fine to ask if you are going in the right direction, or you can ask the recruiter to repeat the question and start over. Practice is important, even when you practice going off the topic.

Waning Energy

The interview process is strenuous. If you interview with one person, it's easy to keep your energy up. However, some interviews might be set up where you will interview with multiple people or several individual people throughout the day, and, in some cases, on different floors and in different buildings. Your energy level must be as strong and consistent with your seventh interview as it was with your first. To avoid waning energy, bring a small bottle of water with you to help you feel refreshed. If your interview day will be several hours long, bring a small snack bar to help you stay alert.

Blaming Others for Your Poor Performance

Putting anyone or anything in a negative light is not a good strategy for an interview. Criticizing your past peers, boss, or company puts you in a negative light. Interviewers red flag any type of negative comment and might probe for more negative energy lurking in other interview responses.

Not Treating Everyone with Respect

Treat everyone you meet during the day with the utmost respect, whether it is the security guard, the administrative assistant, or the actual interviewer. Be respectful if you are trying to rush through security or if you are holding an elevator for someone. All of these individuals communicate with each other, and if you leave a bad impression with any of them, it could end your candidacy. Be courteous and kind to everyone you meet. Manners do count.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The more prepared you are to execute an exceptional interview, the better are your chances of getting another interview or an offer.
- The interview process can be exhausting, so ensure you have strategies to keep your energy high.

- Focusing during the interview process is critical to success. Answering questions directly is the best way to showcase your strengths.

EXERCISES

1. Practice focusing on the exact questions asked by an interviewer to avoid going off track in any way.
2. Practice positive body language for interviews. Ensure you are comfortable in your interview suit, whether you are sitting at a desk or sitting on a couch in the interviewer's office.
3. Ensure that all your interview responses are positive and relevant. You can practice this during an interview workshop or with an interview buddy. You can also print the top ten to fifteen interview questions and record your responses, and then strengthen each of your answers after you listen to them.

8.6 Chapter Review and Exercises

Control what you can control, and your interview will be more successful. This includes doing the following, but this list is far from exhaustive:

- Assess your strengths and weaknesses before the interview.
- Research the company and its competitors in advance of your meeting.
- Prepare and practice interview questions.
- Create a routine for the day of the interview to ensure you don't rush or skip important steps.
- Write down five to seven questions to ask at the end of your interview to prove you are motivated to get this job offer.

Remember that interviews are subjective and that a second interview is never a guarantee. Budgets can shift and your targeted company may have to pull an open requisition. Perhaps the company wants to promote from within and they may hire an internal candidate. Many interviewers hire in their own image, regardless of any interviewer training course they may attend. No matter what happens at the end of your interview, it's important to stay positive and it's equally important to not take it personally.

Regardless of the interview's outcome, and especially if you don't get the job, thank the interviewer for the interaction. Continue to keep in touch because that person can become an important part of your network. Leaving a positive impression can only help your future prospects because jobs for which you would be a perfect fit might open in the near term. Remember also that recruiters and hiring managers tend to move from company to company, and there is a strong likelihood that your paths may cross again. Maintaining positive relationships can only help your career.

Lastly, if you interview for a position and you don't get it, at least appreciate the value and practice of your experience. Troubleshoot what could have gone better and improve on that one thing. If you are proactive enough at strengthening your interview ability and ensuring you have enough interviews lined up, you increase your chances of getting a job offer. Once that happens, you will probably be in the interviewer's seat before long.

Chapter Takeaways

- Before you even think of interviewing, you must know three things:

1. Know yourself.
2. Know your résumé well enough to enthusiastically speak about every minute detail.

3. Know the company, the position, and the industry for which you are interviewing.

- Knowing what to do before an interview is key to your success:
  - Research the industry, the company, the competitors, and the interviewer (if possible).
  - Practice the interview questions.
  - Have a full dress rehearsal three days before the interview.
  - Know where you are going in advance and ensure you show up early.
  - Have a routine for the day of the interview.

Knowing what to do during an interview is critical:

- Maintain positive body language.
- Update your networking.
- Maintain your focus.
- Be authentic.
- Prepare questions to ask toward the end of the interview.
- Ask what the next step will be.

Knowing what to do after an interview can strengthen your chances of getting the job:

- Send a thank-you note.
- Update all parties relevant to your search.
- Map out your follow-up strategy.

Things can go wrong during an interview. Knowing how to get back on track is vital to your interview success.

Interviews can be very structured or very unstructured, depending on the interviewer and the industry.

The best way to succeed in any interview is to prepare for every type of interview and every type of interviewer.

Interviews can be one of three types:

1. Behavioral interviews
2. Case interviews
3. Informational interviews

Interviews can be conducted using different methods:

- Live interviews
- Phone interviews
- Videoconference or Skype interviews
- Taped interviews

The venue will be either on campus or off campus and in either an office or a conference room.

Some interviewers are more skilled at the interview process than others, so having a planned approach helps ensure your strengths are highlighted in the interview.

You need to be prepared to answer various types of interview questions in advance of the interview:

- Open-ended questions
- Specific questions
- Motivation questions
- Unusual questions

Familiarize yourself with questions that are considered illegal.

Avoid interviewer pet peeves to ensure maximum success during the interview process. Some of these include not being prepared, not having positive body language, and not being enthusiastic, among others.

Chapter Review

1. How do you define an interview?
2. What should you know about yourself before you actually interview for a position?
3. What is the structure of a typical interview and what are some reasons an interview might be unstructured?
4. Why is it important to prepare and practice?
5. What are the most important things to do before an interview?
6. How important is having a routine to follow on the day of the interview?
7. What is body language and how can you use it to your advantage?
8. When answering interview questions, why it is more effective to have a beginning, a middle, and an end to your response?
9. What types of things can go wrong during an interview, and what can you do to get them back on track?

10. What three things should you do after an interview?
11. Why are thank-you notes important and how do you write an effective thank-you note?
12. Why are the three main types of interviews?
13. How do you prepare for an informational interview, and what are the main benefits to conducting them?
14. What are the four different methods of interviewing?
15. Why are more and more interviewers choosing to conduct phone interviews versus face-to-face interviews?
16. What are the pros and cons of phone interviews?
17. What is the difference between on-campus and off-campus interviewing? Why should you participate in both?
18. How can you practice the most-asked interview questions?
19. What strategies would you use to answer open-ended questions versus specific questions versus motivation questions?
20. Why would an interviewer use unconventional interview questions, and what is the best way to practice answering them?
21. What constitutes an illegal question, and what should you do if you are asked an illegal question during an interview?
22. What interviewer pet peeves can you avoid?

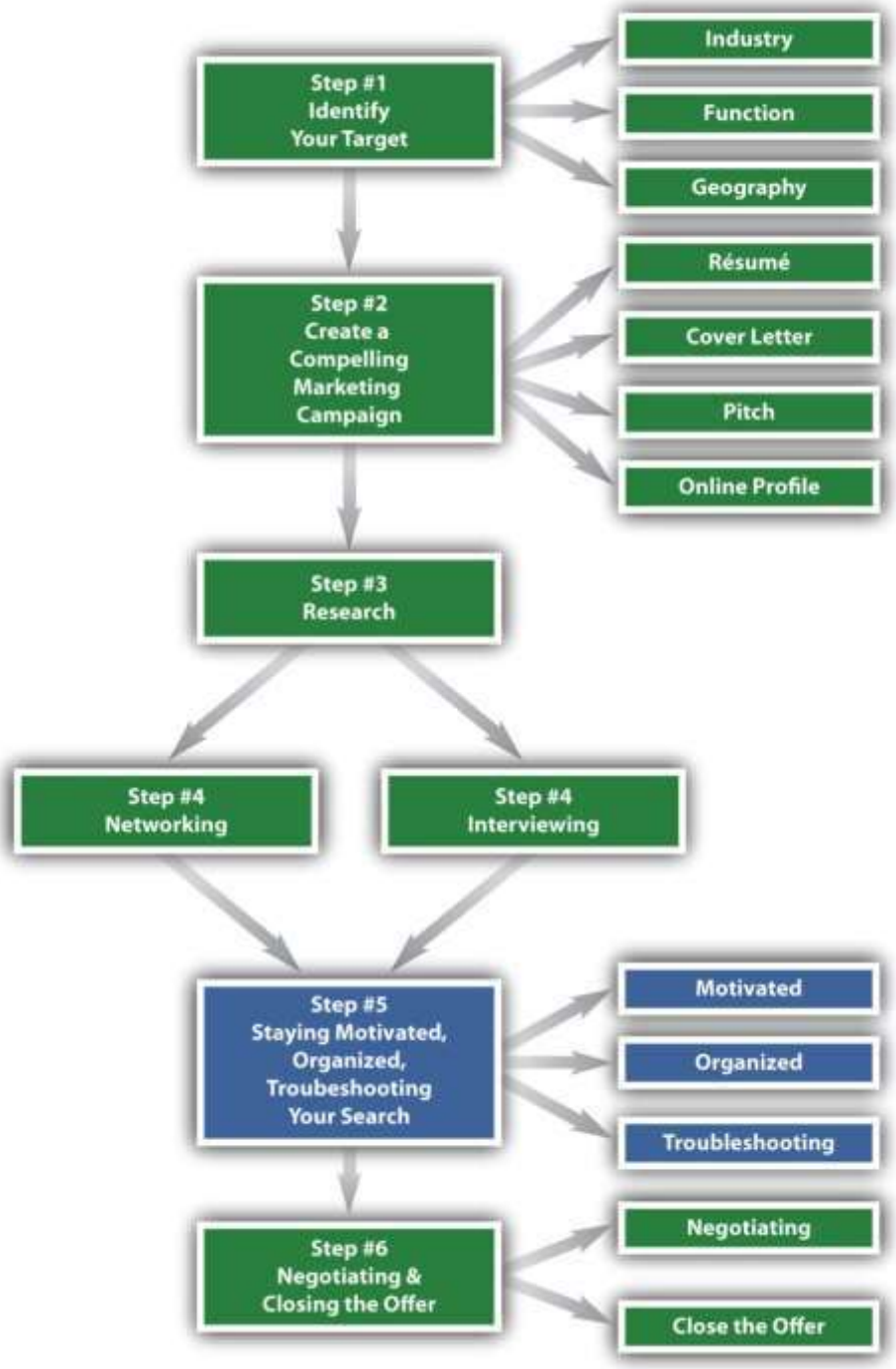
SuccessHawk: Interview

For tips and ideas about preparing for interviews, click on Interviews in the Advice and Research Section of the menu bar on the right. You may also want to review the demo using Perfect Interview, an interactive online interview practice feature under Interactive Features. (*Note*: There is a charge of $19.95 for unlimited use of Perfect Interview for sixty days.)

SUCCESSHAWK
JOB SEARCH PRODUCTIVITY SOLUTIONS
My Workspace
Logout (SuccessHawk Demo)
Interviewing
Home ›› Interviewing
Interview Preparation
Employers conduct interviews to help them decide if you are qualified to do the job and to determine whether you will fit in the organization. Interviews also give you an opportunity to learn more about the company and its fit for you.
For many people, interviewing is the most difficult part of the job search. We can't make interviewing easy, but some of the anxiety that interviewing brings up can be reduced if you have an understanding of what to expect.
Types of Interviews
Preparing for an Interview
Interview Questions to Anticipate
At the Interview
Questions for You to Ask
Ending the Interview
The Informational Interview
My Contacts
Advice & Research
Career Exploration
Resumes
Letter Templates
Search Job Listings
Interviewing
Managing a Layoff
Guide to Networking
Interactive Features
My Workspace
My Contacts
My Action Items
Goal Setting
Personal Statements
Resume Creator

Chapter 9: Step 5: Stay Motivated and Organized and Troubleshoot Your Search

Figure 9.1 The Six-Step Job Search Process: Step 5



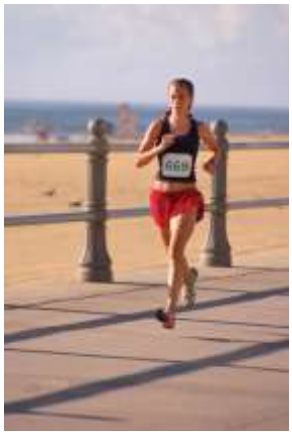
Overview

What Do We Mean by Stay Motivated and Organized and Troubleshoot Your Search? At this point in your search, you have taken the following four steps:

1. Identified your targets and have a list of companies, specific departments, and specific people to approach (step 1)
2. Created your marketing campaign, for example, résumé, cover letter, online profile, and networking pitch, to position yourself to these prospective employers (step 2)
3. Researched your desired market so that when you talk to people you can have an intelligent and engaging conversation, and they are more likely to help you or hire you (step 3)
4. Started talking to people, including developing relationships, learning new information, and interviewing for specific roles (step 4)

This chapter will discuss the different types of motivation and strategies for maintaining that motivation, how to develop organizational systems that work best with your style, and ways in which to troubleshoot your search.

Many job seekers slow down at this stage, right when the job search should instead be heating up. The job seeker has fun with the blank slate of targeting—envisioning his or her likes and dislikes. Marketing is tangible, and the job seeker feels productive, diligently putting together a résumé. In addition, a job seeker can read about companies and industries on his or her own schedule, at home, perhaps before bed, or after a tiring day at school or work. Getting in front of other people, however, and going beyond the awkwardness of networking with strangers or near strangers is hard work for a lot of job seekers. Yet this is the meaty part of the search, and a good job search should devote the bulk of time to the networking stage. As a job seeker, you will need to stay motivated throughout your job search, but especially in this critical networking and interviewing phase.



This chapter talks about the two types of motivation you will need and strategies for how to become and stay motivated. You will explore answers to the following questions on motivation:

- Do you consciously pace yourself for the long haul of a project (in the case of a job search, all six stages)?
- Does your energy tend to wane after an initial fast start?
- Do you have the ability to summon your motivation at will for an important event (in the case of a job search, at an interview or key networking meeting)?

- When you have a final exam, big game, or other high-stakes event, do you just hope you are at your best that day?

With four steps of the job search in full swing, you will be juggling names of companies, names of people, and insights into your target market. As you talk to more and more people, you will find out about other companies and get referrals to additional people to speak with or to specific jobs for which you need to apply. You need a way to stay on top of all this information. If you had been capturing all of this in a to-do list or a journal, your simple list will no longer suffice as the information flow increases.

This chapter covers the two categories of information that need to be organized and strategies for how to develop organization systems that work for your style:

- Do you have a system for organizing your network of contacts?
- Do you have a plan for how you will incorporate new job leads into your existing contacts?
- How do you keep track of long-term projects with lots of sequential steps but also lots of revisions (such as a job search)?
- How do you schedule and remind yourself of follow-up actions for long-term projects?

Finally, the networking phase is the time the job seeker tests the market. While you are *thinking* about companies and industries as you set your targets, create your market, and conduct your research, you don't actually put yourself *in front of* companies or other prospects until you reach the networking phase. Once you start networking, you will get your first market reaction. Your feedback might be anything from "Wow, where have you been all my life? We need to hire you right away!" to "Thanks for contacting us. We'll get back to you if you are a match with any of our openings." You might even end up with no response at all.

This chapter includes what problems you may encounter and ways to troubleshoot your search:

- Are your inquiries leading to networking meetings and interviews?
- Are your networking meetings and interviews leading to callbacks for additional interviews or referrals to other opportunities?
- Are you getting offers?

To stay motivated and organized and troubleshoot your search is a stand-alone, critical step in your job search that warrants your attention and prioritization. We place this step in the fifth position for several reasons:

- You need the data from the earlier steps to have something to organize.
- You need results and market reaction to troubleshoot.
- It is typically later in your process that the need to deliberately focus on motivation comes into play. Many job seekers neglect this step, assuming that lists upon lists will be enough to stay organized. You might assume that motivation comes naturally, or perhaps that the financial or peer pressure of having to secure a job will be enough to motivate you. It might not occur to you to go looking for problems in your job search. But the proactive job seeker is deliberate about all elements of his or her search and, therefore, *deliberately* harnesses motivation, creates the systems and other support required to stay organized, and identifies and fixes problems throughout the job search.

9.1 Two Types of Motivation Relating to the Job Search

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Become aware of the importance of motivation to the job search.
2. Anticipate the areas within the job search where motivation is needed.
3. Start thinking about how you have handled motivation in the past and what you can use from past experience or what needs to change.

There are two types of motivation in your job search:

1. Long-term motivation over the duration of your job search
2. Short-term motivation for a specific job search event, such as a networking meeting, interview, or offer negotiation

Each type of motivation requires different energy and focus, and, therefore, a different strategy. It is similar to taking two different classes—one where the emphasis is on weekly exams versus another where the grade rests on research papers. The way that you prepare for each class will be different. The pace at which you do your work will differ. In a job search, the weekly exams are the networking meetings and interviews (in fact, you will have more than one exam during the busy weeks of your search). Getting from job idea to job offer is a long-term project, akin to a multiweek research paper.

Long-Term Motivation

To retain long-term motivation for your job search overall, you need to take certain actions:

- Pace yourself and move through the process.
- Push past the ups and downs, and do not get discouraged by the inevitable disappointments during the job search.
- Stay focused on the end goal of ultimately securing job offers.

Long-term motivation is the marathon aspect of your job search. If you are experienced at long-term projects, such as big research papers, then you can apply your experience and know-how about pacing and scheduling to your job search. If you are a better student in the weekly exam class model, then you need to periodically remind yourself of your overall job search goals. Select from the specific strategies for maintaining long-term motivation later in this chapter.

A good example of maintaining long-term motivation is the case of Emily G., a class of 2008 undergraduate who was interested in the media industry and had moved to New York City after college in

Pennsylvania. Her job search took over a year, during which time she held a series of internships and part-time jobs, all while conducting her search. She graduated during a serious downturn in the economy. She received two offers that were rescinded, through no fault of her own, because the budget for those positions was cut. It took over a year, but her third offer finally stuck, and she is happily employed at a major media company in human resources.

Short-Term Motivation

In addition to long-term motivation, individual situations in the job search, such as a job interview, call for increased energy and focus. For every job interview, you will need to be at your best, regardless of whether the commute to the interview was tiring, whether you woke up feeling a bit down, or whether you stubbed your toe on the reception desk right after you walked in at your appointed time. This short-term motivation provides an immediate and necessary boost to whatever is the focus of your search right now. There are many instances across your job search where you need to harness short-term motivation:

- Each and every job interview (and most companies will have multiple rounds for one job opening)
- Each and every networking meeting
- Career fairs
- Professional group meetings or mixers
- Phone calls to your target companies (e.g., for information, for a status update)
- Offer and salary negotiations

If you are a better student in the research paper class or you like to ease into a situation, then you need to ramp up your preparation for the high-stakes events like job interviews. Prospective employers form impressions very early in the process. You will not have the first five minutes of an interview to ease into it. Your interviewer will already have an opinion of you from meeting you at reception or from the small talk you make at the start of the interview.

A good example of maintaining short-term motivation is the case of K. V., an experienced executive who was negotiating an end to her contract at a major firm while negotiating a new role at another one, all while continuing to do her high-profile management job. K. V. would often have very different types of meetings in the same day, from contentious negotiations with her bosses to enthusiastic sales meetings with her future bosses. She had to maintain composure and advocate hard for herself in a severance negotiation, and then turn around and be cheery for an offer negotiation. She was able to be at her best in

each scenario, came to an amicable end with her former employer, and is now enjoying a bigger role at her new employer.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- There are two types of motivation, long-term and short-term, each playing a critical role in your job search.
- Long-term job search motivation is akin to a multiweek research project, while short-term motivation is more like weekly class exams.

EXERCISES

1. Do you do better with exams or research papers? Based on this, on what areas of the job search will you pay particular attention so that nothing falls through the cracks?
2. Do you prefer exams or research papers? This gives you an indication of what areas you may enjoy in your job search.
3. How do you currently prepare for exams or research papers? What strengths do you have in one or both areas that you can bring to your job search?
4. What bad habits or tendencies do you need to avoid, for example, procrastination, nervousness?

9.2 Strategies for Motivating at Will

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the importance for deliberate actions and routines.
2. Learn different strategies for long-term and short-term motivation.
3. Get specific examples that you can apply to your own job search.

Motivation at Will Requires Deliberate Action

For a successful job search, you need to be able to harness both short-term motivation and long-term motivation *at will*. The best way to do this is to have a plan and structure in place to *deliberately* motivate yourself. You cannot rely on sheer willpower or inspiration because that is exhausting and unreliable. Champion athletes and performing artists are good examples of people who use deliberate motivation. They have well-defined routines for the day of big events and for the long-term preparation leading up to the big events.

A good example of deliberate long-term motivation: One piano teacher at a leading conservatory gave his students very specific pacing for learning the concerto selected for the school's annual soloist competition. It included finishing the piece several *months* before the actual competition so that his students could stop playing it entirely for several weeks, and then pick it up again refreshed. A break of several weeks was deliberately built in to give students a tactic for staying refreshed, energized, and motivated on the piece.

A good example of deliberate short-term motivation: A commercial and TV acting teacher gave his students a specific routine and set of guidelines for the days they had auditions. One of the rules was no watching or reading news or dramas the night before and morning of the audition. This was a deliberate choice to keep the students upbeat in the hours leading up to the audition. He also coached his students to focus on one good thing that happened to them in the previous three days—another deliberate tactic to maintain positive energy.

Similarly, you will need a deliberate routine before job interviews and other high-stakes job search events. You will also need deliberate routines built in over your job search to stay refreshed, energized, and

motivated. Deliberate motivation-at-will strategies will enable you to stick to your job search, regardless of nervousness, fatigue, or even forgetfulness.

Strategies for Maintaining Short-Term Motivation

Following are some suggestions for motivational routines to follow prior to a job interview, beginning the night before the interview:

- Do something relaxing that keeps you positive.
- Create a summary sheet of key research points you intend to share.
- Review your questions for the interviewer so that you ensure a two-way dialogue.
- Practice your interview responses for the top questions you are expecting.

The morning of the interview, certain actions can ensure a successful outcome:

- Skim the current event headlines so you can engage in a timely discussion.
- Have your favorite breakfast that will keep you full and energized, but not cause your energy level to crash (i.e., you may want to avoid too much sugar or caffeine).
- Pick a specific accessory or other item for your interview outfit that makes you feel good and is a visual cue that this is a special day.

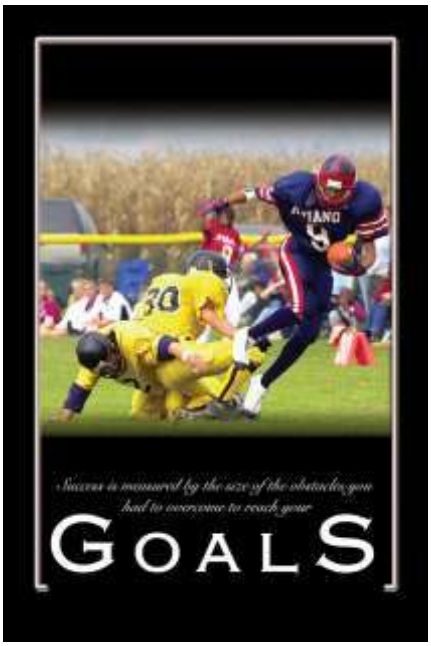
On the way to the interview, you can continue to maintain your motivation:

- Listen to your favorite, upbeat song (remember to take the earphones out of your ears while you are waiting in reception so you appear approachable)
- If you are inspired by quotes, have your favorites on an index card to read, even right before you check in at reception.
- If you are visually oriented, have a picture with you that instantly relaxes you.

These same suggestions can also work for the other job search events that require short-term motivation, such as networking meetings, career fairs, professional mixers, and offer negotiations. For the high-intensity, time-sensitive job search situations, such as sending that thank-you letter on time, consider designating a job search buddy on whom you can call for support. This person doesn't have to be a fellow job seeker, though that's one popular approach as you can support each other. Just make sure you pick someone who is encouraging and focuses on action.

Try different things as you go through your job search, and keep a log of what works for you:

- Activities that are relaxing and can easily be scheduled the night before an event (You may love a long hike in the woods, but this might not work for the day before an early-morning meeting.)
- Foods that are sustaining and energizing, including meal and snack options
- Outfits and accessories that are appropriate, flattering, and good visual cues to motivate you
- Songs, quotes, and pictures that inspire you
- People who encourage and inspire you



Also keep a log of what to avoid:

- Activities that put you in a bad mood (e.g., sad or scary movies)
- Activities that you may enjoy but distract you (e.g., Internet surfing)
- Foods that give you heartburn or make your energy level crash
- People who drain your energy and discourage you

Strategies for Maintaining Long-Term Motivation

For long-term motivation, recognize in advance that your search will take several months, so you need to plan for regular breaks throughout each day, during the week, and at various points during your overall search.

High-focus, ongoing activities, such as research or corresponding with networking leads, require breaks that give you refreshment but also don't derail your train of thought:

- Schedule activities that require concentration for when you do your best thinking.
- Block out uninterrupted time—turn off your e-mail alerts and close down your Internet browser so you don't jump on and off your favorite sites at every pause.
- Set a specific time, say on the hour, when you will get a glass of water, stretch, or incorporate a different activity for a few minutes. For example, one job seeker scheduled exercise and personal errands in the spaces between job search activities to give herself a mental break.

Each week, you also need a longer break, where you can unplug from the intense concentration a proactive job search requires. Plan for a half-day of a personal-interest activity:

- Museum visit
- Movie, show, or sporting event
- Hike or other physical activity
- Volunteer opportunity

Job seekers who tend to their personal interests are more relaxed and more interesting to prospective employers. Candidates who engage in outside interests tend to have a personality, unique point of view, and balanced approach that will serve them well during crunch times. Taking breaks enhances your search and is an investment in the success of your search.

Use these longer breaks to engage in a hobby or deep interest that might add to your networking. This is not just about meeting people during the times you might be volunteering or participating in an extracurricular class (though this may happen, too). Having genuine outside interests that you actively pursue is also a great conversation enhancer. In networking situations, such as a conference or industry mixer, it's tiring to just hear about work or the job search.

A good example of staying motivated *and* contributing to his job search is Daniel K. He was working full time, including lots of overtime, at a job he didn't enjoy, so he was having a tough time staying upbeat and energized during his search. One of his longtime goals was to watch all of the American Film Institute top-one hundred movies. Not only did watching one or two movies during his weekly breaks energize him, but he also had natural conversation starters (the movies) for when he met with people. He noticed a huge difference in his demeanor and the way he approached his job search and was able to identify his next career step (in his case, graduate school).

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- There are specific events during your job search when you need to get motivated at will, including job interviews, networking meetings, career fairs, professional mixers, and offer negotiations.
- Creating a deliberate routine and set of actions can enable you to get motivated for these high-stakes events.
- Deliberate work scheduling and taking longer breaks will help you stay motivated for the duration of your search.

- Activities during your longer breaks are not just about refreshment, but they can also contribute to the enthusiasm you bring to your job search.

EXERCISES

1. Where do you see your energy flagging in your current job search? If you are just starting a search, where has your energy flagged in the past—in high-stakes situations or over the course of a long project?
2. Which short-term motivation strategies will you use? Be specific and pick actual quotes, songs, or pictures if you decide to use those techniques.
3. Which long-term motivation strategies will you use? Make a list of places to visit, shows to see, books to read, and other activities that refresh you.

9.3 Information You Need to Organize

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the two categories of job search information you need to organize.
2. Understand how each piece of information fits into the job search so you capture everything that is relevant.

There are two categories of data and information every job seeker needs to organize:

- Your overall contact list
- Your job search–specific list, including information on contacts and activities

Your Overall Contact List

Because networking is so important to your job search, it is not just job-specific contacts that you need to track. Family, friends, colleagues, classmates, acquaintances, and any new contacts specifically for your job search all should be cataloged in one master list or database. Even people who do not seem relevant to your search now may turn out to be relevant:

- They know someone else who is relevant (remember the networking 2x2 matrix in Chapter 7).
- They have resources or services (e.g., color printer, copyediting skills) relevant to your job search activity.
- They are encouraging motivators.

By keeping all of your contacts in one overall list, you easily can move people into and out of search priority and are always reminded that everyone is a potential help to your search.

Your overall contact list should include, but not be limited to the following:

- Names
- Mailing address
- E-mail address
- Phone numbers (distinguished by home, work, cell, or other)

Your contact list should also be categorized by relationship:

- Family
- Close friends
- Colleagues
- Classmates
- Service providers

You can also categorize each contact by priority. Some salespeople will classify contacts in their database in order of how hot the prospect is—that is, how close they are to buying. You might want to categorize by priority of how much contact you want to maintain over the year:

- A-level contacts are people with whom you want to maintain close contact.
- B contacts are people whom you might contact every month or every several months.
- C contacts are people whom you contact just once a year—at the holidays, for example.

You want to maintain your C relationships, but you are not trying to grow them. B contacts are people you are trying to get to know better. B contacts might become A or C contacts once you have a better sense of the relationship.

When you categorize your contacts, you are able to sort and find people for your exact needs. If you need a favor, you would look through family and close friends. If you have a general professional question, you may start with colleagues. If you are working on networking, you might want to look at B contacts specifically so you can find the people you already tagged as those with whom you want to expand the relationship.

Your Job Search–Specific List

Even though your whole list is important to your search, some contacts will be closer to your search outcomes than others. For these contacts, you need to track information beyond just contact information or category. For the search-specific list, this includes everyone with whom you have inquired about your job search. Your well-connected Aunt Mary is appropriate to your job search–specific list because in addition to being family, she works in the industry you are targeting. Informational interview contacts go on this list. Of course, people who interview you are on this list.

For the search-specific contacts, you will want to track the following information:

- How you heard about them
- When you first contacted them
- The quantity of activity involved with them (e.g., how many phone calls, how many meetings, how many attempts to contact or other back and forth)
- The quality of activity (e.g., what did you talk about, what reactions and rapport were evident)
- The most current point of contact and the date
- Any follow-up required (e.g., send a résumé, e-mail John Doe and say this contact referred me)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- You need two lists of contacts: an overall list; and a job search–specific list.
- You need to track all of your contacts because you need one go-to place for information about your network.
- You need a job search–specific list because there is additional information to track regarding the contacts for your job search.
- For your job search contacts, you want to know the activity, dates, and follow-up actions related to your contacts.

EXERCISES

1. How are you currently organizing your contact list—cell phone, Outlook, LinkedIn, Facebook, paper address book, business cards you collect?
2. How do you currently categorize your list, if at all?
3. If you don't yet categorize your list, will you use the categories and priorities suggested earlier? If your list is already categorized, is it suitable for your job search activity? Do you need to update any of your contact information or categories?
4. How in the past have you managed a long-term project where you have to track different pieces of information at different times—on paper, electronically? This may give you some guidance in terms of how you might stay organized with your job search project.

9.4 How to Create Systems to Stay Organized

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn why systems are important to getting and staying organized.
2. Get ideas for different organizational systems.

Systems are essential to getting and staying organized. By selecting a system, you ensure that your current lists get organized but also that any additional items to your list get organized. A system enables you to make updates and changes to your contacts or activities. A good system enables you to find what you need quickly so you can track your job search and move forward.

The most important criterion for selecting your organizational system is that it supports you and how you work best. You do not want to create or select a high-maintenance system that requires big changes in your natural work style and, therefore, a lot of additional work. Your job search will give you enough to do without having to add extra time and effort tracking the information.

Systems for Your Overall Contact List

Some popular methods of storing your overall contacts include the following:

- Paper address book
- Rolodex or business card collection
- Cell phone directory
- Outlook or other e-mail contacts database
- Facebook, LinkedIn, or other social media network
- Relationship management system, such as SuccessHawk for job search or Salesforce for sales leads

For many people, the overall contact system is some combination of the preceding methods. The important thing is that the system supports you. There are ways you will know your system works:

- You can easily find the people you need.
- Information on your contacts is updated or easy to update.
- You can easily skim or search your contacts to discover people you might have forgotten.
- You can categorize people so that your network stays organized as it grows.

Systems for Your Job Search–Specific List

For your job search–specific list, you need a system that can capture both contact information and activity. So it needs to be more flexible and substantive than your overall contact system. You can choose from three categories of systems for your job search–specific list:

1. Paper based
2. Customized electronic
3. Off-the-shelf electronic

Paper-Based Job Search–Specific Systems

In a paper-based system, you have a tabbed binder or accordion file folder, with different sections corresponding to different areas of your search. You can have a section for each target company, as well as for your overall search. You can also have a separate sheet for each person related to each target company and log your activity with that person there.

A paper system has several positive traits:

- It is visual.
- It enables you to easily capture thoughts, ideas, and asides
- It is easily portable, so you don't have to carry a laptop or find an Internet connection

A paper system does have some downsides:

- It is difficult to search. What if your research turns up a name for a senior executive at one of your dream companies, who happens to be an alumnus of your school? You don't want to contact him right away because you want to do some other lower-level informational interviews first. Several weeks later, you know you want to go back to this contact, but what was his name? You would have to page through your whole paper system to find it.
- It is hard to back up.
- It consumes more space when you have a lot of leads.
- It lacks flexibility. If you arranged your filing by company, where do you put your general networking contacts or other people who may be relevant across companies?

Customized Electronic Systems

You can create an electronic system for your job search activity in Excel:

Table 9.1 Sample Activity-Tracking Spreadsheet in Excel

First Name	Last Name	Title	Company	Source (How You Heard of Them)	Current Status	Status Date	Follow-Up	First Contact
John	Smith	Head of campus recruiting	Company X	Career services	Résumé and cover letter sent	9/23/10	Call after 10/8 to check on status	9/1/10
Jane	Doe	Marketing associate	Company X	Alumni database	Second e-mail	10/1/10	Follow up on request for info interview	9/1/10

You can add additional columns as needed for fields you want to track. For example, you may want to include a Comments column and put notes or ideas there. As you add more contacts, sort by status date to see to whom you haven't reached out recently. Then check the follow-up column to see if you need to do something specific or just reach out to maintain the relationship. The First Contact field shows the first time you reached out to this person, so you can see if you have moved forward since adding them to the list. In the case of Jane Doe, you attempted to contact her on September 1 and you are still trying to reach her for an informational interview on October 1. You need to try harder to reach her, or assume the contact is stale and find someone else to add to your list.

The preceding table was created in Excel. On the plus side, you can customize an electronic system:

- You can be flexible about what fields you want to add.
- You can format and sort according to exactly what you need.
- You can back up electronic systems.

Electronic systems do have downsides:

- You have to build the system from scratch.
- You have to know what fields are worth tracking.
- If your contacts have a lot of activity, your spreadsheet can quickly get crowded and disorganized.

Off-the-Shelf Electronic Systems

Salespeople use customer relationship management (CRM) software, such as Salesforce or High Rise, to track candidates and activity. In the job search, you are the product and employers are the customers, so you can apply the idea of sales-tracking software to your job search. One solution already customized to the job search is SuccessHawk Job Search Productivity Solutions.

Figure 9.2 SuccessHawk Home Page

SuccessHawk is a web-based platform that you customize with your contacts and activities. You can import your contacts from your existing overall lists. SuccessHawk supports online e-mail (e.g., Gmail, Hotmail, and so forth), LinkedIn, Outlook, Apple Address Book, vCards, and Internet service provider webmail (e.g., Comcast).

SuccessHawk also has a section for tasks, where you can export tasks from Apple calendar or Outlook, or you can add tasks manually. So instead of documenting in Excel that you want to call Jane Doe for an informational interview, you would Add a Task to your SuccessHawk "My Action Items" section, designating the target (Jane Doe), a description of the task (call to follow up on e-mail request for informational interview), and a target due date. SuccessHawk sends you e-mail reminders of upcoming tasks, so instead of having to visit your Excel spreadsheet and sort by follow-up, the reminders come to you.

SuccessHawk also has other job search-related features built into the platform, including a space for goals, a résumé creator, and advice and research.

On the plus side, off-the-shelf electronic systems have several attributes:

- They are prebuilt so you can get started right away.
- They can be interactive and give you extra support (e.g., the reminder feature in SuccessHawk).
- They can be synchronized with other resources you already use (e.g., contact lists, task lists).
- They can be backed up.
- They have additional features and resources you wouldn't get on your own.

Off-the-shelf systems also have a downside:

- You may have less flexibility if you are very particular about how you organize data.

- You have to buy the system or pay for a user account.
- You have to learn the ins and outs of the system.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- You need to select a system to get and stay organized.
- There are three main choices for organizational systems: paper-based, customized electronic, and off-the-shelf electronic.
- Each choice of system has its pros and cons.
- You want to select a system that matches the way you naturally work.

EXERCISES

1. How have you been tracking the information and contacts developed during your job search?
2. If you haven't already selected a system, experiment with paper and electronic. Pick five friendly contacts and try to schedule meetings with them so you have something to track. Create a paper folder or binder system to track your efforts and build a spreadsheet to track your efforts. What data and fields did you include? Which system did you prefer?
3. If you already have a task-organization system, are there additional fields you will track for your job search? How will you change (or not) your organization of your search based on the information you have learned?
4. What do you wish you could track better, or where are you stuck in your organizational needs? What resources might you consult to get your organizational needs met?

9.5 Troubleshooting Your Search: Three Areas Your Job Search Can Break Down

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the importance of troubleshooting in your job search.
2. Learn the three stages of the hiring process where your job search can get stuck.
3. Become aware of how you can measure your own job search to identify your problem areas.

If you've made it this far, you have accomplished a lot toward your job search. You have a sense of what you want in your job targets, you are positioning yourself well with your marketing, you are arming yourself with research to make you a knowledgeable candidate, and you are putting yourself out there by networking and interviewing. You are doing a lot, but are you being effective? Troubleshooting is about looking at your search results to date and figuring out where your job search needs work and how to fix it. At the networking and interviewing stage, you are getting market feedback. Even if you are getting no response from your networking inquiries, no response is still feedback (it's negative feedback because what you are doing is not eliciting a response). There are many reasons behind the feedback you may be getting. You need to use the feedback you are getting (or lack of feedback) to troubleshoot your search. There are three stages of the hiring process where your job search can get stuck:

1. The candidate identification stage
2. The general interview stage
3. The closing stage

In the most general description of the hiring process, a candidate is identified, interviewed, and hired. A job search can break down at any one of these three stages. From the job seeker's perspective, you must be identified as a candidate—that is, you must be invited to an interview. You must be interviewed and get called back for more interviews or for a hiring decision. You must be on the positive end of a hiring decision. So, the three categories of potential job search problems are (1) you are not getting enough interviews, (2) you are not moving forward in the interview process; or (3) you are not getting offers.

The Identification Stage Problem: You Are Not Getting Enough Interviews

If you have been submitting résumés or asking people for exploratory interviews for more than thirty days, look back and see how many people have asked you to meet with them. You want to meet with

several people per week (five to ten if you are working on your search full time or one to four if you are working on your search part time). Are you not getting invited to meetings or interviews?

The Interview Stage Problem: You Are Not Moving Forward in the Process

If you have been getting meetings or interviews, congratulations! Clearly, your marketing is paying off. Now, your focus should be getting more meetings and interviews:

- More networking meetings that can lead to job interviews
- More first-round job interviews with additional companies
- More second-, third-, and fourth-round interviews with your existing targets

Look over your latest thirty days and note the types of meetings you've been getting and the steps that follow. Are you getting lots of first-round interviews, but are not getting asked to return for more interviews? Are you getting referrals from your introductory networking meetings to actual jobs or additional possible networking leads?

The Hiring Stage Problem: You Are Not Getting Offers

If you have been getting interviews and getting called back, then clearly you are doing something right because prospective employers are interested. But if there have already been several companies where you have been the bridesmaid but never the bride, then there could be a problem during the later stages of interviewing that is hindering your ability to close. Hiring is subjective, so if you lose one or two offers, that is to be expected and may be through no fault of your own. But three or more lost offers, especially if you went far along the process for all of them, could signal a problem.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The hiring process includes candidate identification, interviewing, and hiring. At any of these stages, there can be problems for the job seeker.
- You should measure the results of your networking and interviewing on a regular basis to see how you are doing at the identification, interviewing, and hiring stages.

EXERCISES

1. At what stage are you stuck in the job search process? If you haven't started your job search yet, put reminders on your calendar during the time you intend to do your job search to troubleshoot according to the three stages.

2. As you have been reviewing your data capture so far, what data, if any, is missing that you should add to your search going forward?

9.6 Troubleshooting Your Search: Strategies for the Three Common Problem Areas

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn potential reasons for the problems at each job search stage.
2. Learn strategies to get your job search unstuck and moving forward again.

Three Reasons You Are Not Getting Enough Interviews

You may not be getting enough interviews for the following reasons:

1. There is a mismatch between what you are targeting and who you are.
2. Your marketing is incomplete.
3. You are too passive in your outreach.

What to Do for a Mismatch

A mismatch occurs between what you are targeting and who you are when one or both of the following are true:

- You are not the right candidate for what you are targeting.
- You are a qualified candidate, but you are not positioning yourself to reflect this.

You may not be qualified for the companies or jobs you are targeting. Some industries or functions have very specific certification requirements, GPA minimums, or some other very clear deal breaker. If you are focusing your efforts on these competitive areas, and you do not have the prerequisites, you are sabotaging your search. Review your targets to see if they are appropriate for your experience and skills. Be realistic with what the requirements are and what you bring to the table. You may need additional experience, another degree or certification, or a specific skill you do not yet have before you can go after your targets.

Similarly, you might be going after the right companies or jobs, but your positioning, the way you represent yourself, may not reflect how good a fit you are. Your targets may be correct, but you may not be positioning yourself correctly to your target. This is a marketing problem. Review your résumé, cover letter, networking pitch, and online profile to ensure that your marketing reflects that you are indeed a match.

What to Do When Your Marketing Is Incomplete

Your marketing may be incomplete when you focus too much or exclusively on only some, but not all, of the four main elements of your marketing campaign:

- 1. Résumé
- 2. Cover letter
- 3. Networking pitch
- 4. Online profile

Prospective employers often favor some elements more than the others, but you do not know which employer favors which element, so you have to be strong across the board.

Many job seekers spend a lot of time on the résumé, but not as much time on the cover letter or other correspondence. If your overall package is not consistent, you will lose out if a prospective employer happens to weigh the cover letter most heavily. Some job seekers do not have any online presence. If you do not have an online profile, and recruiters are looking for you online, then they will not find you. If you are not getting enough interviews, your marketing is not getting through to prospective employers.

Review your marketing to ensure that you have both a strong résumé and online profile, that cover letters and all your correspondence are effective, and that you have a compelling and memorable networking pitch.

What to Do When Your Outreach Is Too Passive

Finally, you may not be getting interviews because you are relying too much on passive methods—recruiters or job postings—to get you interviews. Recruiters and job postings are just one source of leads. They are passive sources because you are waiting to be selected. You are giving up control of your search to someone else.

Instead, take a more active approach:

- Contact companies directly.
- Identify the specific departments where you'd like to work.
- Network your way to the specific people who manage these departments and, therefore, have hiring authority.

The majority of jobs are filled by candidates who are referred directly by employees or who otherwise network into the company. Fewer jobs are filled by external recruiters or unsolicited responses to job

postings. Review your approach to ensure that you are directly networking with prospective employers and not just relying on recruiters or job postings for your leads.

Three Possible Reasons You Are Not Getting Called Back after You Interview

You may not be getting called back after your interviews for the following reasons:

1. Your interview responses do not convey key message points.
2. You spend the interview telling without showing.
3. You aren't at your best during the interview.

Have Key Interview Message Points

Some job seekers blame the interviewer for not asking the questions that will enable them to highlight their best self. It's true that some interviewers don't know how to interview well, or at least in a way that enables the job seeker to show his or her best. But it's the job seeker's responsibility to control the interview. You should have three to four key message points that demonstrate why you should be hired. These are your unique strengths, skills, experience, and personal attributes most relevant to the job being discussed.

You need to weave these key message points into the interview, regardless of what is specifically asked of you. Think about the president of the United States facing the press room: He does not wait for the right question. He has an agenda prepared in advance and uses whatever question he gets as a springboard to forward his agenda.

Show, Don't Just Tell

The best candidates give examples with details and tangible results. You don't say you have great analytical skills. You talk about a specific example of when you used your analytical skills and the quantified results you achieved for your employer because of them. You don't say you work well with people. You give a specific example of a project that involved coordinating a group of people or communicating or relationship building. You don't say you will learn on the job. You come in having clearly researched your target company with specific ideas of what you would do in your role.

A good framework exists to ensure that the examples you give clearly highlight your contributions. That framework also gives the interviewer a good sense of the scope of your responsibility. To emphasize your contributions, answer these five questions:

1. Who sponsored the project? Was it the CEO, the head of a department, an outside client?

2. What was the overall objective? Were you researching a new market, developing a new product, organizing a conference for key clients?
3. What was the output you needed to deliver? Was it a PowerPoint presentation to senior management, an Excel spreadsheet with projections, a written report?
4. What was the result? Did the company enter the new market? Was the product developed, and was it well received? How did the conference turn out?
5. What did you do, and what did everyone else on the team do? A prospective employer needs to understand what you specifically did. Itemizing what you did shows your contribution. Itemizing what everyone else did shows you stayed on top of the overall project, and it also gives the interviewer a clear sense of the size and composition of the team.

   For example, Russell S. is a recent undergraduate with extensive music-related internships but who now wants a sales role upon graduation. To highlight that his experience in music was indeed relevant to sales, he walked his then-prospective, now-current employer through a sample music project. He deliberately picked a promotion project because it is closely related to sales:

- I was promoting a high school band for gigs in the neighborhood. (Question 1: The band sponsored this project. Also Question 2: The objective was landing gigs.)
- I canvassed different restaurants, bars, and community organizations for the type of entertainment they booked and developed relationships with the bookers of places that fit the music of my band. (Question 3: The output was the sales process.)
- We landed several gigs throughout the summer, and many places became repeat customers. (Question 4: The result was multiple sales and repeat business.)
- I was not in the band, but I acted as the business manager, negotiated the contracts, collected the fees, and worked with the venues to promote the band. Everybody else was a performer. (Question 5: Russell itemized exactly what he did in relation to everyone else.)

Be at Your Best

This chapter started with the importance of harnessing motivation at will. A major way to kill an interview is to have low energy. If you are not excited and enthusiastic, it looks like you don't really want the job. Many prospective employers will choose the less-qualified but more-enthusiastic candidate over a great candidate who appears disinterested. Remember the suggestions earlier in the chapter for motivational

routines to follow prior to a job interview. There are several steps you can take the night before the interview:

- Do something relaxing that keeps you positive.
- Create a summary sheet of key research points you intend to share.
- Review your questions for the interviewer so that you ensure a two-way dialogue.
- Practice your interview responses for the top questions you are expecting.

The morning of the interview, certain actions can help ensure your interview is successful:

- Skim the current event headlines so you can engage in a timely discussion.
- Have your favorite breakfast.
- Pick a specific accessory or other item for your interview outfit that makes you feel good and is a visual cue that this is a special day.

On the way to the interview, continue to maintain your motivation:

- Listen to your favorite, upbeat song (remember to take the earphones out of your ears while you are waiting so you appear approachable).
- If you are inspired by quotes, have your favorites on an index card to read, even right before you check in at reception.
- If you are visually oriented, have a picture with you that instantly relaxes you.

Three Possibilities That Might Keep You from Closing the Offer

You might not be closing the offer for the following reasons:

1. You encounter job search fatigue.
2. You do not follow up enough and employers forget about you.
3. You aim for the job, instead of the offer.

Beware of Job Search Fatigue

Here's that motivation issue again: you need to ensure that you are at peak performance throughout all of your interviews. You can't just start out strong and assume that the positive feedback will carry through. What's tricky about the later stages of interviewing is that job seekers experience a roller coaster of feelings. They are elated at being called back, but many interview processes last for multiple rounds. After a while, it's physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausting, and a job seeker gets tired, which looks like

disinterest, which kills the later interviews. Refer to the refreshment activities suggested earlier to maintain your long-term motivation, including these activities:

- Museum visit
- Movie, show, or sporting event
- Hike or other physical activity
- Volunteer opportunity
- Job search buddy

Don't Let Employers Forget about You

There are a lot of time gaps in the hiring process—the time between when candidates apply and when interviews are scheduled; the time between when interviews are scheduled to when they actually happen; and the time between when various candidates get through their interviews and decisions can be made. During these gaps, the employers are seeing other candidates. You think you are just waiting patiently, but don't stay out of sight for too long:

- Keep in touch with your contacts at the prospective company.
- Don't just ask about the status of the search—that puts too much pressure on the company.
- Check in with interesting news you have heard about the market. The networking chapter includes tips on how to follow up in an engaging but nondemanding way.

Focus on Getting the Offer, Not the Job

In the six steps to job search success, the last step is to close the *offer*, not get the job. We focused the language specifically on the offer, as opposed to the job, because you always want an offer, but you may or may not want a job. The offer puts the ball back in your court, so you can decide what's best for you. If you only interview at companies where you are sure you want the job, you won't interview that often because it's not easy to evaluate a job without interviewing for it. Yet, you don't want to analyze the job too closely as you interview because then you seem unsure. Recruiters and employers can see the doubts you bring to interviews. Therefore, go for the offer, not the job. Be 100 percent committed to getting an offer (you can still say no, after all). Don't ever show the interviewers you are second-guessing.

Strategies to Troubleshoot Your Overall Job Search

The key to troubleshooting your search is having good data to review but also being honest with yourself about where you are. Remember that the stage where you are stuck—whether it's not getting interviews,

not moving forward, or not getting offers—is not a reflection of the quality of your candidacy. It is a reflection of your job search *technique*. You might be an amazingly qualified candidate, but have poor job search technique. Remember, you can learn good job search technique and adjust what you are doing to improve your search going *forward*.

There are very good reasons great candidates get stuck in their search. Career changers,on-rampers, or international candidates needing sponsorship are just some examples of candidates who may have trouble getting interviews. Employers prefer people who have done the job before (sorry career changers), or people currently active in the market (sorry on-rampers), or people who are easiest to bring on board (sorry internationals). All three of these candidate groups may have exceptional candidates, but they are coming with preexisting red flags that need to be overcome. Therefore, don't see an ineffective job search as a poor reflection on you. Just acknowledge that something isn't working, try to identify it, and fix it. Build in time for regular troubleshooting, at least every thirty days. Schedule time for job search review in your calendar at these regular intervals, so that you automatically save the time when it arises, and you don't have to rely on your memory or discipline. Regular review ensures you identify and can stop problems early.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- At the candidate identification stage, you may not be getting enough interviews because of a mismatch between your targeting and positioning, an incomplete marketing campaign, or passive outreach.
- At the interviewing stage, you may not be moving forward because you lack key message points that highlight your value, you give answers without examples, or you are not at your best.
- At the closing stage, you may not be getting offers because you have job search fatigue that appears to be lack of interest, you don't follow up and employers forget you while they interview others, or you show hesitation about the job or self-doubt.
- You should be troubleshooting your job search at regular intervals by tracking your results data and by being honest with yourself.

EXERCISES

1. Review the possible problems at each stage and look at your own search activity. Are you guilty of any of these shortfalls?

2. If you have identified possible problems, do you know how to fix them?
3. If you haven't started your search, which stage do you think will be toughest for you? Most job seekers, especially for first jobs, have the most trouble with the identification stage because early in a career there is not a lot of experience to differentiate yourself in your marketing.
4. Where could you use help with your search?

9.7 Chapter Review and Exercises

Stay motivated and organized and troubleshoot your search:

- Keep your energy high and your focus strong.
- Maintain data in a structured and meaningful way.
- Identify and fix problems along the way.

Step 5 is the most proactive of the six steps to job search success because these activities can so easily be overlooked. Yet, for the job seeker who takes the time to master each of these activities, he or she will have a more efficient and productive search.

Chapter Takeaways

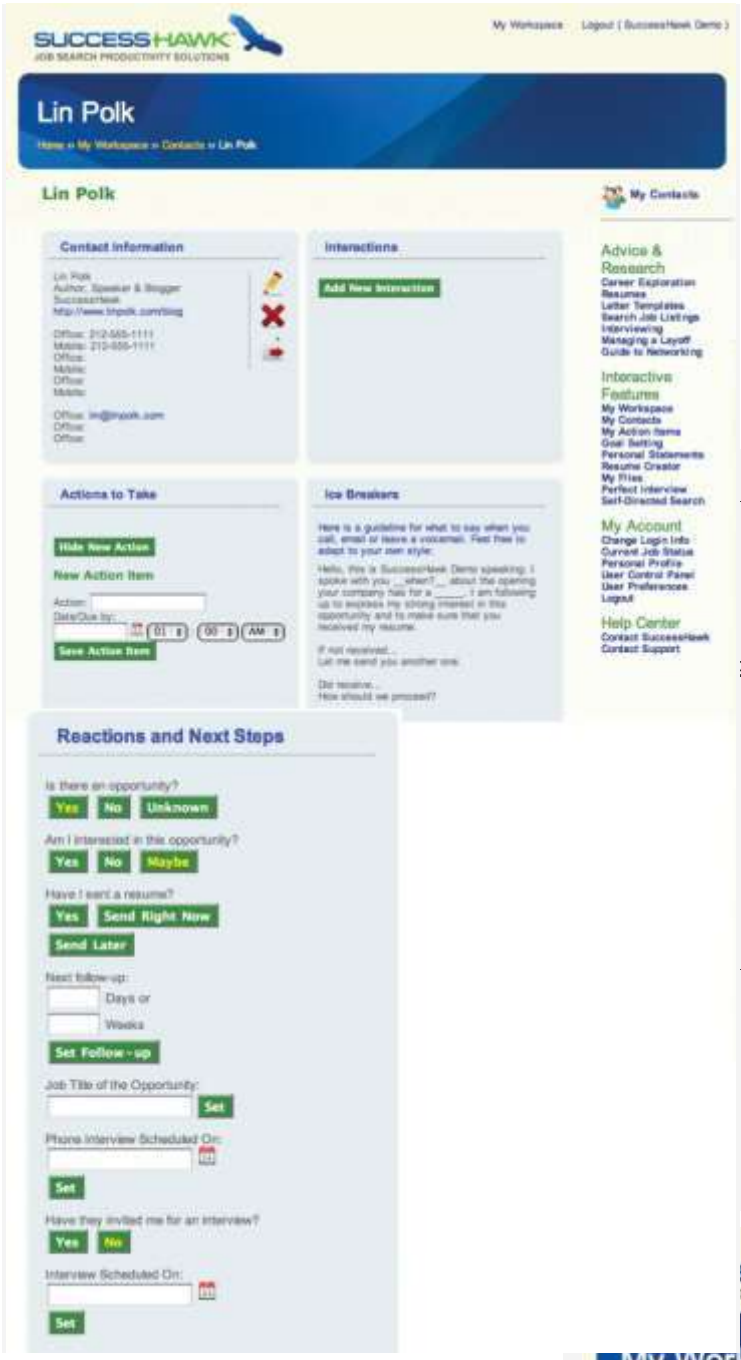
- There are two types of motivation, long-term and short-term; each plays a critical role in your job search.
- Long-term job search motivation is akin to a multiweek research project, while short-term motivation is more like weekly class exams.
- There are specific events during your job search when you need to get motivated at will, including job interviews, networking meetings, career fairs, professional mixers, and offer negotiations.
- Creating a deliberate routine and set of actions can enable you to get motivated for these high-stakes events.
- Deliberate work scheduling and taking longer breaks will help you stay motivated for the duration of your search.
- Activities during your longer breaks are not just about refreshment but also about contributing to the enthusiasm you bring to your job search.
- You need two lists of contacts: an overall list and a job search–specific list.
- You need to track all of your contacts because you need one go-to place for your network.
- You need a job search–specific list because there is additional information to track regarding the contacts for your job search.
- For your job search contacts, you want to know the activity, dates, and follow-up actions related to your contacts.
- You need to select a system to get and stay organized.
- There are three main choices for organizational systems: paper-based, electronic customized, and electronic off-the-shelf.

- Each choice of system has its pros and cons.
- You want to select a system that matches the way you naturally work.
- The hiring process includes candidate identification, interviewing, and hiring. At any of these stages, there can be problems for the job seeker.
- You should measure the results of your networking and interviewing on a regular basis to see how you are doing at the identification, interviewing, and hiring stages.
- At the candidate identification stage, you may not be getting enough interviews because of a mismatch between your targeting and positioning, an incomplete marketing campaign, or passive outreach.
- At the interviewing stage, you may not be moving forward because you lack key message points that highlight your value, you give answers without examples, or you are not at your best.
- At the closing stage, you may not be getting offers because you have job search fatigue that appears to be lack of interest, you don't follow up and employers forget you while they interview others, or you show hesitation about the job or self-doubt.
- You should be troubleshooting your job search at regular intervals by tracking your results data and by being honest with yourself.

Chapter Review

1. Why is motivation important to the job search?
2. Why is organization important to the job search?
3. Why is troubleshooting important to the job search?
4. Why is after the network and interview phase has begun a good time to look at motivation, organization, and troubleshooting?
5. What are some ways to stay motivated during your job search?
6. What are some tools to stay organized during your job search?
7. Where are the three stages in a job search where a search may get stuck?
8. Why is it a good idea to set a calendar reminder for every thirty days to troubleshoot your job search?

SuccessHawk: The Scheduler



The Scheduler is the key tool for keeping your job search organized and on track. It notifies you of actions you need to take with your contacts to keep your job search moving forward. The Scheduler is activated in two ways:

1. Go to a Contact's page and scroll down to "Actions to Take." Click on "Actions to Take" and complete the form.
2. Go to a Contact's pages and scroll down to "Reactions and Next Steps," answer the questions, and click "Set Follow Up." Completing this procedure triggers the following:
3. SuccessHawk will automatically populate "Actions for this Week" on My Workspace. Note that you can export Actions for this Week to Microsoft Outlook, Apple iCal, and other applications that support calendar (.ics) files.

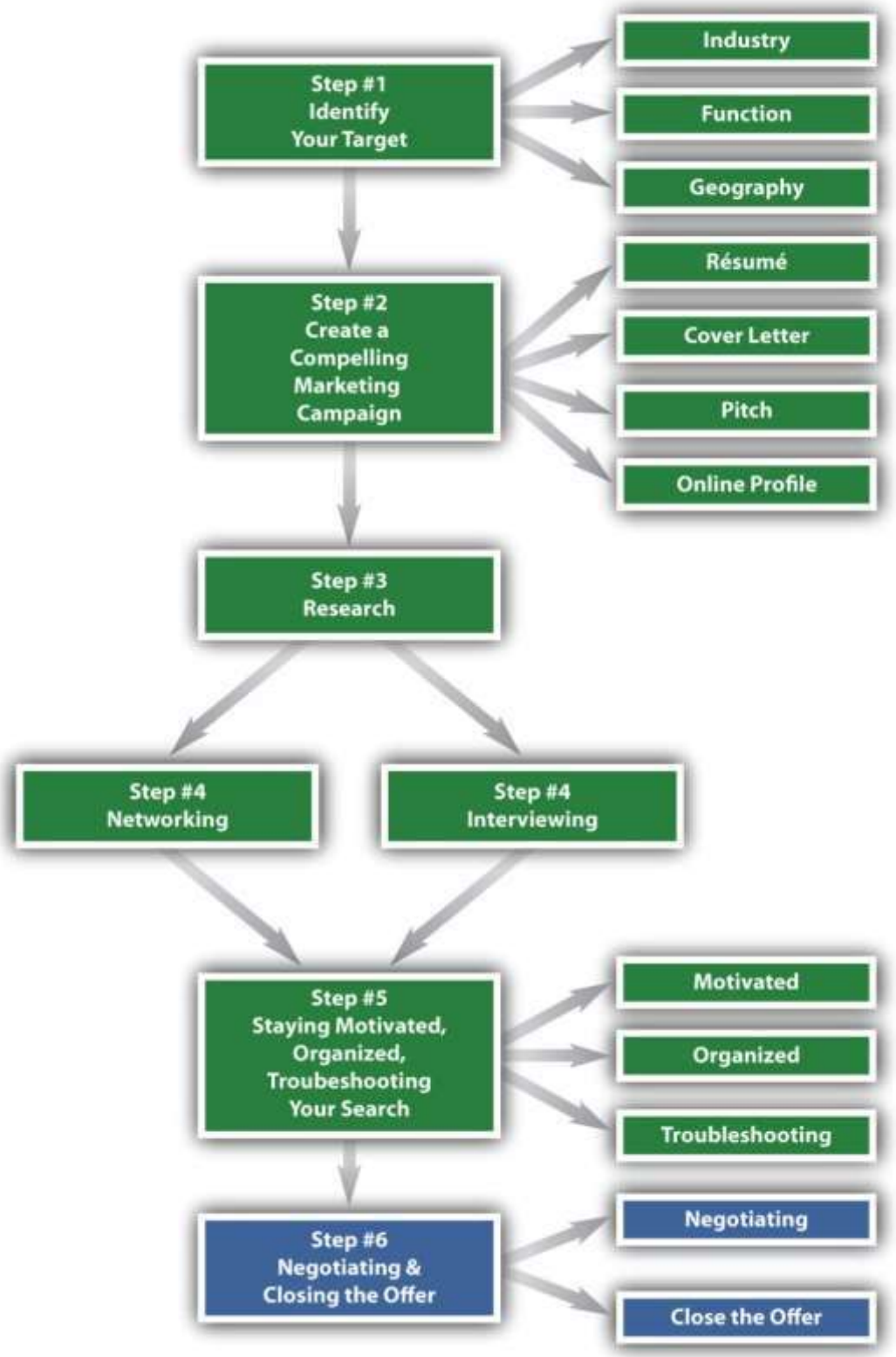
SuccessHawk will also e-mail you reminders about who to contact and when. You can choose how often you want to receive e-mail

Saylor URL: http://www.saylor.org/books

reminders by clicking on “User Preferences” in the right-hand menu bar under My Account.

Chapter 10: Step 6: Negotiate and Close Your Offer

Figure 10.1 The Six-Step Job Search Process: Step 6



Overview

A Quick Review of the Six Steps By now, you have read about and studied five of the six steps in a job search and you

are ready to learn about the final step: Step 6, Negotiating and Closing the Offer! This last step should be fully supported by all five that came before it:

- *Step 1*: You've identified your target, so this offer will be in the industry, the function, and the geography you are seeking. You also are working a list of ten targets, so you have a high level of activity with multiple companies.
- *Step 2*: You've created a marketing campaign that has helped you sell your candidacy to your hiring manager. In completing step 2, you've also completed some assessments about your strengths and accomplishments that make your current target a position that is well matched to your skills and abilities.
- *Step 3*: You've conducted both the primary and secondary research necessary to know what the job entails, what direction the company is headed, and what the salary guidelines are for the position.
- *Step 4*: You've networked with a variety of individuals, so you know about the job requirements and the company specifics. You've interviewed with a number of people at the company, so you are familiar with the culture, the requirements of the job, and the expectations down the road.
- *Step 5*: You've stayed motivated and organized throughout the job search, troubleshooting along the way to ensure you didn't make the same mistakes twice and that you had everything you needed to make a strong first impression and strong subsequent impressions.

Now you enter *step 6* with quite a lot of knowledge, research, and forethought that will springboard you into the negotiation phase and allow you to successfully close the offer.

What is negotiation? It's a dialogue between two or more individuals to reach a point of understanding that pleases both parties. Negotiation requires skills just like any other step in the job search, and this chapter will give you strategies to strengthen those skills.

Many people feel quite a bit of anxiety at the thought of negotiating, and that shouldn't be the case. We negotiate for things all the time: where to have lunch or dinner, what movie to see, what channel to watch. It's true that negotiating for a better offer is more important than where to have dinner, but some of the same tactics and strategies apply. We'll discuss them in great detail.

We negotiate with a host of individuals, including both family and friends and business managers and colleagues. With our family and friends, we negotiate where and when to go on vacation and what movie we should see. With our business colleagues, we negotiate work schedules, promotions, job

responsibilities, and of course, salary increases and bonuses. We negotiate with our managers, our colleagues, our vendors, our clients, our consultants, and our peers at other firms.

Your ability to negotiate effectively impacts your relationships and your career. Relationships, team roles, project support, and resources, in addition to project deadlines, must be discussed and agreed on by many parties.

A note about the negotiation skills of women versus men: women and men may have the same amount of education; however, there has been a workplace trend in which women get paid less than men. According to ABC.com, on average, women earn just 77 cents for every dollar a man gets. [1] One explanation for this wage discrepancy is that women don't negotiate as often as men do, and if you don't negotiate, you don't receive any increase. Another explanation is that men may enjoy the negotiation process, and see it as a competitive sport, whereas women tend to avoid it at all costs. The following link should be viewed by both men and women, as it shares negotiation strategies that can be used by both; however, this piece focuses on how women especially need to negotiate:http://www.sixfigurestart.com/career-coaching. Whether you are a man or a woman, the strategies outlined in this chapter will help you negotiate successfully!

What Can Be Negotiated? Most people think negotiation refers only to compensation. While compensation is certainly one of the main things you may want to consider negotiating, there are many other things to consider:

- Base salary
- Bonus potential
- More time to consider the offer
- Start date (either sooner or later)
- Vacation
- Technology (Blackberry, business phone)
- Company car or commutation expenses
- Reporting relationships and potential managerial duties
- Health benefits
- Insurance
- Job title and job responsibilities

- Work location flexibility
- Work and life balance

This list is lengthy, but far from exhaustive. It's important to identify the one or two items that mean the most to you, and select those as negotiation targets. It's also important to note that some offers will be far better than you anticipated, and you will want to accept right away. As long as you conduct your research, and know with a good amount of certainty that the offer is exactly what it should be, go ahead and accept. However, it's strongly recommended that you wait at least one day before doing so (it's always a good idea to run the offer by someone who is experienced in what represents a good offer and what does not). Others will choose to negotiate for one or two components of the offer they wish were better. Either way, ensure that your research clarifies whether or not your offer is within the proper compensation range.

How Do You Close the Offer? The second part of step 6 is Close the Offer, which means that once you are a final candidate among a final slate of candidates, you must distinguish yourself above all the others to receive and then close the offer. Learning the strategies in this chapter will help you to distinguish yourself and get that offer.

Step 6 is the last step in the job search, and the most important of all. Without step 6, there would be no offer, and no job. Each section of this chapter will strengthen the skills necessary to negotiate and close the offer. These strategies are followed by a question-and-answer section at the end of this chapter that should highlight options you can consider when you do get your offer. Let's begin!

[1] Tory Johnson, "Men vs. Women at the Bargaining Table," *Good Morning America*, September 26, 2007, accessed June 3, 2011, http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/PersonalBest/story?id=3651753&page=1.

10.1 Effective Negotiation Requires Work Before, During, and After

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Know what to do before, during, and after a negotiation, as it will help to ensure success.
2. Understand how research will help to ensure that you know what the other party in the negotiation is expecting.
3. Learn active listening techniques that make for a productive negotiation.
4. Understand that it is important to remain professional at all times, as it's crucial for negotiation and for your continued career success.

Before

Before negotiating, research the position or the person you are negotiating with. This should let you know what he or she expects the right compensation to be. You should also know the compensation you expect. Once those two things are known to you, build a bridge so both parties connect, and try to meet at the right point.

For example, your research for a teaching position should disclose the starting salary and the requirements for that starting salary. You may have gotten this information from speaking to career services, from prior graduates entering that field, and/or via research on the web. You can discuss the salary you want using the data you've uncovered during your research. If starting salaries for teachers in New York are between $40,000 and $45,000, you can try asking for a salary of $45,000.

During

Listening is key during the actual negotiation, so use active listening techniques that include taking notes and nodding your head. Understand that adjusting to the situation and being open-minded are important versus a "one size fits all" model. Put yourself in the shoes of the person doing the hiring so you can clearly understand how he or she benefits from this negotiation. In addition, be on the lookout for unexpected opportunities that may present themselves, and be open to these. It's a must to always be professional. Proactively seek to clarify and simplify, and always support your experience with specific examples. Making a situation a "win-win" is a great goal to shoot for.

For example, if the high end of the teacher's salary range pertains to teachers with two to three years of student teaching experience and you do not have any, it is understandable that $40,000 may be the right

compensation for your starting salary. Perhaps a position in this city has a starting salary of $40,000, but another nearby city might have a starting salary of $45,000. If you are open to this different location, this could benefit you quite a bit! Even if things are not working out and it's clear that you cannot come to a mutually beneficial point, always remain professional and thank the person for his or her time. If you make a good impression and a position becomes available the following week or month, perhaps you will be called back. The benefits to being courteous and professional are huge.

After

After a negotiation, it is very helpful to clarify things in writing and confirm a new timetable as soon as possible. Assess what took place during the negotiation so you can learn from your experience and strengthen your negotiation skills for the next time.

For example, perhaps nothing worked out at this particular time. Keep in touch with this person, as positions may open up the next month, the next quarter, or perhaps even the next year. Perhaps you accepted the lower starting salary of $40,000. Send the interviewer a thank you and let him or her know you are excited. That positive, professional impression will go a long way toward future negotiations and perhaps promotions.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Using the strategy of preparing what to do before, during, and after a negotiation will increase your chances of it going well.
- Being professional at all times will further increase your chances of succeeding during a negotiation.

EXERCISES

1. Pair up with a classroom buddy and brainstorm about what you need to do before a negotiation. How would you research the starting salary for the position you are most interested in?
2. Practice active listening techniques during the negotiation.
3. Remain professional during a negotiation role play, no matter how unprofessional the other party is.
4. How would you follow up if the negotiation yielded a job? How would you follow up if the negotiation did not yield a job?

10.2 How to Be More Comfortable When Negotiating for a Position

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn how to remove the emotional element to negotiating in order to master this skill.
2. Understand that the more offers you have, the easier it will be to negotiate for a salary increase or any other component of the offer you would like to increase.

Many individuals are highly uncomfortable when the subject of salary or compensation arises. Why? Because money evokes emotion in a lot of people and whenever emotion is involved, rational thought tends to wane.

Money, to a large extent, dictates your style of living. If you are reading this book as a college student, the starting salary you receive may determine whether you will have to move back home with your parent(s), if that is even an option, or if you will have an apartment with one or more roommates. People get emotional about lifestyle issues.

To decrease the stress related to your living expenses (whether you move back home or have a place of your own), know your expenses, including rent, utilities, food, transportation, clothes, gifts, credit card debt, student loans, and so forth. If you've done your research, will the position for which you are aiming cover these expenses? Is there a match? Is there a huge disconnect? It's best to review your expenses and think about them sooner rather than later.

We need to make rational decisions, so we need to remove the emotional component from the negotiation process, and it's very possible to do so. If you have followed each of the steps in the job search process, you should have more confidence in the process. You should have a plethora of job search activity, no matter what the state of the economy, that should result in multiple offers. Knowing that you will have multiple offers should calm you, even if you are the most nervous or emotional individual.

Practice is a theme that has been present in every chapter of this book, and negotiation is no different. Meet with career services to practice negotiating until you feel very comfortable. After role-playing three or four or five times, your emotion should be kept in check and shouldn't interfere with the conversation. You may also practice with a friend, but try to get as much advice from a professional as you can.

Remember to conduct in-depth research to ensure you have a clear idea of what the salary levels should be. There should be no surprises at this stage if you've conducted the proper research, which includes speaking to career services, speaking to your network of peers, and conducting various salary surveys. A good source of starting salaries can be researched on the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) website. NACE also has a Salary Calculator tool that enables you to enter the state in which you reside, the region, and the appropriate occupational

categories (ranging from business to life, physical, and social sciences, to the arts, health care, sales, forestry, construction, installation and repair occupations, to transportation and material-moving occupations).

Another tool you may decide to use is GetRaised (http://www.getraised.com), which helps determine if you are being paid the right amount relative to the job you are doing. For college students seeking entry-level jobs, you can still use this tool by entering "one year" in the number of years you've been working in this particular job, and then enter all the other information asked (where you work, the title of the job for which you are applying, and so forth). This tool will give you the competitive salary for this position. Of course, you will have zero experience, versus one year, but at least it gives you an idea of the salary range you should be seeking. It's a very useful tool for experienced job seekers, especially because it will give you the script you can use to negotiate for higher compensation. GetRaised is just one tool of many, so research various tools available to you.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The more activity you have in your job search, the better your negotiating ability.
- Posture is everything in negotiation. If you have an offer from a company and you are negotiating with another, that sense of nervousness and desperation is minimized or obliterated!
- Research is key! Know the starting salaries for the various jobs you are targeting.

EXERCISES

1. Pair up with a classroom buddy and create a hypothetical job and offer. Then take turns negotiating from a salary of $45,000 to $50,000. State why you think $50,000 is the most appropriate level of offer.
2. Switch with your same classroom buddy and negotiate once more with the answer to your salary request being no. Position yourself to ask for one other component in the offer.
3. If at all possible, women should pair up with men and men should pair up with women.

10.3 Items Open to Negotiation: Cash and Noncash Components

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1. Understand that there are many cash and noncash components, besides financial compensation, that can be negotiated when offers are presented.

It's important to review the various components of an offer before accepting. When identifying what to negotiate, several individuals may think only to negotiate base salary, or total compensation.

Cash and noncash components can be negotiated, and each has a host of considerations:

Cash Components

- **Base salary**. You get paid your base salary on a regular basis, which will be weekly, twice a month, or monthly. Consider what the future salary potential could be and understand the timing. For example, most companies review performance and salary increases once per year, while others may review this twice per year.
- **Bonus**. Several bonus options could be available, depending on the company and opportunity. If you are not eligible for a bonus, ask if it would be possible to receive one in the future, if your performance goes above and beyond what is expected. Ensure you know the timing of each bonus that could be available to you.
  - **Sign-on bonus**. Larger companies may pay sign-on bonuses, which were originally given out to reimburse students for moving expenses when they lived a certain distance away from their new work address. Corporations decided to streamline the process, and relabeled this a sign-on bonus, giving it to all candidates.
  - **Quarterly or year-end bonus**. Some companies allot for a quarterly bonus and a year-end bonus, both of which are paid based on individual performance and, of course, company performance (which could result in huge percentage swings either way). It's important to understand how these bonuses are calculated and exactly what you are eligible for in advance.

- **Commission**. Salespeople have a great opportunity to make commission, which is a percentage of the sales they make. This is a great opportunity, but you should also exercise caution. Understand the commission structure clearly. What happens if you do not sell anything for the first two or three months? Do you receive a base salary, or is it full commission? Is commission paid on gross sales or net profit? Do you get a draw that you will then have to pay back?

  Explore all of these details so you are clear on the entire structure.

Noncash Components

- **Company stock**. Sometimes, companies pay only the more senior individuals company stock or company equity. If company stock is made available to you, know the guidelines.
  - **Stock options**. Companies grant stock options and an individual can then decide to sell them at a specific price. The profit represents the current value, minus the option price.
  - **Stock grants**. Companies sometimes grant stock to an individual outright, usually with a vesting schedule to incentivize retention. If you receive a stock grant, you have the opportunity to own the entire stock.
- **Retirement accounts**. 401K and 403b accounts allow you to save, and accumulate, a percentage of your salary (before tax) that you can withdraw at retirement age. Some employers match these funds either dollar for dollar or perhaps fifty cents on the dollar. There may be stipulations that will allow you to withdraw these funds before retirement, but withdrawals usually come with a sizable penalty. In some instances, you can take a loan from the amount you've accumulated in these accounts. Ensure you understand the many details associated with each of these retirement vehicles.
- **Benefits**. Companies offer various benefits, and it's important to review these carefully when considering an offer. Some plans allow you to take your benefits elsewhere (this is portability, and there is a fee, but it does provide flexibility). Often, these plans can be a bit confusing; many companies offer hotlines to call for further explanation. Benefits offerings can include the following:
  - **Health-care benefits**. These can be extensive, including elder care, child care, and adoption benefits.

- **Dental benefits**. Some dental benefits cover 100 percent of the cost, while others cover only a certain percentage. Know what this is in advance.
- **Insurance**. Some benefits offer travel insurance, should something happen to you while traveling on business.
- **Disability**. This varies greatly per the opportunity. Some allow you to opt in for greater disability insurance. Knowing the options is very helpful.
- **Education**. Some companies will contribute a certain percentage to your future education. For example, if you wish to obtain a graduate degree, they may pay 50 percent toward that, or there could be a sliding scale based on your grade. Some companies may even provide on-site advanced degree programs with special partnerships at certain schools.

- **Start date**. Some companies will be flexible and others will not (especially if training programs or orientations are planned).
- **Employee perks**. These could include discounted movie tickets, free admission to cultural venues, and discounted cell phone plans, representing an opportunity to save money you would otherwise spend.
- **Paid versus unpaid leave**. This includes both vacation and holiday pay and sick time and personal days.
- **Lifestyle and flexibility**. This could include the opportunity to telecommute, or to work a four-day schedule. Companies sometimes have broad policies and sometimes customize for employees.
- **Outplacement services and severance pay**. This tool can be very useful should things not work out with the company in the long run. The bigger the company, the more likely you are to obtain outplacement and severance pay. This is especially useful for downsizings in bad economies, or when mergers and acquisitions are made.

  There are many reasons noncash items can prove to be important and sometimes critical in the acceptance of a job offer. Perhaps you have a medical condition that requires specialized treatment or medication, so medical benefits are extremely important. Perhaps you have a vacation booked in advance and you wish to push the start date off a bit to enjoy this long-planned trip with family and friends. Perhaps a lower base salary makes sense when combined with bonus potential, stock options, or grants. A higher base salary may make more sense because it's a given, whereas bonuses and stocks are influenced

heavily by economic downturns. These are important reasons to *consider all* elements of a job offer before accepting.

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Knowing both the cash and noncash components of an offer can be extremely helpful when considering what you want to negotiate for, and especially so when the request for a base salary increase is refused.

EXERCISES

1. Select the two or three most important items from the preceding noncash list. Decide how you would negotiate for more in these areas.
2. Pair up with a classmate and role-play with you as the candidate, and then you as the hiring manager.

10.4 Why You Should Always Consider Negotiating

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

1. Understand that recruiters and hiring managers at larger firms have about twenty individual steps in the job search process before they find the right candidate, which gives the final candidate leverage to negotiate.

Many individuals shudder to think of negotiating, in any type of economy, never mind a down economy. That should not be the case, especially when you consider all the work the company has to do before they identify you, the perfect person to receive the job offer.

All the steps a larger company may take to fill an opening are included in the following list. Smaller companies may require fewer steps, but the detail listed here demonstrates the great amount of time and effort needed to find the right person to extend an offer. Once that person is identified, employers do not want to start the process over again, so there is some room for negotiation.

Steps include:

1. The available position needs to be identified as either a "replacement" (someone has left and they need to be replaced) or an "add to staff" (an incremental position is needed). Therefore, the position will either be backfilled or a new position will be created.
2. The hiring manager must secure budget for this position. Just because someone left this position (i.e., they got promoted, they left the company, or they were fired) does not make it a given that the position will be filled. Many times, managers have to make the case for hiring a replacement. The tighter the budget, the less likely it will be filled.
3. The job description needs to be written (either by the hiring manager or human resources [HR]).
4. HR must be given the open requisition to fill (along with the forty or fifty other job requisitions they are currently filling).
5. HR will decide where the position will be listed. It's typically always listed on the company website, but it will need to be listed on specialty job board sites in addition to the larger sites for the specific industry.
6. Candidates will submit résumés that need to be reviewed.
7. Top résumés will be compiled.
8. Top résumés will be shared with the hiring manager, and a top slate will be selected.
9. Candidates will be contacted for an interview (either by phone or in person).

10. Interview schedules will be created.
11. Candidates will be interviewed by HR and the hiring manager.
12. Top candidates will be selected for the second round.
13. Second and final rounds will take place.
14. The hiring manager and HR select the person to receive the offer.
15. An offer will be made.
16. The candidate will receive the offer verbally.
17. If accepted, the offer letter will be put in written form and mailed to the candidate.
18. The offer letter has to be signed by the candidate and returned to the hiring manager.

The preceding exercise demonstrates that once a company extends an offer to you, they*want* you to accept. If you would like a bit more in your salary, most companies will consider complying to ensure you accept, but some will not. If you would like a bit more in terms of year-end bonus percentage targets, they may easily decide to comply, but then again, they may not. If you are interested in a later start date, they may be open to that, and of course, some may not be.

It's important to also remember that nothing is a given. In strong hiring markets, your chances are stronger to negotiate. But even in down markets, you still have leverage.

Also note that your base salary is a very important starting point at a company. Accepting an offer with a compensation level that is far below market value can be a tricky move as well, even if you are very anxious to get any experience you can. Your next employer may be very curious as to why your compensation level is so low, and it could add a red flag to your candidacy. Whenever in doubt, speak to a professional—perhaps someone in career services or a colleague in the field. For most opportunities, salary increases come just once a year and are sometimes skipped in down economies, so you could be "stuck" at a very low compensation range for a longer time than you would like. Getting a higher base when you begin can make a significant difference for many years to come. With that said, research is always a key point in the negotiation phase. Ensure you know the best starting point, and your negotiation will be more successful. Also note that if you are hired into a large company, with a formalized entry-level program, all hires receive the same exact compensation package, and there is no room for negotiation. You can still ask, but the answer may be no.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Hiring managers and recruiters have a lot of work to do before selecting a final candidate. Once all that work is done, they do not want to backtrack to find another candidate. This gives you negotiating power.
- Smaller firms will have fewer steps, but a significant amount of work is still necessary to find the best talent in the marketplace.
- If you decide to negotiate, select the one or two most important points and go for it. Expect a yes, a no, or something in between. Negotiation is far from an exact science.

EXERCISES

1. Conduct some research on acceptance and decline rates in the industry in which you are most interested.
2. Search your network to find someone in HR and get their opinion of the hiring process.

10.5 How to Get to a Decision and How to Juggle and Time Multiple Searches

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn how to be a successful job search candidate by conducting multiple searches simultaneously. This has to happen given that you begin with ten legitimate targets.
2. Use your strong and clear communication skills to keep recruiters informed of deadlines of any kind that can impede the offer process.
3. Stay organized in order to juggle all aspects of your job search.

Step 1 of the job search emphasized that an individual should shoot for at least ten targets during a job search. Your goal is to receive as many offers as possible. Offers equal negotiation power. If you plan your job search strategy properly, many of your targets will move toward step 6.

As you move toward an offer with one company, it's important to communicate with the others as to when you expect to receive an offer. To be fair, give each company the needed lead time to prepare an offer.

Case in Point

Peter interviews with Company A, which is his number one company. If he receives an offer, he will readily accept. Company A has interviewed Peter twice, and he is a finalist. They are not ready to extend offers until next month, but they ask that Peter let them know if he receives an offer from another company.

Peter has interviewed with Company B and he is put on hold.

Peter then interviews with Company C just hoping to get an offer, so he can leverage that with Company A. Things go very well and he is more interested than he thought. If given an offer, he would seriously consider accepting. Company C lets Peter know he will receive a call regarding his candidacy on Friday and that they feel very positive about what he has to offer. They do not, however, tell him that he will definitely receive an offer.

Peter has interviews with Company D, E, and F in the next ten days.

Peter calls Company A and sends the following e-mail:

E-mail to: Andrea
Subject line: Time sensitive communication

Dear Andrea,

I hope this finds you well. I wanted to drop you a note to let you know that I am still extremely interested in your opportunity as per our conversation two weeks ago.
As I have been continuing my interview activity, I have been told by a company that in all likelihood I am to expect an offer this Friday.

Your company remains my number one choice for a career after college, as I feel my strengths are in perfect alignment with your mission and goals. If given an offer, I would readily accept and be very enthusiastic about my future career with you.

You requested that I let you know if I was close to getting another offer and that will most likely be the case.

I remain hopeful that there is a career opportunity at (name the company). Please let me know your thoughts, hopefully by this Friday, as I may have to respond to a potential offer by early next week.

Best regards,
Peter
917.555.5555

. This e-mail communicates six very important things:

1. It addresses the urgency of the situation. The subject line highlights and notifies the company representative that the information is time sensitive, and in the last paragraph Peter states that he hopes to hear from them by Friday, or at the latest, by early next week.
2. Peter reiterates his interest in the position—in the first paragraph, in the third paragraph, and again in the final paragraph. It's helpful to let this company know that they are his number one choice.
3. Peter lets the company representative know his interview activity is continuing, which also is helpful because the best candidates have a lot of interview activity. Recruiters know this, as do hiring managers.
4. Peter follows the recruiter's instruction and lets Company A know he may have another offer.
5. Peter is, at all times, professional and respectful.
6. Peter also has posture at this point. He is likely to receive an offer from Company C, and is giving Company A enough time to get their offer ready.

Another Case in Point

Donna wants to teach in an elementary school and has been networking and meeting several principals. Two of them have interviewed her and have expressed interest in her teaching at their school.
Donna really wants to work at P.S. 55 and has received an offer as a teaching assistant. Luckily, Donna was also offered a position at P.S. 22 for a full-time teaching position, but she would much rather work at P.S. 55. She can negotiate with the principal at P.S. 55 in the following way:

- Thank the principal at P.S. 55 for the offer. Even though it's a teaching assistant versus teaching position, she should let her know she is flattered to receive the offer.
- Let the principal know that while she's been looking for the past three to four months, another principal has offered her a full-time teaching position. She also appreciates receiving that offer; however, her number one choice is P.S. 55 because she spent time student teaching at the school, and because she has formed solid relationships with several of the teachers in addition to the principal.
- Is there any way she could have a full-time teaching position?
- If that isn't possible, and she accepts the teaching assistant position, would it possibly turn into a teaching position, and, if so, how long would that take?
- If the principal cannot guarantee the better position, Donna should take the job at P.S. 22. Although the school is somewhat unfamiliar to her, she should trust that she can succeed there and advance in a stellar way.

Stay Organized

When you have multiple searches occurring at the same time, stay organized by having a playbook of sorts, as illustrated in Table 10.1 "Job Search Plan".

Table 10.1 Job Search Plan

	Company Name	Name of Contact	E-mail and Phone	Position of Interest	How You Found Out about the Position	Actions Taken	Deadlines	Next Steps
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								

	Company Name	Name of Contact	E-mail and Phone	Position of Interest	How You Found Out about the Position	Actions Taken	Deadlines	Next Steps
8								
9								
10								

This single page in your playbook will keep all high-level information and each subsequent page can keep more detailed information. Reviewing this playbook on a regular basis ensures that you stay proactive on every job search target. It also reminds you that you should have ten targets at any given time, because some job targets are bound to go cold.

Use Strong Communication

The best candidates communicate consistently with recruiters, hiring managers, and networking contacts. If you've met three or four helpful networking contacts, and for some reason you did not make it to the final round, communicate with them as well, thanking them for the information they shared with you, even though your candidacy will not continue. Ask them if it's OK that you continue to keep in touch, and wish them well with their careers. Individuals do shift positions and companies, and the world can be an amazingly small place. It's quite possible that you will meet that person at another time, company, school, or organization, so include them in your LinkedIn contacts.

Poor communication can lead to poor decisions. If Donna didn't explore full-time teaching opportunities at P.S. 55, she could have missed a full-time teaching position that opened up the next month. If Peter never sent the e-mail to Company A, and Company C gave Peter an offer with three days to accept, Company A may not have had the time to put together an offer by the deadline date set by Company C. Peter would have either gone with Company C (his second choice), or reneged on his acceptance to Company C by accepting the offer that finally came from Company A. Reneging is viewed negatively by some recruiters and by career services, so proceed with caution. At times, an employer will contact a student's career services office to let them know that their offer was reneged on. Some career services offices deal harshly with students who breach such promises, so proceed with caution. Records of how

many students renege on their offers aren't kept, but one thing is certain: it's never looked upon lightly. Communication with career services can help to avoid this at all costs.

One last point: never misrepresent an offer from a company to a representative at another company. The truth does have a way of making itself known.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Whenever you have deadlines for offers, you must notify recruiters and hiring managers of these deadlines, giving them ample time to extend an offer themselves, or to let you know that they will not be able to do so. Either way, you achieve more clarity with more communication.
- Reneging is to be avoided at all costs. Through clear communication with the hiring manager, and with career services, this should and can be avoided.
- Never misrepresent anything about an offer from another company. It's a small world after all, and recruiters often network with each other.

EXERCISES

1. Create a playbook for your job search, listing ten targets in which you are most interested.
2. If you do not have a contact at a particular company of interest, network until you get a contact.

10.6 How to Negotiate without Alienating Your Prospective Employer

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the strategies that work well with recruiters and hiring managers when you do want to negotiate.
2. Conduct research, so you can back up any request and thus minimize conflict of any kind.

In the previous section, good communications skills were highlighted as a way to effectively negotiate an offer with two prospective employers. In addition to good communication skills, you can employ other strategies.

When negotiating for increased salary, it's imperative to make the business case for why your skill set deserves the pay you request. Share market data that shows how much people with this skill earn (your research from step 3 will give you this information). Show how the skill will add to the company's bottom line (your assessment of your strengths from step 2 and your interview skills from step 4 will enable you to do this). If you lack years of experience, focus on what you can do from here on and keep the discussion centered on the skill as opposed to experience to maximize your negotiations.

Case in Point

Kevin is a master's level chemical engineering major. He received the offer he wanted: to work on a government base, focused on a fascinating project for which he was perfectly suited. He received an offer for $53,000.

Kevin was disappointed and thought he should have received $65,000. When he asked his career coach how to raise the offer to $65,000, the coach asked where he came up with the $65,000 figure. Kevin didn't have anything to substantiate the figure, other than to say he thought it was an equitable amount given his advanced degree and his 3.8 GPA.

Kevin was instructed to conduct research as to what a chemical engineer, with a master's degree would be able to get in the market. He checked with his career services office, and he was told $60,000 was the going rate. He did a Google search regarding what a chemical engineer in New York City was apt to get and $60,000 came up again. He then spoke to a peer at his college who was working for a similar company, doing a similar job, and she was paid $60,000.

Kevin was now confident that $60,000 was the number to reach. He wanted to contact his employer to discuss this, but practiced with his career coach in advance. Once he was comfortable with how to present his case, he made the call:

Kevin: Hello Mr. Duffy, it's good to talk with you again. I wanted to thank you again for the offer you gave me for this position. This is exactly the type of work I was hoping to do once I graduated and I'm very excited to begin.

Mr. Duffy: I'm glad to hear it. I'm very excited to have you join the team, and I'm hoping you are calling to accept.

Kevin: I do want to accept and I want to be excited about the position. I've done a bit of research and found that my skills, in today's market, call for a base salary of $60,000 versus the $53,000 offer I received from you. This was supported by my college's career services office, by a salary survey of chemical engineers conducted just two months ago, and by my peers at my university. Is there any way I can get the offer raised to $60,000?

Mr. Duffy: Unfortunately Kevin, my hands are tied. I have a budget that allows for $53,000 and I cannot move from that point. In six months, however, I am able to give you a performance increase, should things go well, and there is a possibility that I can raise your salary by $10,000. In addition, we offer you the opportunity to get your PhD, on premises, and at no cost to you. I hope that is of interest to you.

Kevin: It absolutely is. I have great confidence that my performance will be very strong and that I will be able to contribute quickly and significantly. I do have great interest in obtaining my PhD. I thank you for discussing this with me and I would like to formally accept the offer. Will you be sending me an offer letter?

Mr. Duffy: I'm so pleased. Yes, your offer letter will be sent out tomorrow and I look forward to receiving the signed copy back from you. I am anxious to have you join our team!

Kevin: I am as well. Thanks very much!

This phone exchange communicates five very important things:

1. Kevin is professional when communicating with Mr. Duffy. He is polite and thanks him once again for the offer, reiterating that this job is exactly what he was looking for.

2. Kevin then makes his case for a higher salary. He doesn't just state he wants a higher salary for the sake of wanting it. He gives three legitimate points for why it should be $60,000.
3. Once Mr. Duffy states that he cannot give a higher base salary offer, note that Kevin does not interrupt.
4. Mr. Duffy then states that while he can't raise the salary, he is able to give an increase six months into the job. He also adds that Kevin has the opportunity to get his PhD. Kevin may not have ever known about the potential to increase his salary six months into the job. This is a vital information point that can be very lucrative for Kevin.
5. Both parties are pleased with the outcome.

Market your skills, especially if you have unique abilities. For example, if you speak more than one language, that can be seen as a benefit to an employer, especially when dealing with customers. Think about how that differentiates you and market that skill in terms of how it benefits your future employer. Highlight how your background strengthens your candidacy. If you've had internships and part-time jobs that added to your skill set and will ensure that you contribute readily to an employer from day one, make sure you discuss that information with them. The key to impressing a potential employer is to make the case why your skills outmatch your competition by showing them why and how—even if you have to volunteer your time.

Demonstrate how your skills can benefit your employer now. If you've completed work via an internship or a previous job that has direct usefulness to your future employer, share it with them (as long as you don't share confidential data). Demonstrate that you can do the job right now, and that you have familiarity with the process. That could nudge you ahead of your competition.

Always negotiate professionally, and always be prepared to hear no. This way, you are encouraged by what you can achieve through the negotiation process. Never engage in aggressive negotiating behavior because it can backfire and cause you to lose the offer completely.

Use your references. You were advised to gather recommendations in advance of your interviewing activity. Sharing testimonials of a job well done can only support your candidacy in a very positive way.

Remember the famous phrase, "It's business, it's not personal." It can be difficult to separate business and emotions; however, highlight your accomplishments by their business impact, including costs saved, revenue generated, and profits increased. Be very clear about how your contribution leads to bottom-line impact.

Good negotiating is a valuable skill you will always use in your career, so strengthen this skill sooner rather than later!

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Solid research lays the groundwork for solid and successful negotiation.
- Practicing your negotiation with a colleague or classmate can help tremendously in the actual negotiation session.

EXERCISE

1. Role-play to negotiate for $5,000 more in base salary and a performance bonus. When role-playing the hiring manager, be especially tough in your negotiation stance.

10.7 The Six Things Needed to Close an Offer

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn that closing the offer requires focus, energy, and drive. The lack of these characteristics can prevent you from receiving the offer, even when you are a final candidate.
2. Learn about the most important characteristics to express, especially during the final rounds of a job search.

Whenever you apply for a position, you should have the six attributes described in this section at your disposal, at every stage: when you apply, when you are contacted to interview, and most of all, as you continue in the interview process. You should use these attributes most of all when you are a candidate on the final interview slate because you need to continue to distinguish yourself among other candidates. The process can be grueling, demanding, and downright difficult. If you are a student going through the on-campus or off-campus interview process, you have to balance your job search activities with exams and perhaps even finals. If you have a part-time job or even a full-time job while going to school, you have even more things to juggle. If you are searching for a job after you have graduated, or if you've been out of school for several years, there are always things in your life that command your attention. You need to master keeping these attributes "at the ready" because your life's chaos should never been seen or even sensed by your future employer.

Let's review why each of these six attributes is important and vital in the job search:

1. 1. **High Energy.** This attribute is needed to succeed in any job. Being energetic means that you have the vigor, the force, and the get-up-and-go outlook needed to accomplish small and not-so-small tasks that any job will entail. Recruiters and hiring managers will sometimes call you back for several rounds of interviews. By demonstrating high energy, you prove you can handle any job given to you, and high energy will set you apart from others.

2. **Positive attitude**. Any job or any career is packed and perhaps jam-packed with problems, issues, and challenges. If you have a positive attitude, you are much more likely to see the answer to the problem, the issue, and the challenge. Being pessimistic can have the opposite effect. Recruiters and hiring managers are very keen on identifying a positive attitude versus a negative one, so ensure you demonstrate this readily.

3. **Strong follow-up**. This is particularly important because recruiters and hiring managers are often pulled in a number of directions during the job search. Having a strong follow-up ensures that you know what every next step is at every turn in your job search. There is also a fine line between strong follow-up and pestering; ensure you do not cross that line. The best way to avoid crossing that line is to not require that a recruiter or a hiring manager answer each of your e-mails. Whatever the stage in your job search, either simply state that you are still interested, that you hope for a positive response, or that you appreciated their time.
4. **Determination to succeed**. You will absolutely need a determination to succeed because you might face pitfalls, curves, and roadblocks at every stage of the search. Viewing this process as long term can be very helpful in ultimately getting a job offer:
   - A long period of time can elapse between when you are first interviewed and when you are asked to interview a second time. This could be two weeks or two months. You will have no way of knowing. Having determination to succeed will get you through this drought.
   - The interviewer could think you are a strong candidate, but not for this particular job, and may refer you to another division either on campus or off campus. Either way, you will have to drive this process through to fruition.
   - The interviewer could turn you down because he or she went with another candidate, but later on, that candidate could renege on the job acceptance. It doesn't happen often, but it could happen. The employer may then go to his or her original interview slate and decide to offer the job to the candidate who was second in line.
5. **Savvy interactions**. During the job search process, you will have ample opportunities to interact with all types of employees at the company, and often, they will be at varying stages of seniority. You will no doubt have interactions with administrative assistants, managers, VPs, and senior VPs. No matter what the interaction, show yourself to be a person who can get along with everyone, and be respectful of everyone's position, from the security officer who screens your bags to the individuals you meet in the elevators. Be savvy and show you have the good sense and ability to leave positive impressions no matter where you go. Remember that you do not know where the strong relationships lie in a company. The security guard could be very good friends with the recruiter. Administrative assistants often hold quite a

bit of power. Always use good business etiquette in every interaction. Show that you are capable of being part of a team and getting along with all types of employees. It will serve you well.

6. **Posture**. You can do two things to ensure you have good posture. One is to stand up or sit up straight, with your shoulders back and your head held high. The other way to ensure good posture is to execute every stage of the job search as outlined in this textbook, to ensure you have enough targets that will result in at least one or two offers coming your way. This type of posture means that you will always "care" about the result, but you will not be devastated if you do not get one particular offer because you will have the confidence to know that another will absolutely come your way. It is not be a matter of "if." It is a matter of "when." When you have that confidence, and that posture, you are in full control of your job search. You've heard the phrase "it's the journey and not the destination," and so it is with your job search. Having posture means you have the ultimate confidence that the outcome will be a positive one.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Keeping upbeat and focused at the final stages of a job search are necessities. It's difficult at times because you are often juggling multiple searches, going to school full time, and working.
- Demonstrating these top six characteristics, in addition to what you've already learned, is not a guarantee that you will get an offer; however, it will dramatically increase your overall chances.

EXERCISES

1. Think back to the last time you interviewed for a job and received an offer. Did you demonstrate the characteristics listed in the preceding section?
2. Think back to the last time you interviewed and you did not receive an offer. Did you demonstrate the characteristics listed in the preceding section?
3. What can you improve on, going forward?

10.8 Q&A Focused on Negotiation and Closing the Offer

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn about real-life negotiation and closing-the-offer scenarios by reviewing questions and answers that will help you face similar issues in your job search.
2. Learn that no matter what level of your career, you will always need negotiation skills, and you will always need to drive toward a closing situation.

Often, listening to questions and answers about a topic brings it to life. The following Q&A came from real job search candidates trying to solve issues they faced in their job search. The questions are written in the present tense and will include phrases such as, "I did this" or "I'm not sure what to do here." Read on and learn about how to manage these situations should they arise in your job search five days from now or five years from now!

Question 1. I am planning to accept a job that pays below market because everything else about it is ideal. The job responsibilities are exactly what I want to do. The structure of the organization is ideal and my boss and team seem great. I also expect to move in two to three years anyway. How much impact will the lower salary have on my future negotiations?

Answer. You should be commended for considering factors other than just salary in your job decision. At the same time, salary history carries a lot of weight in future salary negotiations, so the decision to take a lower salary now will require extra work in the future:

- **Better negotiation skills**. Your past salary is a very strong anchor in the minds of prospective employers. I once conducted a search for a leading *Fortune* 500 company who finally found their ideal candidate after almost two years into the search. Their prospective hire had been grossly underpaid, so to bring him to market, the company would effectively have doubled his salary. In their minds, that suddenly seemed like a lot, so instead, they offered him slightly below market but still an enormous increase over his former salary. The candidate eventually negotiated for market value, and everything worked out, but the negotiation took much longer than it should have (and the candidate had to be a much better negotiator than he should have) because of his original salary discrepancy.

- **Better positioning**. Your past salary signals to employers your level, title, and responsibilities. Once you accept a lower salary to start, you then have to convince successive employers that you belong at the level, title, or responsibility that in their minds command a higher salary. You will need to position yourself so that future employers don't have to think, "If she's so good, why isn't she paid accordingly?"
- **Better personal financial management**. Employers aside, your decision to take a lower salary affects your personal bottom line. You will have less money to save, invest, and cushion you during economic downturns.

Question 2. Is there ever a scenario where taking the lower salary makes sense?

Answer. Of course, there is. Career planning is a highly individualized process, so exceptions abound. However, rather than encourage you to accept a lower salary, I challenge you (women especially!) to explore as many other creative solutions as possible to get what you want without having to "pay for it" in a lower salary.

Question 3. What's the best way to approach a recruiter about salary negotiation? How does someone new to the workforce approach negotiation? How does that approach change after you have a few years of experience?

Answer. Recruiters will demand to know salary before they present you to the client. They need to know that you are in the ballpark of what their client is expecting. It also is good market knowledge for them to have. So you need to know that whatever you say goes to their client.

When you are new, you might think you have no negotiating leverage. It is true that the big management training programs or analyst and associate programs at banks and consulting firms have set salaries with little negotiating. For everywhere else, and that means most other jobs, there is no standard salary. You are paid what the employer has in their budget and what they think you are worth. Look at the market value of your skills (computer, languages, analytical, coursework), your internships and part-time jobs, and your degrees. Know what benefit you will bring to your employer's bottom line and what comparable people in these same roles are making. When you are new, employers will try to pay you based on your years of full-time experience because you have relatively little. You want them to focus on skills and results.

When you are experienced, it's trickier because there are more variables, but the essential lessons remain the same. Know your market and how you contribute. That is your value and that should be your price.

Question 4. Due to the down economy, I committed to a job offer that paid very little (peanuts), but was offered a good job profile. As time progressed, I realized that the company did not deliver on its promises and I plan to quit soon. As I apply for jobs, I am expected to quote a salary based on my current salary. The current salary is very little and I believe that with my experience and education I should be able to quote a higher salary. How can one deal with this situation?

Answer. Your current salary is a very strong anchor to what employers think they need to pay you. Therefore, you need to do whatever you can to establish your value before divulging how little you make. Focus on what you are bringing to the job and what comparable people in these roles are making. See the points in the preceding answer. Now that you have established that this is the correct anchor, you can explain your salary as an anomaly and one of the reasons you are leaving. Employers are happy to get good hires at a fair price, even if that means paying a lot more than what you happened to make at a previous job.

Question 5. How do I respond when a job posting (application) asks for salary history and minimum salary requirement?

Answer. This is why I don't recommend that people spend a lot of time responding to job postings. There is very little room to maneuver because some employers toss out applications with missing information, such as salary and salary requirements. I won't even move ahead with presenting candidates to my clients and hiring managers without salary information. You have to respond with the truth, and, unfortunately, the salary you name anchors how the employer perceives you.

If you don't want to respond, you need to find another way to apply that circumvents the application. Network into the decision makers and bypass the recruiter. Make a pitch that focuses on your value so that salary becomes a secondary consideration.

Question 6. I received an offer from a large consulting firm. The start date for the job is July fifth. My family always spends the July fourth holiday and the remaining week at my grandparent's cottage in Lake George. This consulting firm has a training program that begins on July fifth. I'd like to begin on July eleventh. Can I negotiate for this?

Answer. Large firms put extensive time and effort into constructing training programs that can introduce you to the company, along with senior managers, and provide training that can be vital to your success.

Speak to your human resources contact and ask what is on the schedule for the first week of training. The training can be eight weeks long, with the first week scheduled with senior manager welcomes. If they feel this is something that can be missed, then you have an option to consider.

I would recommend you skip the family vacation this year, and get a good start to your career. Important networking contacts can be made in that first week when everyone is new to the company, and those contacts last decades. The information you can gather at this training event can be vital to your success.

Question 7. I have two years of administrative experience with a medium-sized manufacturing firm and I'm making $45,000. I finally got an interview for a job I've wanted as a compensation analyst. The recruiter said I would be offered the job for $45,000 because I don't have any experience, but they really like me. I wanted $55,000. Should I hold out for that?

Answer. You need to do your research. What are entry-level compensation analysts getting in your market—Los Angeles? Let's say your research gives you two data points that indicate the going rate is $50,000. You can then negotiate for the $50,000, citing the research, and citing that you have two years of business experience under your belt. In my twenty-five years of corporate experience, I've never seen an offer pulled because a candidate asked for an additional $5,000. Think ahead: is there anything else worth negotiating for? Either way, it may be worth taking for three reasons: (1) it's a step up from administrative assistant, (2) you will be learning a new skill that is of great interest to you, and (3) you can grow within that discipline.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Learning about the struggles of others in the negotiation and closing-the-offer stage can be helpful for future career negotiations.
- Research and communication are two vital tools when negotiating and closing the offer.
- We negotiate for a lot of things, and probably never think we even negotiated at all. We negotiate for where to go to lunch, when to go to dinner, and what to do on any given project.

EXERCISE

1. Together with a classmate, remember back to the last time you negotiated for something—anything—and what was the result? Discuss a positive result and identify why the negotiation went well, and discuss a negative result and identify why it didn't go well.

10.9 Chapter Review and Exercises

Individuals can naturally get intimidated when they have to negotiate, but the truth is that we negotiate things every day, without even realizing it. We negotiate which restaurant to go to, which movie to see, how to best present a project, yet no one feels intimidated or nervous about negotiating.

It's a given that negotiating for a job has more serious implications that negotiating for what movie to see, but if you've done your prep work, it should go very smoothly.

Negotiation is a skill and, like any other skill, practice is critical to succeeding. Role-play with your friends and your contacts at career services. Practice asking for a slightly higher salary with a partner who doesn't give in easily. Practice asking for a higher salary with a partner who doesn't give in at all. Respond professionally and appropriately at all times.

When receiving an offer, it's best to think of the totality of the offer. What makes you happy about the offer? What displeases you and how would you like to see it changed? In some cases, you will not be pleased in the compensation arena because you'll have less vacation time than you would like or no opportunity for a bonus (at the starting point). Either way, remain professional at all times, and balance and weigh each component, thinking about the long-term potential of the position, the company, and the industry.

Sometimes when you negotiate, hiring managers will go higher with compensation and sometimes they will not. If the compensation is extremely low, much lower than the average, perhaps you should refuse this offer. Consult someone who knows what they are doing: career services, a professional you can trust, or perhaps a career coach. It's well worth your effort to ensure you move ahead wisely and appropriately.

Some people view compensation as the most important component of an offer, and others, perhaps most, place it in the top three or four components. Other components may include the following:

- Your manager: Can you adjust to their style?
- Your company: Does it have a strong brand?
- Your challenge: Is the job challenging enough, and can you rise to the challenge?

Interview and get multiple job offers and negotiation will be much less stressful.

One final note: don't forget to follow your gut instincts. We often immediately know whether something is a good or bad idea, and we are usually right. Negotiating can be risky, but you can mitigate that risk by using all of the previous job search steps, and also tuning into and trusting your instincts.

Chapter Takeaways

- The final step in your job search should be fully supported by all the steps that came before it.
- Multiple negotiation points can be used when considering an offer. They include base salary and bonus potential; more time to consider accepting the offer; start date (either sooner or later); reporting relationships and potential managerial duties; benefits and insurance; job title and job responsibilities; and work and life balance.
- Negotiating is a much easier skill to master once you remove the emotional element from the equation.
- Your posture is immediately improved and visible when you have multiple offers. The more offers you have, the easier it will be to negotiate for a salary increase, or any other component of the offer.
- At larger firms, recruiters and hiring managers have multiple hoops to jump through before finding the candidate who will receive an offer. This great amount of work gives you leverage to negotiate.
- Strong communication skills are needed to keep recruiters and hiring managers abreast of offer deadlines.
- Staying organized is key to the job search process. Using a single page in a playbook that highlights the latest interaction with employers can keep you on track.
- Closing the offer requires an increase in focus, energy, and drive that will differentiate you from other finalists.
- Regardless of the level of your career, you will always need negotiation skills, and you will always need to drive toward a closing situation.

Chapter Review

1. What strategies can you employ to lower the stress involved in negotiating key components of a job offer?
2. What different items are open to negotiation? Which are cash items and which are noncash items?
3. Why should you always negotiate?
4. How do you juggle multiple searches while staying organized? What tool can you use to ensure you don't miss any deadlines?
5. How do you negotiate without annoying or alienating your prospective employer?
6. How can you close the offer strongly and confidently? What do you need to do to rise above the other final candidates?
7. Why should you seriously consider not taking a job offer if the compensation is ridiculously low? How can that affect future searches?

Chapter 11: Social Media and the Job Search

Overview

How Social Media Can Help Your Job Search

At this point in your search, you have an overview of all six steps of the job search process:

- Step 1: Identify Your Target
- Step 2: Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign
- Step 3: Conduct In-Depth Research
- Step 4: Network and Interview
- Step 5: Stay Motivated and Organized and Troubleshoot Your Search
- Step 6: Negotiate and Close the Offer

Social media is a tool that can enhance all six steps of your job search. By social media, we are referring to interactive media via web and mobile technology. Facebook and LinkedIn are two well-known examples of social media sites. These two sites, accessible via the Internet, enable you to publish information as well as gather information about others. You can also interact with other users, so there is an interactive, social quality to this media.

This chapter goes in depth on how social media touches all six steps of the job search. Interactions are both personal and professional, and social media is quite public, so using social media for your job search can be tricky. You have personal and professional information and personal and professional relationships, and both sides are present on social media. Understanding how to best manage social media and make it work for you professionally and personally requires conscious planning and discipline.

Technology enables the job search to be so much more productive. In order to take advantage of social media, you need to have a

Figure 11.1 Social Media and the Six Steps

base level of technology resources and skills:

- Do you have access to a secure and reliable Internet connection?
- Are you currently using social media? On which sites do you have a profile? How active are you on each site and overall?
- What is stopping you if you aren't yet on social media sites?

Many social media sites are useful to the job search process. Section 11.1 "Social Media Sites for the Job Search" of this chapter gives an overview of the most useful social media sites at the time of this writing and how they are relevant to the job search:

- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Twitter
- niche online communities—for example, Brazen Careerist

A key benefit of social media is its interactivity, so networking is the obvious goal of many job seekers' social media activity. Although interactivity is a key benefit of social media, it is by no means the only way to use social media for your job search. This chapter reviews how social media is applicable to all six steps of your job search.

LinkedIn and other social media sites are set up to foster interactivity and community, but you can also interact via blogs and websites by setting up your own and leading the conversation or by commenting on other people's blogs and websites. Setting up your own blog or website can be a very useful job search tool, so we include this option in this chapter. We also cover possibilities to interact via other people's blogs and websites.

A key advantage of social media is that it enables people to find you. Recruiters use social media to find job candidates to hire. This chapter covers how recruiters use social media to research and find candidates. Understanding how recruiters search and what they look for can help you position yourself to be found.

Finally, this chapter talks about managing your social media presence to mitigate the potential conflict between the personal and the professional and to enable you to manage your public face. Job seekers might have several questions regarding social media:

- How do you keep yourself accessible to recruiters, employers, and contacts while retaining some personal privacy?
- How do you remain open to new contacts while maintaining meaningful relationships?
- How do you know what is public?
- What if you don't like your profile or want to change your brand?

Social media is a powerful tool for your job search when used thoughtfully and purposefully.

11.1 Social Media Sites for the Job Search

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Get an overview of different social media sites.
2. Understand how social media sites assist your job search.

LinkedIn

As of December 2010, LinkedIn had ninety million members and is adding new social media site designed to share your professional information. Much like a traditional résumé, the standard profile includes sections for a summary, education, experience, and additional information. You can also upload a picture, as well as attach presentations and your blogs and websites to your profile.

The social, interactive component of LinkedIn is your ability to connect to people and to see their connections (or people who have connected to them). You can reach out to these secondary connections by asking for an introduction from someone with whom you are already connected. In fact, you can reach out to connections of connections through the introduction process, so you have access to not just your circle but two circles removed from you. This greatly expands your network.

Another interactive component is the Groups function. LinkedIn has Groups based on a mutual interest or other commonality, such as university affiliation, professional goal, or geography. Anyone with a LinkedIn profile can create and run a Group, so you could use LinkedIn to create an online community for your specific interest or goal.

The following is a cursory overview of LinkedIn's basic features, but you can see that having a LinkedIn profile can add tremendous advantages to your job search:

- You can upload your résumé details online and be able to point people to your LinkedIn hyperlink rather than an attached document. This is very useful when requesting informational interviews where you want

the person to have your extended background, but you don't want to be presumptuous and attach a résumé.

- You can share additional information that would be cumbersome on a traditional résumé.
- You can network with ninety million members regardless of where you are physically based.
- You can use the connections feature to keep track of your network and to meet new people, thereby facilitating your job search through networking.
- You can use the Groups function to meet people with similar interests and goals, such as people in your target industry, function, or geography.

Facebook

As of December 2010, Facebook reported over five hundred million users. Facebook originated as a personal social platform, so its profile includes basic information, such as education and interests, but is more geared toward sharing ideas, comments, and photos. Like LinkedIn, you can attach your blog to your Facebook profile so your posts will appear on your profile.

Like LinkedIn, the social, interactive component of Facebook enables you to connect to people as "Friends" and to see their Friends. You can send messages to your Friends and sometimes to their connections, so you have the ability to organize, maintain, and grow your network via Facebook.

Facebook has a Pages function, which works like the Groups function in LinkedIn. The range of Page subjects is much wider on Facebook, because it is predominately a personal site. You will see opinions, cultural themes, and other non-career-related Pages. At the same time, some Pages are dedicated to organizations where you may be able to see job posts and breaking news. Other Pages are dedicated to professional and career-related subjects, and you may see advice or resources on them.

Facebook is predominately a personal site, but there are advantages to your job search from having a Facebook profile:

- The reach is much wider, so you may be able to connect with more people. If you can't find someone on LinkedIn, Facebook provides another option.
- The best networking starts with developing rapport, so the predominately personal environment of Facebook may be less intimidating for both job seeker and prospective networking targets.
- Organizations and people interact differently on different social media, so Facebook provides another data point for reaching organizations and people of interest.

Twitter

Once you sign up for a profile, which is just your Twitter handle (i.e., name), Twitter enables you to post Tweets (i.e., ideas, comments, and thoughts) of 140 characters or fewer in length. You connect to other Twitter users by "following" their Tweets. People can also follow your Tweets, and if someone is following you, you can send them a message.

As of December 2010, Twitter is one of the top ten most visited websites, as reported byAlexa.com. Alexa.com is a widely used tracking site to measure visitors and page views to websites. Most Tweets are not specifically job or career related. However, there are advantages to using Twitter for your job search:

- Organizations post job openings via Twitter.
- Individuals who may be instrumental to your job search might be on Twitter, and following them is another way to show your interest and possibly connect with them.
- Your posts reveal your ideas and expertise, so you could Tweet about items that showcase your industry or functional knowledge.

Other Niche Online Communities

The value of social media sites is putting your information out there and being able to connect with people, so it makes sense that communities have been established around

very tight niches. The value of being active in a niche community is that the participants have a natural rapport already established from sharing a common affinity. This facilitates networking.

One example of a niche online community is Brazen Careerist, a site targeted at career issues for Generation Y (the generation of people born between 1980 and 1995, also known as Millennials and Trophy Kids). Similar to other social media sites, Brazen Careerist allows you to create a profile, post ideas, and connect with other members. The Groups function is where communities specific to industry, function, geography, interest, or goal connect. Organizations post jobs or sponsor events via the site. Because you know that Brazen Careerist is specifically targeted at Generation Y, you can become active on the site if you are trying to reach Generation Y contacts, including organizations that target Generation Y.

Another example of an online community, though not a social media site in its strict definition, is Meetup.com. Meetup.com posts live meetings around specific topics. You can set up an account so you can search for events and groups near you. The networking happens live, so it is not social media per se, but clearly the online component is greatly facilitating the targeted networking.

The value of niche online communities to your job search is in the targeted networking:

- If you want to reach a targeted group, by identifying a social media site for that group, you focus your networking efforts.
- Your ability to interact and build connections with this tight community is a way to gauge if you are indeed interested in this group and if they are interested in you. This can help you position your overall marketing.
- Organizations are also active on niche online communities, so you can find organizations that are predisposed to your profile.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Examples of social media sites include LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and niche online communities.
- The value of social media sites to your job search is in the ability to push out your information and to connect with people in a targeted way.

EXERCISES

1. Which social media sites will you select for your job search? If you are not familiar with these sites, visit the ones mentioned in this section to get a feel for each site.

2. What specific steps do you need to take to increase your activity in the social media space? Do you need to establish a profile? Do you have a profile but need to update it or post ideas? Pick one social media site (again, LinkedIn is recommended for its focus on professional careers) and create or update your profile.
3. How will you incorporate social media activity into your job search going forward? Set calendar reminders each month to update your social media profiles.

11.2 Social Media and the Six-Step Job Search Process

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how social media can be used at all stages of the job search, not just networking.
2. Get specific action steps for incorporating social media into your current job search.

Table 11.1 "The Six Steps and Social Media" presents each of the six job search steps and details how social media can help.

Table 11.1 The Six Steps and Social Media

Job Search Step	How Social Media Can Help
Step 1: Identify Your Target	Other people's profiles show career paths and job descriptions
Step 2: Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign	Your profile and activity represent your experience, skills, and interests
Step 3: Conduct In-Depth Research	Looking at profiles across organizations and industries reveals hiring patterns and other organizational information Ability to search profiles by keyword enables you to find people who fit the exact criteria for you to interview for informational purposes
Step 4: Network and Interview	Ability to reach out and interact with other site members expands your network
Step 5: Stay Motivated and Organized and Troubleshoot Your Search	Stay motivated by the community Self-edited status and information updates enable site members to have organized and current information about each other Find more contacts and organizations if your search stalls
Step 6: Negotiate and Close the Offer	Ability to look at different profiles enables you to compare titles with scope of responsibilities Interactive questions and Group functions enable surveying for salary data

Step 1: Identify Your Target by Using Site Profiles as Prototypes

In step 1, we describe a well-defined job target as one with a specific industry, function, and geography. You can then map this to your decision criteria, or your personal values and interests. You look internally for your values and interests, but to understand how these might translate to different industries and functional areas, it is necessary to look externally at what is happening in the market. Social media enables you to look at other people's careers and find prototypes (i.e., models or examples) that your own job search might follow. LinkedIn is most conducive to this type of search because the profiles are laid out like résumés.

If one of your potential job function targets is public relations, look at people in PR:

- What is their career path? Do you want these jobs?
- How are they describing their jobs? Do you want to work on these things?
- Look at the organization profiles for where they work. Do these types of organizations appeal to you?
- Join Groups related to PR and follow discussions. Are you interested in what is being discussed?
- Ask questions using the Groups function or Q&A function to get specifics on what it is like to do this job. Do you like what you find out?

If one of your potential industry targets is nonprofits dedicated to children and the arts, pick a specific nonprofit in that space (or several) and look at people who work there:

- What different roles do people have? Do you want these jobs?
- How do people describe what they do? Do you want to work on these things?
- Look at the different profiles in relation to each other. Are a lot of people in programming or development, or do they cover several functions? Does this structure appeal to you?
- Join Groups related to children's education and follow discussions. Is most of the talk about fundraising, programming, and operations? Are you interested in what is being discussed?
- Ask questions using the Groups function or Q&A function to get specifics on what it is like to work in this industry. Do you like what you find out?

Step 2: Create a Compelling Marketing Campaign That Is Current and Comprehensive

An online profile is one of the four key components of your marketing campaign because it represents you online where recruiters and employers do look for candidates. Compare your profile to other profiles at your level and target, and make sure that you are competitive in your experience and skills. Continuing

the PR example from earlier, if certain keywords (or, specific words or phrases) are often found in PR profiles, make sure you have these in your profile. (If you don't have a legitimate reason to weave those keywords into your profile, this could be a sign that you lack something considered a prerequisite to getting those jobs!) Check also for specific computer or other technical skills to ensure you are competitive with your peers.

Social media enables you to update in real time, so make sure you update your status. In social media, status refers to what you are currently doing and may include professional or personal activities. LinkedIn has a status area on the profile. Facebook has a Wall to post what you are doing. Updating your status notifies site members connected to you. Frequent updating also ensures that people who view your profile always see the latest version. Each update is another nudge to view your background. It reminds people what you are doing. Don't just think of status as your employment status—that is, whether or not you have a job. Use your status to communicate projects you are working on, informational meetings you have attended, and other professional activities that may not be directly job search related, but clearly demonstrate that you are keeping busy. Your status is not static, but should reflect your ever-changing skills and experience.

With a paper résumé, it is unwieldy to include a lot of attachments, such as a portfolioof your work. A work portfolio might include published articles if are a writer, or illustrations and designs if you are a designer. Using your online profile, you can link to an online collection of your work (for example, using the SlideShare application to showcase a slide presentation) and create a comprehensive view of everything you offer. LinkedIn and Facebook have applications that enable you to link your blog to your profile. If you have a blog and your blog showcases examples of your work, your profile updates with samples of your work whenever you post to your blog. LinkedIn also has applications that allow you to share what you are reading, where you are traveling, and even slide presentations you have created. While this level of detail would be onerous for a paper résumé, online it is easy to page through and access as much data as you'd like, so you can offer the reader (in this case, recruiters and employers) much more information.

If you are positioning yourself for a job in PR, ask the following questions about your profile:

- Do you share the same important keywords as other profiles active in PR?
- Do you describe your projects in a similar way?
- Should you join certain Groups so that you are active in the same circles?
- Can you update your status periodically to showcase PR work you are doing for a school club or professional association? Have you attended a conference or read an article that you'd like to share in your status?
- Can you share samples from a recent campaign?
- Have you read books or articles on the industry that you can add to your status?

If you are positioning yourself for a job in the nonprofit intersection of children and the arts, ask the following questions about your profile:

- Do you have examples of work with children and the arts in your profile?
- Have you isolated a functional area, such as fund-raising or programming, where you can focus your keywords?
- Are your Groups, status updates, and applications consistent with an interest in children and the arts?
- Can you post a status update or sample of a recent project or volunteer experience involving children, the arts, or both?
- What books or articles have you read in this area that you can add to your status?

Step 3: Conduct In-Depth Research by Viewing Profiles

In-depth research gives you insight into the functions, industries, and organizations of interest to you. Social media sites with their collection of people and organization profiles contain a lot of useful information. The career paths, project descriptions, and titles of people in your target function, industry, or organization reveal what is typical in that field. LinkedIn has a feature where, when you view a profile, suggestions are made for other matching profiles. A box on the lower right of the profile is titled, "Viewers of this profile also viewed…" and contains a list of other profiles. Even if you have only one name of someone to view, you can easily find more by using those suggestions. People in these other profiles often work at other organizations, and this can lead to discovering new organizations to target.

The ability to search by a wide combination of keywords enables you to identify very specific people for informational interviews and networking overall. You can look for specific alma maters, organizations, skill keywords, geographic locations, or a combination of keywords. Without social media and its reach and searchability, it's difficult, if not impossible, to efficiently find someone from a specific school who has done a specific project or job, has a certain skill, has worked at a specific company, and lives within your target geography.

When you research, especially in preparation for networking meetings and interviews, you want to be current on the trends of your target industries, functions, and organizations. The continually updated statuses and dialogue of social media sites enable you to get breaking news. Follow discussions and see what subjects, ideas, and concerns are trending.

Finally, the organization profiles in LinkedIn or Pages in Facebook contain a summary of the organization and often include job postings. When you follow specific organizations in LinkedIn, you get a daily or weekly update on promotions, arrivals and departures, as well as job openings. This information is invaluable to finding possible relevant people profiles to view, having the latest organization news, and getting a jump on job openings.

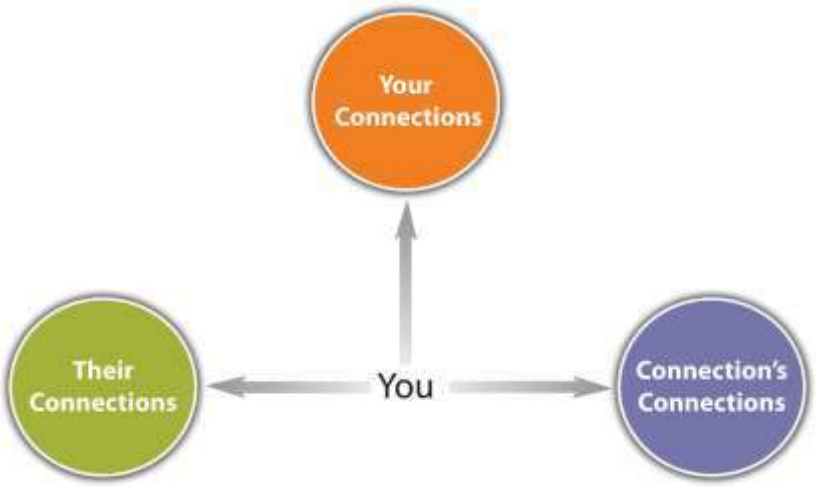
If you are positioning yourself for a job in PR, the following information might help you:

- Look at specific companies for whom you'd like to do PR, but also look at PR agencies.
- PR might be called media relations or be handled within a broader department such as marketing. Use different keywords when you search.
- When you see late-breaking news for companies you are following, think about how this would impact your job in PR. Get into the habit of questioning and really analyzing your research.

If you are positioning yourself for a job in the nonprofit intersection of children and the arts, use some of the following techniques:

- Find nonprofits, foundations, and ancillary programs of bigger nonprofits that might be children and art related.
- Look at people's backgrounds—do they have teaching experience or performing experience? What common threads are present among the people active in this space?
- Don't just look at the professional part of someone's background, but also look at volunteer work, special interests, and groups to which people belong. Are any organizations cited new to you, and can you add them to your target list?

Step 4: Network and Interview with a Larger, More Diverse Group



Social media sites are also referred to as social networking sites. With their interactivity and

wide reach to many users, the networking potential is clear. Here are some tips to get the most out of networking via social media:

- **Include a professional-looking picture so that people recognize you**. If you try to connect with someone with whom you haven't corresponded in years, they may not remember your name or background, so a picture is another clue. A big benefit of social media sites is your ability to connect with a wider range of people than you might if you network only in person or by telephone. The likelihood increases that you will reach out to less familiar contacts, so a picture bridges the familiarity.
- **Put your LinkedIn profile hyperlink in your e-mail signature**. LinkedIn (as opposed to Facebook or other social media sites) is specifically recommended for this tip because the LinkedIn profile is structured like a résumé. Therefore, the hyperlink effectively attaches your résumé without the presumptuousness or the potential virus implications of actually attaching a résumé. Keep the LinkedIn profile hyperlink for all e-mails, even personal ones. This makes it easy for any e-mail recipients to view your background, and Friends who think they know you can learn more about you and help in your job search. You never know 100 percent who other people know or what they know.
- **When adding connections in LinkedIn, Friends in Facebook, or connections in another social media site, don't use default invitation messages**. Personalize the message with how you know the person and why you are reaching out. This makes it easier for the recipient to accept the invitation because they will have all the information they need to determine whether you are someone they want to connect to.
- **Use Groups and discussions functions to expand your network**. As you build your online connections, reaching out to people you know is a logical first step. You can also reach out to people from your school and any prior work environments. After that, finding people with like interests is another potential affiliation. The Groups and discussion and Q&A boards of social media sites are a great way to identify these like-minded people. Your comments to the Group and discussion boards are also a great way of showcasing your expertise. In an interview, you proclaim your expertise and experience to show why you'd be a great hire. As you display your expertise and experience in online Groups and discussion boards, you essentially publish your interview responses, which can reach prospective employers who have not formally called you for an interview.

Step 5: Use Social Media to Motivate, Organize, and Troubleshoot

Many online communities are focused on searching for a job. LinkedIn has multiple job search groups, and other social media sites have multiple options. The interactivity of social media helps people stay on track, maintain accountability, and keep momentum. The job search process involves several solitary activities (e.g., research, marketing). Remember to use social media to stay connected during the times when you are busy with solo projects.

Social media sites are a contact database that continually updates as people self-edit their status and information. You have to update your Outlook, cell phone directory, or other contact database, but the contacts themselves update social media sites. If you need to reach someone and your e-mail bounces back, reach out via social media because their contact information may have been updated since you last edited your own database. Don't forget to interact when you do see an updated status—acknowledging someone's new status is a good way to build in networking naturally.

Profiles on social media sites provide examples of how people in your target field are positioning themselves. Compare other profiles with yours to help you troubleshoot if you are missing critical words, descriptions, skills, or experiences. Another reason your search may be in trouble is that you are too passive in contacting prospective employers. The ability to search profiles of people and organizations enables you to find specific (and additional) leads for your search.

Step 6: Negotiate and Close the Offer with Online Data

Part of good negotiation technique is knowing what your negotiation counterpart wants and needs. Social media sites provide an opportunity to find this necessary information. Using social media grants you access to many people, making it easier for you to find those whose backgrounds match yours; you can survey these people for information. When you find someone whose profile indicates they have done the job you are seeking, you could try the following sample query: *I noticed in your profile that you worked as a PR assistant in health care. I have seen data that estimates PR assistant salaries from the low $30s up to the mid-$50s. (Note to reader: You want to give a range so the person knows you at least tried to get some information on your own. This range was provided by http://www.salary.com by searching on public relations + New York, NY.) As an experienced PR person, is that what you have seen as well? What most impacts where you fall on the range? Any insights you have would be greatly appreciated.*

Many recruiters use social media, so you can also reach out to them and learn from their expertise in hiring people for jobs you are targeting. The following sample query is addressed to a recruiter who

specializes in nonprofits, ideally children and arts related: *I noticed in your profile that you specialize in nonprofit children's organizations (or arts organizations, as applicable). I am doing salary research on entry-level development (or programming, specify a functional area). (Note to reader: You need to note a specific level and function so that the recruiter knows what salary information to provide.) Because you are active in this market, what have you seen as typical starting salaries? Does this vary widely? Has this changed much over time? Any insights you have would be greatly appreciated.*

Post a question about compensation via the Groups or discussion boards. Don't forget to ask, not just about salary but also lifestyle, growth prospects, and all the components of your decision criteria. The following is a sample query to a Group or discussion relating to your target prospective industry and function: *I am doing salary research on (specify functional area and level so that people know how to respond).What are the salary estimates for this area? Can anyone recommend resources or people to consult for my salary research? Thanks so much!*

The preceding sample queries are a template to show the bare minimum of information you want to share to elicit the data you want. Remember the social component of social media, so your queries and interactions should reflect your voice and engender rapport. Much like your cover letter, networking pitch, and other marketing correspondence, your social media correspondence should be customized to your personality, background, skills, experience, and your job search targets.

Another aspect of closing your offer is the reference check process. A reference check is when a prospective employer contacts someone who has worked with you or managed you, so that the person who is contacted can "reference," or describe, your work and work characteristics. Social media posts will never be a substitute for a reference check, but LinkedIn does provide a Testimonials feature where people who have worked with you can provide comments on your work. Having a few of these testimonials in your profile can nudge a recruiter or employer who is looking at your background closer to your favor.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Social media sites are useful at all stages of the job search, not just for networking.
- People and organizational profiles provide information for your target selection, marketing, research, troubleshooting, and negotiation.

- Interactivity and continual updating of social media sites enable you to ask questions and get breaking news of trends, people's statuses, and even job openings.

EXERCISES

1. For each social media site you are using for your search, set aside some time and use the site for all steps of the job search, from finding new organization names to finding salary data.
2. Make an activity list of how you will use social media for your search. If you are struggling to find organization names, make an effort to join Groups in the industry so you can see more profiles and possibly get names, or ask questions in the group to identify names. If you are struggling with marketing, review profiles and focus on what you like and don't like about profiles of people doing your target job.
3. If you are not comfortable using social media or not very active, can you find a tech-savvy friend who can be your job search buddy in this specific area?

11.3 Blogs and Personal Websites

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how blogs and personal websites are useful to the job search.
2. Determine whether blogs and personal websites are appropriate for your search.

Blogs Are the Subset of Websites That Feature Articles

A blog, the more commonly used shorthand of weblog, is a type of website or part of a website that features articles, or posts. Millions of blogs are available on the web, and they cover a wide range of subjects. Many organizations have a blog to promote their business and interact with their audience. Individuals also have blogs—some represent purely personal musings, almost like a virtual diary, and some represent specific subject matter or expertise.

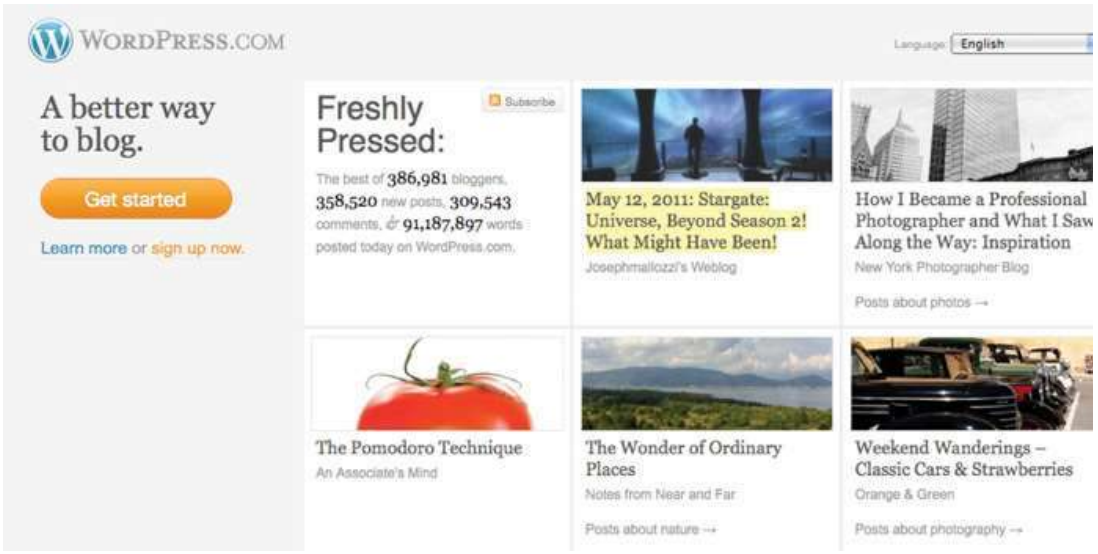
For the job seeker, a blog is an opportunity to demonstrate expertise and therefore build credibility. A job seeker in PR might blog about trends in PR or provide PR coverage for a specific industry, organization, or person, for example, blogging press releases and breaking news. In this way, the job seeker provides tangible evidence of what he might offer on the job. A job seeker in children and arts nonprofits might blog about the different organizations active in the space. She might cover events or conferences. She might follow specific issues, such as the shrinking public education budgets for arts in schools.

You can add photos to your blog or use audio or video files as part or all of your posts. Many different templates are available to organize your blog, some of which are free, but some need to be purchased. Different applications you can have with your blog can give you different functionalities, such as the ability to link to your other social media profiles, to create a membership community, to share your calendar, and so forth. What you decide to include and how you organize your blog showcase your creativity, structure, and thinking process.

Blog posts often link to other blogs and published information. Providing such links also demonstrates your expertise and training as a job seeker. You show that you keep abreast of current news and trends in your area of expertise.

Finally, the discipline and commitment required to populate a blog signal that you follow through and are committed to your area of expertise. This signaling works both ways—if you start a blog and it has few posts all dated from a while ago, then you send a negative signal.

If you decide to get started with a blog, you can use free sites like WordPress, Blogger, or Typepad to create an account and start blogging. Alltop, Digg, and Delicious are examples of sites that list highly trafficked articles, many of which are from top blogs. You can see the range of blogs out there, as well as formats, writing styles, and use of audio and video by visiting these article aggregator sites.



A Personal Website Turns You into "You, Inc."

Many people are accustomed to visiting an organization's website for more information about it. You might be going to a new restaurant, so you look it up online to see the menu, photos of the dining area, or special promotions or coupons. Likewise, an individual might consider creating a personal website to share information about him or her.

For the job seeker, you might include your résumé and a contact page so prospective employers and recruiters can reach you. You might have samples of your work. This is especially common, in fact, expected, for creative professionals in editorial, art, design, photo, and, of course, digital jobs. You might have a blog as part of your website to cover a specific industry, function, or other expertise. In this way, you showcase yourself much like an organization shares its information and selling points. If a prospective employer wants to learn more about you and searches for you online, they may find your website.

To start a website, you need to register a domain name—the name of your website. GoDaddy and Register are two popular registration sites. You also need to select an extension, typically ".com," but it can also be .net, .org (typical for nonprofits), or other extensions. Most registration sites offer website hosting for free (think of your host as where your website resides on the Internet) in exchange for posting advertisements

on your site. You can also pay a monthly hosting charge and get additional storage space for additional pages, no advertising on your site, and other extras.

Interacting with Other Blogs and Websites Is an Alternative to Managing Your Own

If the prospect of populating your own blog and maintaining your own website doesn't sound appealing, then you might consider creating an online presence for yourself by commenting and interacting with other blogs and websites:

- Identify the blogs and websites that are related to your target function, industry, and organization.
- Regularly visit the blogs and websites. You can subscribe to blogs via e-mail or an RSS feed (an online reader) so that posts get delivered to you automatically.
- When you read something that interests you, post a comment or ask a question to forward the discussion. This showcases your ideas (and bloggers often appreciate knowing posts have elicited responses).
- If you have an idea for a post that might be suitable for the blog, contact the blog owner and ask if you can guest post.

Interact with other blogs and websites so you can share your ideas and expertise without having to maintain your stand-alone site. Staying on top of other blogs and websites also shows commitment and follow-through because doing so takes time and attention. This interaction also is a form of online networking, and can be seen as a form of social networking, in addition to your activity on LinkedIn, Facebook, and other social media sites. If you are trying to connect with someone you do not know, following their blog or website is a way to get to know them, as well as demonstrate your commitment and interest. If an organization's website features a recently published report, commenting on that report can attract the attention of the author and give you an entry point into the organization.

To stay on top of relevant blogs, remember the article aggregators, such as Alltop, Digg, and Delicious, that showcase the top-read news stories and articles and frequently the most-visited blogs. Quora and Squidoo are two examples of websites that are specifically set up for people to showcase their expertise. Quora consists of questions and answers where anyone can contribute. By answering questions about a specific topic, you showcase your expertise in the topic. Squidoo consists of blogs on different topics, called lenses. You set up a lens on your specific area of interest and populate it. This is very similar to

starting your own blog, but your blog (or lens) is part of a large collective group, rather than a separate individual blog.

Twitter Is a Microblog for Your Job Search

Twitter is a microblog because you post very short items—140 characters or fewer. It is impossible to showcase deep knowledge in 140 characters. However, you can link to other articles (or your own blog or website) and, in this way, demonstrate that you are current on the trends and news of your area of expertise. The fact that you are using a fast-moving, leading-edge technology tool such as Twitter signals to prospective employers that you are on the leading edge yourself. This is critical for digital-related jobs but also in general for marketing, communications, creative, technology, and other fields where being an early adopter is valued.

You can also follow other people's Tweets, including organizations' Tweets. Some organizations post jobs on Twitter. Similar to the Groups function in social media sites that aggregate job seekers, Twitter accounts set up for job seekers link to career advice and job leads. As with blogs and websites, if you are trying to connect with someone you do not know, following them on Twitter is a way to get to know them, as well as demonstrate your commitment and interest. The almost real-time nature of Twitter updates also means you can get a jump on the latest job postings.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Blogs, websites, and the microblog Twitter can help you, the job seeker, showcase your expertise and connect with people active in your target area.
- Much like organizations use websites to share information and market to prospective customers, you can use a personal website to share information and market to prospective employers.
- You do not need to set up your own blog or website to take advantage of the benefits of having one. You can comment and interact with other blogs and websites and still highlight your expertise by the insightfulness of your comments. Commenting also connects you with people; you demonstrate genuine interest by paying attention to what they post.

EXERCISES

1. Will you start a blog or website? If you are in a creative field—editorial, art, design, photo, digital—a website is necessary. If you are in a marketing-related field, social media is so important that increasing your activity there can help your search. What steps do you need to

take to get started or be more active? Make a list of specific actions (e.g., register a domain name) you need to take, and set a timetable for each.

2. If you're still unsure about whether to start your own blog or website, start posting comments on other sites. You want to visit these sites for research anyway. Use your comments as an accountability tool to stay on top of your research and to force yourself to come up with insights.
3. Even if you decide not to Tweet regularly, write ten Tweets related to your target industry, function, or organizations. This exercises your creativity and your ability to be concise.

11.4 How Recruiters Use Social Media

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand social media and the job search from the recruiters' perspective.
2. Tailor your job search by using your knowledge of how recruiters use social media.

The Job Search Process from the Hiring Perspective

We covered the six steps of the job search process from the job seeker's perspective. On the other side of the equation, however, the organization that needs to hire has its own process. Social media is helpful to the employer (and therefore to you) at each step the employer takes:

- Identify the need.
- Kick off the search.
- Invite candidates for interviews.
- Select candidates for final rounds.
- Extend and negotiate an offer.

Use Social Media to Identify Needs Early and Tap the Hidden Job Market

Initially, the employer must recognize there is a need. This occurs before the search can begin, and this is where the hidden job market (the market of unadvertised jobs) flourishes. If you are following organizations online and watching for breaking news, new employee arrivals, and employee departures, then you might also see a potential need. You might be able to tap the hidden job before it becomes public.

> *Jennifer Sobel is a Recruitment Manager at Disney ABC Television Group:*
> *Many job seekers are desperately trying to use social networking tools to search for jobs, which is a great idea. However, they are using the tools all wrong. I must get ten to fifteen "LinkedIn" requests per day from people searching for a job at my company. Their requests usually sound something like this "Hi, I don't know you but would love to work at Disney ABC Television Group. Are there any openings for me?"...I would urge each job seeker to only reach out when they have identified an open position that they meet the minimum qualifications for....Not having your research done beforehand comes off as lazy and it doesn't give a recruiter any reason to help you.*

Use Social Media to Help Recruiters Find You When They Start the Search

When the search kicks off, an organization's recruiter needs a way to collect suitable résumés. The recruiter may post the ad to the organization's website, he or she may use social media to promote the opening, an external recruiting agency may be called, or external job boards may be used. Recruiters also actively try to find candidates, and many recruiters use social media sites because they are readily searchable to find suitable matches.

> *Regina Angeles is CEO of Talent2050, an executive search firm that provides multicultural recruiting solutions for online and traditional media companies:*
>
> *Candidates should invest time in building a robust online profile, especially on LinkedIn. Third-party and corporate recruiters continue to rely on LinkedIn as a sourcing and referencing tool. Make sure your profile contains keywords that will make you searchable.*

Most recruiters also have an existing candidate database that they tap when news of an opening breaks. If you are active in social media and if you are already in the organization's sights—perhaps by having interacted online—you might leap to the top of their existing candidate database.

This also means, of course, that recruiters can find negative information about you. Do an Internet search on yourself before you start your job search. Look at what employers will see. You might be unknowingly tagged in someone else's photos or mentioned in someone else's profile. You might have hastily written an angry comment or shared something overly personal. Even if the content is appropriate, you might have hastily typed something with mistakes and spelling errors, and it looks sloppy. We cover online profile repairs in the next section on managing your online brand; however, be aware that recruiters will research you, so be proactive so you know what they will find.

Use Social Media to Make Your Qualifications Stand Out during Interview Selection

Recruiters often skim résumés because they have so much volume. If you are an unsolicited candidate and this is the only time recruiters see your profile, then you have just a few seconds to make an impression. If you have been active in social media, however, mentions of you exist outside the résumé. You might have a portfolio online, and although a recruiter might be turned off by a multipage résumé, an online profile that is interactive and easy to click through does not feel as cumbersome.

Use Social Media to Prepare for Interviews

Social media is great for identifying trends and breaking news. Subscribe to blog posts and Twitter feeds in the days leading up to your interview to ensure you are current. Dig deeply into an organization's employee profile by looking at the online profiles of people who work there, and prepare highlights of your own experience to match existing hiring patterns. Look at the way the organization promotes itself online—this is what they want you to know, so this is what you should reflect in your discussions about the organization.

Use Social Media to Be a Worthy Negotiating Adversary

Organizations respect you when you are a good negotiator. If you ask for what is customary for your target market, employers will know that you are savvy in your field. Social media is great for gathering data, and its interactivity and ability to finely search by a mix of keywords mean that you can use social media to get nuanced data. Take advantage of this because employers expect you to negotiate, and your ability to negotiate well is a reflection on you as a candidate.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Employers take different steps during the job search process and use social media at all stages.
- Understanding how employers will use social media enables you to plan your job search activity accordingly.

EXERCISES

1. Now that you are aware of how recruiters use social media, what will you do differently?
2. If you know a recruiter, ask him or her to review your social media profile(s). See if they get a clear sense of your interests and what industry and function you are targeting. See if they think your online profile showcases you in the best light.

11.5 Managing Your Online Brand

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how to remain active over time with social media sites.
2. Understand how to balance your personal privacy with the desire to remain accessible to recruiters and employers.
3. Learn how to refine or change your brand as needed.

Now That You Have Your Social Media Profile(s), Keep Going

Setting up a profile or account in LinkedIn, Facebook, and other social media sites is just the beginning. As you move through life, you pick up new skills, join new associations, and start and end different jobs. Your profile represents one snapshot in time, unless you remember to update it. One good way to remember to update your social media profiles is to make major updates as soon as they occur (e.g., you graduate, you start a new job, you change your e-mail or other contact info). Alternatively, set a reminder for every three to four months to update your social media profiles, and this can capture big and smaller changes, such as adding details about a new project, if not a new job.

In addition to updating the facts on your profile, you want to connect with people and interact so that you take advantage of the networking capacity of social media sites. Here, too, you can set reminders and limits for when and how frequently you will be on these sites. You might limit yourself to a half hour each day at four o'clock. Or you might decide that social media is a priority in your strategy and devote more time. If you decide to work with multiple sites and have a blog and website, then you may need several hours each week to get the full benefit of the networking and interactivity.

You Still Can Have a Personal Life (or a Personal Profile)

You can only have one profile on each site. If you have a company, you can have a company profile or page that is separate from your profile, but many job seekers don't have that option. If you decide to use your profile for your job search (e.g., point contacts to your profile's hyperlink in your e-mail signature), then any personal information you share online becomes part of your professional package. Professionally shared profiles have no personal and professional distinction, so you want to be careful not to put anything that will reflect negatively on you (e.g., negative comments about your current boss, sloppy grammar, and typos).

You can try to manage one profile to be professional, say on LinkedIn, which is broadly accepted as a professional networking site. You also can manage one profile to be personal, say on Facebook, which is broadly accepted as a social platform. To accomplish this, you need to be very disciplined about how the information on your personal profile is shared. You want restricted access, and you only should connect with people with whom you have a personal relationship. Once you connect with someone with whom you have any professional business, that person will incorporate what they see on your personal profile into your professional interaction, even if they don't intend to (you can't unsee what you've already seen!).

In addition, some employers use Facebook to research candidates, so even if you intend to use Facebook (or another site) only on a personal basis, information there might still be found. Again, you can change your privacy and security settings regarding who can view your profile on sites where you want to maintain privacy. You also can make it a practice not to connect on personal sites with anyone whom you know primarily in a professional context. You do your part to keep your profile private by using these two methods.

With blogging, you can also make some posts (or entire blogs) private. If you are using your blog to demonstrate your expertise, however, you want as much to be public as possible. Given the conversational tone of many blogs, it is easy to forget that your blog is still, in effect, a writing sample for your job search candidacy. Your content, voice, and presentation all signal your work quality.

If you have been active on social media and didn't consider it a job search tool, you might have been overly cavalier or sloppy with information. A good first step before you put your job search intentions out there in the market is to do an Internet search of your name. See what comes up. Look at the public version of your social media profiles. Do you like what you see? Are you named in photos where you'd rather not appear? Clean up your profile now. Take your name off photos where you can, and ask friends to be prudent in mentioning your name on their profiles and pictures. You want to clean up as much as you can and put in controls going forward.

Over Time, Your Social Media Profile Will Change

When you are continuing on the same career path, it is easy for your social media profile to match your future aspirations. For example, if you are a student majoring in communications looking for a PR assistant spot, your profile showing your communications courses fits perfectly with your target jobs. But what if you are a music major who decides to move into PR?

It gets more complicated as you add more years, experience, and skills to your life and career. If you spent five years as a professional musician and now want to pursue PR, your profile facts alone won't project your intent.

In the first chapter, we talked briefly about job search and career change. Social media is particularly helpful to refine and change your brand over time. While you can't change your major or the jobs you have held that might paint one type of picture, you can add information about new courses, new projects (even volunteer), and new skills that will add a new dimension to your profile. You can specifically target new groups and new people with whom to interact. You can blog about your new career target or comment on other people's blogs that relate to the new target, thereby shifting the balance from your former profile to this newer blended profile that includes the new target.

It's tricky if you are currently employed and this career transition is a secret. If you are still active in your first career, adding the new information dilutes the former, so this is tricky to balance as well. The trade-off between old and new information and how you project your brand overall will vary on a case-by-case basis, but you should consider the preceding issues as you decide what's best for you.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Social media is not about setting up a profile just one time. You need to update it as your skills and experience change and connect with people as your network grows and changes in order to get the most out of social media.
- You can keep separate profiles to separate professional and personal networks and information, but this is not 100 percent guaranteed. You can also just assume that all of your information is going to be viewable by prospective employers and be extra vigilant about posting personal information.
- Even if you maintain your social media profile actively, over time it will need to change, sometimes drastically (e.g., for a career change to a new industry or function).
- By updating your profiles with new information and being active on your or others' blogs relating to your new career, you can change your online profile.

EXERCISES

1. How will you remember to update your profile? Will you set up reminders in your calendar? Will you designate a specific time of day or day of the week to update your status and connect with others online?
2. How will you manage your social media activity so that you take advantage of the connections, but keep it from overrunning your other activities? Think about setting a time limit on social media activity per day or per week, if you spend too much time on it and neglect the rest of your search.
3. What is your current online brand? Ask your friends and family to give you feedback on your profile. Do you like what you hear, or do you need to change or refine some things? Make an action list with a specific timetable for how you will make the changes.

11.6 Chapter Review and Exercises

Social media is a powerful part of your job search for all six steps of the process. You can find detailed information via social media that will help you identify targets, market effectively, research, interview, stay organized, stay motivated, troubleshoot, and negotiate. You can also share detailed information about yourself and connect with others, which is critical to networking and staying motivated. In other words, social media is a powerful tool for all six steps of a proactive job search. Social media is also a passive form of job search because it enables recruiters and employers to find you online.

There are many ways you can get involved with social media, from the biggest sites like LinkedIn and Facebook to niche sites that serve specific industries, interests, or demographics. You can also blog or maintain a website, or you can comment on other blogs and websites. The vast amount of choices available in terms of social media sites and activities means you need to be clear about your interest level and objectives, so you can take advantage of social media's benefits. Remember, you also want to avoid having social media take too much time and attention away from the rest of your search.

You also want to be clear about how you will remain accessible to recruiters and employers. You want them to find you, but you also want to maintain privacy and have the ability to have personal, purely social connections online. Maintaining separate profiles on separate sites, one for professional activity and one for purely social activity, is one way to balance your public and private sides.

Chapter Takeaways

- Examples of social media sites include LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and niche online communities.
- The value of social media sites to your job search is they give you the ability to push out your information and to connect with people in a targeted way.
- Social media sites are useful at all stages of the job search, not just for networking.
- People and organizational profiles provide information for your target selection, marketing, research, troubleshooting, and negotiation.
- The interactivity and continual updating of social media sites enables you to ask questions and get breaking news of trends, people's statuses, and even job openings.
- Blogs, websites, and the microblog Twitter can help you, the job seeker, showcase your expertise and connect with people active in your target area.

- Much like organizations use websites to share information and market to prospective customers, you can use a personal website to share information and market yourself to prospective employers.
- You do not need to set up your own blog or website to take advantage of the benefits of having one. You can comment and interact with other blogs and websites and still highlight your expertise by the insightfulness of your comments. Commenting also connects you with people; you demonstrate genuine interest by paying attention to what they post.
- Employers have different steps of the job search process and use social media at all stages.
- Understanding how employers will use social media enables you to plan your job search activity accordingly.
- Social media is not about setting up a profile just one time. You need to update it as your skills and experience change and connect with people as your network grows and changes to get the most out of social media.
- You can keep separate profiles to separate your professional and personal networks and information, but this is not 100 percent guaranteed. You can also just assume that all your information will be viewable by prospective employers and be extra vigilant when you post personal information.
- Even if you maintain your social media profile actively, over time it will need to change, sometimes drastically (e.g., for a career change to a new industry or function).
- By updating your profiles with new information and being active on your or others' blogs relating to your new career, you can change your online profile.

Chapter Review

1. What is social media, and what are some examples of social media?
2. Why is social media important to your job search?
3. How can social media help you stay current on trends?
4. How might you use blogging or a personal website in your search?
5. How do employers use social media?
6. What do you need to do to be active in social media?
7. How can you maintain your privacy while staying active online?
8. How can you change your online brand?

Chapter 12: From Job Search Success to Career Success

Overview

Getting a Job Is Only One Step to Building a Career

The first eleven chapters of this book are dedicated to getting you a job. The right job is critical to career success because it is the springboard from which you will learn important skills, develop key relationships, and demonstrate your achievements. Your career will include many jobs. Even if you stay at the same organization for the duration of your career until you retire, your job will change. You may take on more responsibility and start managing people and budgets. The company may change its focus and ask you to work on different projects.

Therefore, to build a career, it is not sufficient to know how to get any one job. You also must know how to do the following things:

- Succeed and do well in the job you have.
- Develop, expand, and maintain professional relationships.
- Steer your career advancement—ask for a promotion, a raise, and a performance review.
- Secure your job during difficult economic times.
- Manage work conflicts—difficult colleagues, privacy and confidentiality issues, and discrimination or harassment.
- Have a life as well as a career.
- Obtain your next job, whether in the same organization or outside it.

This chapter gives strategies and tips for you to manage your career once you get a job. To do well on the job, you need to make a strong impression in your first ninety days. You need to transition to your new workplace. You need be clear about expected results and how these will be measured. You need to establish good communication with your boss.

You also want to develop, expand, and maintain relationships outside your immediate boss. You want mentors other than your immediate boss. You likely will have colleagues in your department and outside it. Your boss has a boss, and there might be other people in senior management or leadership positions (you ultimately work for everyone in positions above you, even if not on a day-to-day basis). You may have customer contact. You may work with vendors or consultants that work with or for the

organization. You also want to have professional relationships outside your organization, such as other people who work in your functional area or industry.

You shouldn't assume that if you do a good job, people will know about it. You have to proactively manage your career with advancement in mind. Some organizations have structured performance reviews, and you should know how to optimize these meetings. Some organizations do not have built-in ways for you to get feedback, so you need to learn how to ask for feedback. Some organizations have a well-defined process for granting raises and promotions. Sometimes, however, you need to initiate a request for a raise or promotion.

Just because you have a job now doesn't mean you will keep your job. The United States has employment at will, which means that organizations can hire or fire you for any reason or no specific reason as long as there is no evidence of discrimination against a protected minority group or class. It also means that you can quit for any reason or no specific reason. Therefore, you cannot look to the government or some regulatory agency to secure your job. You need to make your organization want to retain you. You need to notice the signs of an impending layoff so you can protect yourself accordingly. You need to know what to do if you lose your job unexpectedly so you can get the most support possible from your employer during the transition.

An unexpected layoff is not the only potential challenge you will face. You will spend a lot of your time in your work environment, so problems and conflicts will inevitably arise. It is important to have a sense of some common workplace problems. While each case should be managed individually, we'll cover a general roadmap for dealing with some of the more common challenges that arise.

You will be spending so much of your time at your job that you may start focusing exclusively on your job. You might neglect your personal relationships outside work, your own health and self-care, and your personal life. It is important to maintain a healthy balance between professional and personal responsibilities. You need to take care of friends and family, your health, your home, and your finances. Sometimes, despite proactive career management, good relationships, and a healthy life outside work, you still need to leave your job. It might have been a great job when you started, but you have grown and your job hasn't kept up. Perhaps the organization has changed. Maybe you want to do something different. You

want to manage your career such that you have choices when you look for your next job. You want to have a strong network that is willing and able to help you. You want to have strong skills and qualifications that are attractive to prospective employers. You want to be learning and growing so that you are valuable to more than just your current organization.

12.1 How to Do Well in the Job You Have

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand how to maximize your first ninety days on the job.
2. Learn strategies for developing a good relationship with your boss.
3. Understand what success in your current job really means.

Table 12.1 "Your First Ninety Days On The Job" gives an overview of some things you may want to address during your first few months of employment.

Table 12.1 Your First Ninety Days On The Job

Suggested Time	Items to Do
Before you start	Return offer letter and work-related forms (e.g., I-9, W-2) Confirm place and time to report on your first day
On your first day	Meet your boss and immediate colleagues Get security ID, computer passwords, phone and voice mail access Find the bathroom, lunch spots, and other creature comforts Understand your work deliverables for the short term
During your first week	Complete employment paper work Learn company policies and regulations Meet colleagues in different departments Debrief with your boss on your first week
During your first month	Attend orientation sessions Have lunch with different colleagues in your department and outside it Debrief with your boss about your first month Confirm your work deliverables for the first quarter
During your first ninety days	Get feedback from your boss Look into training opportunities or other support from your employer Confirm your work deliverables for the next quarter, half year, and year Continue to debrief with your boss, network with colleagues

Make the Most of Your Onboarding Support during Your First Ninety Days

When you are new, it is a good time to ask questions and meet people. Unless you are coming into a leadership situation where people will be looking to you for guidance immediately, take advantage of your newness to collect as much information as possible. Introduce yourself to human resources (HR) and get their advice on where you should focus to get acculturated quickly to the new organization. Remember that HR has onboarded many people before you, so they should have some good advice about how to get started smoothly. Ask your boss to introduce you to the people you should know. It is ideal that people are aware you were recently hired and are starting that day, but sometimes it's a surprise, so be ready to introduce yourself and tell people about your background and what you will be doing.

You might be starting at the same time as several other people. Think of a school that has a well-defined academic calendar and therefore may have all the new teachers start on the same day. You might be offered specific onboarding training programs. One school sent its new hires the school newsletter for a few months before they started so they could feel they were a part of the school before they got there.

Learn How Your Employer Runs Its Business

In addition to meeting key people, you must coordinate practical logistics. Paper work must be filled out, including tax forms (e.g., W-2) and work authorization forms (e.g., I-9). You may have to sign a form that confirms you've read the company policy manual. Don't forget to consult the organization's policy manual regardless of whether it's required reading. By doing so, you know any specific rules around start and end time (continuing our school example from earlier, not every school starts and ends at the same time), breaks, dress code, access to computers and other supplies, and so forth. You may need to get an identification card or keys to the office.

You also want to get accustomed to the physical environment. Confirm where to go on your first day; don't just assume that area will be where you normally work. Sometimes large companies have several offices, and an orientation for new hires might be located in a different area. Know where the bathroom is located. Know where the cafeteria is located or get lunch spot recommendations. Know where to find office supplies. Don't underestimate the value of being comfortable. Some companies set up a workspace for you with computer, telephone, and other equipment you will need. If this isn't the case, arrange for these resources as soon as possible so you can start contributing on the job. Know whom to call for IT or telephone support; perhaps the organization has put together a list of frequently used phone extensions.

Remember the school that onboarded its new teachers by including them in the newsletter distribution list even before they joined? This school used particular grading software and an intranet to share lesson plans. If you are a new teacher there, you would want to make sure you have access to the system and will get training on how to use it.

Learn What Success on the Job Means

From day one, you need to get down to work. Get clear about what you need to deliver from your work that day, that week, that month, that quarter. Will you shadow another teacher first? For how long will you train, if at all, before taking over the job (or in this case, the classroom)? Will you use existing lesson plans—that is, how much structure will you be given?

It is best to ask your questions before you start or when you are new. Ask your boss rather than a colleague so you know officially what to do. Get specific recommendations from your boss about how best to learn about the work—for example, who customers are, how specific forms get filled out, what software to use. Confirm to whom you should go for questions. It may be your boss, but he or she may select a colleague to train you. Find out about upcoming deadlines or special projects that insiders might be aware of but that they may forget to mention. Maybe the school where you teach collects data on the students after the first thirty days of school, and you need to be tracking specific things more closely or in a format different from what you anticipated.

Learn How Your Boss Likes to Work

Once you know what you should be doing day to day and for the next few weeks, you want to confirm with your boss how to keep him or her updated. People like to communicate in different ways. Live, telephone, or e-mail are all possible forms of communication. Find out what your boss prefers.

Find out how frequently you should update him or her. Only when you have a question? Once a day? Once a week? After a project or task is completed?

Confirm what type of update he or she would like. A quick summary? A more detailed report? Do you need to send a meeting request in Outlook for a specific time each week?

Find out how you will get feedback. The company policy manual may have information about formal performance reviews, but these are typically done once or twice each year. You will want more frequent feedback even informally so you know what you are doing well (and continue doing this) and what you need to develop (so you can work on this). Check in with your boss after your first week to let him or her

know how you are feeling about your job (e.g., workload, what you've completed, outstanding questions), and ask for feedback then. You can also confirm how often he or she would like to discuss your performance going forward.

Don't forget to bring paper and pen or an electronic tool for taking notes during meetings with the boss and others. A common newbie mistake is to try and retain all of the information from a meeting without taking notes. You will miss something. While it's fine to ask clarifying questions, it looks like you weren't paying attention if you ask about something that was already covered. You want to bring your own note-taking supplies because asking for a paper and pen, rather than bringing your own, makes you look unprepared.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Start strong by taking advantage of onboarding support new employees typically get, such as time with HR on new hire training programs.
- Take care of practical logistics, such as paper work and learning your physical environment.
- Get confirmation about exactly what you need to get done day one, week one, month one, and the first quarter.
- Develop a good relationship with your boss by being available for updates and asking for feedback.

EXERCISES

1. For the jobs that you are targeting, research if they provide new hire training or other onboarding support. Ask people who have worked at organizations in which you are interested. Try to get a feel for what you can expect.
2. If you have a friend who works in one of your target companies, look at the policy manual so you can get familiar with the workday, dress code, and so forth.
3. You know you will need to adjust your communication style to your boss, but you also want to be clear on what you need. How do you like to communicate? Think back to projects that you worked on—do you plan by the day, week, or longer? Are more or less frequent check-ins helpful?
4. Look at a job description for a job that you want. How would you translate this to specific actions you would want to do in day one, week one, month one, and the first quarter? If you are unable

to outline specific actions (and for most job descriptions, you won't because they are written very generally), what do you need to know to confirm specific actions?

12.2 How to Develop, Expand, and Maintain Professional Relationships

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the three types of mentors to develop.
2. Learn how to find a mentor and be a good mentee.
3. Learn other relationships to cultivate outside your immediate boss and mentors.
4. Get strategies for relationship building. Get a Mentor Who Is Not Your Boss (Get Several)

Most of you have experienced the value of mentors because you already have had someone in your life—a family member or a teacher—who has guided and supported you. While your boss can guide and support you professionally, it is ideal to get mentorship beyond your boss for several reasons:

- You want to be able to ask questions freely and share doubts and concerns. Sometimes it's perfectly fine to ask questions of your immediate boss, but sometimes you will want to test an idea or probe an issue before bringing it up to the person who decides your next project, promotion, and raise.

- You benefit from multiple perspectives. Your boss's immediate concern is the performance of his or her team and area. You want to have someone who can be a more objective outsider and is not too close to the situation.
- You establish a relationship outside your immediate area and can therefore learn more about the organization and expand your reach. It's important to know what is going on in the organization as a whole, and a mentor can provide valuable information.

Don't try to develop a mentor relationship with your boss's boss. This can be awkward because your boss might think you are trying to leapfrog or exclude him or her. In addition, you lose the ability to talk more candidly. Regardless of how objectively you try to state things, if you are raising a concern or even a question about your boss, it denigrates him or her in the eyes of the person who assigns your boss the next project, promotion, or raise.

You do not need to have just one mentor. It is unrealistic to think that one person has the time or knowledge to provide all the coaching and support you need. Consider cultivating three types of mentors:

- Guardian angel

- Shepherd
- Board of directors

A guardian angel is what most people think of when they hear the word, “mentor.” A guardian angel is your supporter and protector. Typically, a guardian angel is two or more levels above you to have the credibility and experience to help you. Your guardian angel looks out for plum assignments that might be beneficial to your career. Your guardian angel is experienced in how to be successful at the organization and can advise you on pitfalls to avoid or opportunities to take advantage of. If you have questions about troubleshooting a sticky office situation, your guardian angel will be able to help. For our new teacher in the earlier example, his guardian angel might be a senior teacher or even administrator. This person might propose learning tools or conferences the new teacher could use or attend. This guardian angel also might suggest the new teacher for a committee or other special assignment to raise his profile at the school.

A shepherd is typically not much more senior and may even be more junior to you. A shepherd knows the ins and outs of the organization and can guide you. We all know someone who is the social epicenter of a particular group. For your professional workplace, that is a shepherd who can help shortcut your learning curve. The shepherd knows who is influential, who might be trouble, and who is the best person to talk to for a variety of requests. The shepherd would be a good person with whom to brainstorm about possible other mentors. For our new teacher in the earlier example, his shepherd might be another teacher at the school, who doesn’t need to be of a similar subject or grade, but someone more connected to the culture of the school and who can share the inside scoop.

A board of directors for a company (or board of trustees for a nonprofit) is typically composed of people with different backgrounds and expertise—finance, legal, human resources (HR), operations, marketing, and so forth. The board provides a resource for advice and counsel to the company or nonprofit in a variety of areas. Similarly, you will need advice and counsel on a variety of areas—career advancement, communication and presentation, work and life balance, career change, and so forth. No one person will be an expert in all issues. Instead of relying on one person, it would be helpful to cultivate a board of directors, each with a specific area of expertise important to you. It is ideal to have mentors both inside and outside your organization and even industry. This way, you have a diversity of perspectives. The new teacher might get mentorship from another teacher of a similar subject or grade to provide pedagogical

advice. If he has an interest in using more multimedia or innovative teaching approaches, he might ask for guidance from a teacher outside his subject area who knows a lot about audiovisual technology. Even a school operations staff member might be a member of this teacher's "board" to inform him how the school functions.

To Attract Good Mentors, Be a Good Mentee

Mentorships are close relationships, so it is ideal when they develop naturally. Sometimes, organizations have formal mentor programs, and these are great resources for meeting people and sometimes for establishing mentorships. But don't rely on a formal mentor program because your employer might not have one or the match you get may not be ideal. Instead, be proactive and use the following tips to help you seek your own mentors:

- Think about what you need and want in your mentors.
- Meet with different people who may fit your ideal to see if a relationship develops.
- Try to expand the relationship to meet more frequently or discuss things more deeply.
- Be responsive and helpful to your mentors.

When you are just starting in an organization, find a shepherd to give you a lay of the land. You need to get acclimated to your new environment. Then think about your goals for next year, two years out, and so forth, and think about what you need to know or what skills you need to develop. This gives you an indication of where you may benefit from mentorship.

Identify people in whom you are genuinely interested who might be able to provide advice and counsel toward your goals. Meet with them for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. If you can work on a project with them, that is another way to start a relationship. You should not automatically assume someone will agree to mentor you or would even be a good mentor. Right now, you just want to see who you enjoy being with and who can also provide the mentorship you seek.

For those people who might be possible mentors to you, you do not need to ask them as formally as you would a marriage proposal—that is, no bended knee before saying, "Will you mentor me?" Instead, let them know that their advice and insights in past conversations have been helpful and ask if you can reach out to them on a more regular basis to continue the conversations. Sometimes people will say they don't have the time to commit to something regularly, but sometimes people will be flattered and enthusiastic. You will need to meet with many people before finding the right mentors, so don't be concerned if your

first efforts are not fruitful. At the very least, you are meeting people and practicing networking and relationship building.

When you do secure a mentor, you want to be a good mentee. Mentorship is a relationship, so you are equally responsible for its success. You are initiating the relationship, so be mindful of how the mentor likes to communicate and at what frequency. Is it better for him or her to meet at breakfast or after work, rather than during the day? Does your mentor want to have a sit-down meeting with an agenda or a quick conversation when you both have the time? Be proactive about scheduling the meetings so that the mentor isn't doing the work to maintain the relationship.

Get to know your mentor as a whole person. Find ways to be helpful to him or her. Many mentors enter these relationships because they want to give back. At the very least, let your mentor know about the impact he or she is making by providing results updates—what happened when you took the advice they gave? If you know your mentor has a specific hobby or interest, find a helpful article or recommendation to support that interest.

Remember that your needs and your mentor's availability change over time. Mentorships evolve, so if you find that you have less to discuss and the relationship has run its course, schedule less frequent meetings. Turn the mentorship into a friendship, and steer the discussions more personally or outside the question-advice format. Treat your mentorships like two-way relationships with give and take.

Develop Professional Relationships with Different Companies, Departments, and Levels

A strong professional network is not just about mentorships. You also have colleagues who provide emotional support and more direct support, perhaps, on joint projects. You may be in a role that has customers. You may be working with consultants or vendors. Your job may require you to partner with other organizations. For your own knowledge and expertise, it is helpful to know about organizations and people outside your own employer. Organizations evolve over time, so it is helpful to know people at all levels—your peer could become your manager, or you may be asked to lead a team composed of peers. Knowing people in different departments, at all levels, both inside and outside your employer, ensures that you have a diversity in perspectives about your role, your organization, and your industry. You may have a very specific role right now, but as your responsibilities expand, you will likely have to work with more and more people. It is helpful to establish relationships before you are forced to work together.

Our new teacher would want to know people in his school but also in other schools. If he teaches in a public school, it would be helpful to know people in independent, charter, and other schools. People in the school's administrative department or other school governing body would also be helpful contacts. Academics and experts in education, donors and supporters of education organizations, and parent organizers are other potential contacts for a teacher.

Be Proactive in Your Outreach, Communication, and Follow-Up

You need to be thoughtful and proactive about relationship-building to have quality relationships with mentors, colleagues in different departments, colleagues at different levels, and people outside your employer:

- Set aside specific time to expand your professional network.
- Work on your communication skills and style.
- Follow up over time to ensure relationships develop naturally and are not rushed.

People are busy, and you are busy. If you wait for an opportune time to start building your network, you will not find one. There is no urgency to day-to-day networking, so it will be set aside for a later time that never comes. Instead, schedule a few hours each week with the goal of expanding your professional network. You might set aside one lunch hour per week to eat with a different colleague. You might join a professional association and attend their meetings and mixers. One new teacher volunteered to be her school's union representative. She wanted to learn about the union, and though she was new, she was the only one who volunteered, so it was great exposure in her very first year. You might play on your employer's softball league. You might volunteer to organize the office holiday party. Many opportunities exist to meet a diverse mix of professionals both inside and outside your employer, but you have to consciously set aside the time to do this.

Are you comfortable introducing yourself to people and telling them what you do? Networking is one of the six job search steps, so you probably have worked on your networking pitch to get a job, but in the daily work context, your pitch is about what you do now. Plan and practice what you will say.

If the thought of joining a professional association and going to meetings makes you uncomfortable, consider joining with a more extroverted buddy. The softball league or a volunteer committee might provide a structured outlet for your networking. Find a colleague who isn't shy and ask them to introduce

you to people. People are often very happy to help and may not realize you are shy. Let your boss know that you are trying to meet people, and ask him or her to introduce you to people.

Once you meet people, make time to maintain and expand relationships over time. It is impossible to schedule regular live contact with everyone in your professional network—colleagues, customers, vendors, management, former colleagues (as you progress in your career), and people in your related function or industry. However, you can keep in touch with phone calls and e-mails. The same spirit of generosity applies as you expand and deepen relationships—maintain contact without asking for anything in return.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Mentors are an important part of your professional network to provide advice and a sounding board for ideas and concerns.
- Do not use your boss or your boss's boss as your mentor, so you can candidly speak about your issues and get an objective, outside perspective.
- Several types of mentors are available: guardian angel, shepherd, and board of directors. Ideally, you have several mentors.
- You develop strong mentorships naturally by meeting with people and letting relationships grow. Be a good mentee by being proactive and flexible about scheduling, and by being responsive to your mentor's needs.
- In addition to mentors, you want to develop relationships with people at all levels, in different departments, and inside and outside your company.
- Build relationships proactively by setting aside time to meet people and practicing how you will introduce yourself.

EXERCISES

1. Do you currently have mentors in your life? Pick one area of your life that you wish to improve, and try to find a mentor for that area.
2. Think about your one-year, two-year, and longer-term goals. What areas do you already know would benefit from some mentoring? Think about who might be ideal mentors for those areas. Can you start meeting these people now? Remember that you want to have mentors both inside and outside your employer, so you can start even before you are hired.

3. Look at the suggestions for building your professional network and decide which ones appeal to you. If the idea of a membership group appeals to you, can you join something now? Professional associations often have student chapters or other groups for people new to the career.

12.3 How to Steer Your Career Advancement: Promotions, Raises, and Performance Reviews

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn strategies to practice good career management while still focusing on your day-to-day job.
2. Understand the outline and learn how to maximize a performance review meeting.
3. Understand when and how to ask for a promotion.
4. Understand when and how to ask for a raise. Career Management Goes Beyond Your Day-to-Day Job

Even from the earlier sections of this chapter, you can see that your day-to-day job is just one part of your work experience. paper work, company policies, and physical environment also are a part of your job. You also have professional relationships. Even if you look only at yourself and what you do, you still are responsible for more than just your day-to-day job. You also are responsible for your overall career; these are two distinct entities.

Your day-to-day job is what you were hired to do now. It is first meeting the success metrics that you confirmed in your ninety days. It is having a good relationship with your current boss.

Your overall career is made up of your day-to-day job and your future jobs; therefore, career management means staying marketable and ready for future jobs that will be different from the job you are doing now.

To continue the schoolteacher example, his day-to-day job is teaching his students in the class he has now. Maximizing his overall career also includes staying current on pedagogy and his subject expertise. It also includes getting additional certifications. If he aspires to school leadership, teaching excellence will be just one part; he needs administrative experience in school operations; he needs to coach other teachers; he needs to stay abreast of the latest teaching innovations and challenges because as a leader he needs to guide his school through changes in education. This schoolteacher, therefore, needs to meet his day-to-day job demands, while fitting in the development of additional skills and experience required for his desired future job.

An accountant might be assigned a specific area of tax and a specific type of client. Her day-to-day job is about completing the tasks at hand. Later roles will involve overseeing an entire project and multiple accountants, who, like she once did, just manage certain tasks. Later roles might require overseeing entire client relationships with multiple projects. Finally, this accountant will be expected to bring in new clients; her primary focus becomes selling projects rather than managing projects or performing accounting tasks. This accountant, therefore, needs to perform her accounting tasks, while maintaining perspective on the overall project, developing management skills, and ultimately developing client relationship and selling skills.

The ability to manage both your day-to-day job and your overall career requires good time management and self-awareness of your dual tracks. It is a time management issue because you need to do the daily work of your job and still prioritize time for career-building. You also must have self-awareness of what you want to achieve, your ideal timetable, and what you need to meet these goals. When you are new in your career, your main priority should be to be the best performer you can be in your current job. As soon as you have acclimated to your environment and mastered your daily work, it is time to start proactively scheduling in the training, research, and relationship-building activities you need to prepare for your next role. Do not just assume that opportunities for career advancement will come to you.

Maximizing Your Performance Review Meeting

One way of knowing that you have mastered your daily work is by getting feedback on how you are doing at your job. Some organizations have formal feedback processes, where your direct boss and sometimes even colleagues or other people who work with you fill out a performance feedback form. These forms typically include criteria for the technical skills of your job and soft skills, such as communication skills and relationship skills with others. When you join an organization, find out if it has a formal performance review process. Find out its frequency—it could be annually or several times per year. Some organizations (e.g., management consulting firms) give formal feedback after every project. Ask to see the performance review form when you start because it is a great indication of the criteria by which you will be judged. Unfortunately, not every organization has formal processes in place, or, if they do, not all managers actually give the review in a timely and thorough way. Your employer might have a formal process, but if no one follows it, you still don't have your review. In the case where you aren't getting formal performance feedback, you need to ask for it. In the first section on how to do well on the job, we covered the

importance of regular updates with your boss. This alone should ensure that a formal performance review has few surprises. However, these shorter updates are not a substitute for a more thorough review of your performance. Schedule a meeting with your boss well in advance, and let him or her know you would like to discuss your performance.

At a formal performance review, you want to cover four topics:

- A summary of what you are working on and have accomplished since your last review
- Confirmation of priorities and expectations for what you will be working on in the next few months or year
- Specific things you did well or qualities that are your strengths
- Specific areas you need to improve, including suggestions for how you can develop these areas

Don't assume that your boss is aware of everything you are working on and have accomplished. Some jobs have narrowly defined tasks, but many jobs have ad hoc projects that arise. Sometimes you take over the duties of a colleague if your area is restructured or the colleague is assigned to other things. Your boss may lose track because he or she might have other direct reports and his or her own responsibilities and daily work. The new accountant, for example, might have been expected only to be a junior member of a project team, but maybe the manager got called onto another project for a few weeks, and the new accountant stepped up. She needs to make sure her boss realizes that she went above and beyond on a project.

Come prepared to your performance review with a list of your current responsibilities and past accomplishments. Listen closely to what your boss sees as your responsibilities and past accomplishments. Make sure you are on the same page—maybe you are prioritizing a part of your job that your boss sees as trivial. Maybe your boss highlights a win that you overlooked or dismissed as unimportant. The new accountant might be spending a lot of time formatting specific client reports rather than talking to the client and getting verbal input on what they're thinking. Maybe the firm would prefer that she get in front of the clients more, rather than focus on the written correspondence (or vice versa). Come to agreement on any gaps between how you evaluate your performance and how your boss evaluates you so that you know the criteria on which you are judged for the future.

In the spirit of agreement, confirm priorities and expectations for the upcoming months or year (depending on the frequency of when you get a performance review and how quickly your duties typically

change). Make sure you are working on the tasks and projects that matter to your boss and to your department. Be prepared to discuss what you plan to work on, but be open to the possibility that your boss might reprioritize your work. Having a prepared list of upcoming tasks and projects also makes your boss aware of everything you are doing—remember, he or she has other direct reports and responsibilities and may not realize all you've been assigned.

Ask for feedback on your strengths and what you did well. Don't assume that a performance review is just about improving and therefore discussing your weaknesses. Knowing your strengths is equally important so you know what to build on and do more often. Continuing the example of the schoolteacher, many schools observe teachers in the classroom and give instructional feedback (this is done by the principal and possibly dedicated instructional coaches). A new teacher might not realize how effectively he is engaging his students by mixing up the lesson into lecture, small group, and independent work. Once that is pointed out in a performance review, the teacher knows to build this into future lessons.

However, you also want to address any weaknesses or areas to develop. Don't get defensive; just listen and schedule another meeting after this review if you still disagree with the feedback once you've had time to absorb it. Ask for specific examples so you are clear on what behavior isn't desirable or how your skill in a weak area is deficient. Get your boss's recommendation for how you can address these weaker areas. Do you need to get on a project to hone these skills? Is there any training you can attend at the organization or offsite? Can your boss give you more regular coaching on a day-to-day basis? Continuing the example of the new accountant, she might have struggled on a project that required a specific industry expertise or area of accounting. Her boss might recommend a training course to develop this expertise, or she may be placed on another project in the same industry or accounting specialty so she can get more exposure to that area.

If a number of weaknesses are revealed, or if there is a wide disagreement between what you and your boss think (in terms of what you accomplished, your future priorities, strengths, and weaknesses), you want to get agreement on the next steps to fill this understanding gap. You probably want to schedule another meeting in the not-too-distant future to check in or at least step up your regular updates. It is important that you know how your job performance is being perceived and that you build on your strengths and improve your weaknesses.

When and How to Ask for a Promotion

Your main priority when you are new on the job is to master the job. You will learn from your performance reviews how you are doing and if you are ready to take on more responsibility. Some organizations have very specific career tracks with well-defined schedules for when the typical employee progresses to more responsibility and a formal promotion in title. As with performance reviews, however, not all organizations have a formal or well-defined process. Over your career, you may be in situations where you need to ask for a promotion.

You need to have a good understanding of your organization's culture to know the best timing and case for a promotion. In a flat organization, where there are few titles, the chances of a promotion are fewer due to the flatter structure. Even where a range of titles exist, if you see that people with the more senior titles have many years' experience, then you can approximate that the track to each promotion requires many years. There are always exceptions, so you want to look at individual cases in your specific organization, but the flatness of the organization and the title track of people already within it are two good indications of how promotions are viewed.

It is ideal to already be doing a bigger job before requesting a promotion. You want to have earned your promotion. It will not be given on promise or potential. In this way, you want to structure a promotion discussion much like the performance review meeting. You want to itemize your current workload and past accomplishments, which should demonstrate that you have taken on more than your current title suggests. You want to confirm your future projects, which should indicate a bigger role with more responsibility. You want to highlight your strengths.

Know the exact title you want and what you plan to do in the role. If your boss agrees, get confirmation of when the promotion will take place and ask for something in writing documenting your new position and responsibilities. This way, you ensure that everyone has the same understanding and that your promotion has officially gone through the proper channels of approval.

If your boss doesn't agree, get a clear understanding of why so you can plan your next steps and manage your career accordingly. If the timing is too soon, find out when you can revisit getting a promotion. If promotion approvals occur only during certain times of the year, mark your calendar so you catch the next decision process. If your boss disagrees about your achievements or skills, ask for recommendations on how to improve. You are not entitled to a promotion, but you also don't need to sit idly by and just wait for one. Document your achievements, make your case, and act on feedback that you receive.

When and How to Ask for a Raise

A promotion and a raise are different, although they sometimes go hand in hand. As with promotions, some organizations give raises on a regular schedule, typically annually either at your start date anniversary or at the same time every year for the whole organization (in which case, the raise is prorated for your start date in your first year). Sometimes raises are pegged to inflation; this raise is known as COLA, or cost of living adjustment. Sometimes raises are performance based, in which case strong feedback or specific results (e.g., sales) determine the raise.

As with promotions, you want to know what is customary for your specific organization. This doesn't mean that you can't ask for an exception, but you will at least know what to expect and to brace yourself to make a case if what you are asking for is exceptional. You might consider asking for a raise if your job has changed dramatically and you are taking on more tasks and responsibilities. Another reason to ask for a raise outside the yearly increase is if you have new market information that shows salaries in similar positions are dramatically different from your own.

A raise implies a permanent adjustment to your salary. Your employer may not want to do this if your additional responsibilities are temporary. In this case, you might ask for aspot bonus, or one-time bonus, to compensate you for your extra work. Remember that going above and beyond your daily work is how you distinguish yourself, so in and of itself that is not enough to justify a raise or bonus. A raise or bonus is warranted in extraordinary cases, and the measure of what is extraordinary varies by organization.

As with promotion requests and performance review meetings, you want to come prepared with your accomplishments as evidence you deserve a raise. The raise meeting is the time to share any market data that you learned. Be informative, but not threatening. You don't want your employer to think you are giving an ultimatum that you get the raise or else you will quit. They may call your bluff. Instead, reiterate how excited you are about your position and affirm that this is the right organization for you, but make your case why a raise may be merited for what you have done.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Doing well on your job is but one part of overall career management. You also want to look at your future goals and make sure that you develop the training, experience, and relationships necessary to reach these goals.

- Some organizations have formal processes for giving performance reviews, assigning promotions, and granting raises. You want to know what is customary for your organization.
- If your organization does not have official processes for performance reviews, promotions, or raises, you will want to schedule time to discuss these with your boss.
- Regular performance feedback is critical to ensure you are doing a good job and are on track for your career goals. Promotions and raises are not a regular occurrence, but are for extraordinary contributions, such as if your responsibilities increase or you have exceptional results in your work.

EXERCISES

1. Aside from doing well in your first job, what are your career goals? Write your autobiography from the point of view of twenty years from now. Yes, you will have to make assumptions and outright guess for some things, but let your imagination explore what you'd like to say you accomplished. Then work backward to explore how you might get that career. When did you get your first promotion? How is a promotion defined—a bigger role, managing people, better scores, higher sales, or some other measure? Do you go to graduate school—for what and when? Look at the profiles for people who have the career you want and see what their career trajectory looks like.
2. If you have a sense of your long-term career goals, plot out what you can do in your first year to move toward these goals. If you know graduate school may be in the future, set reminders for yourself to check on the status of recommendations—are you working closely enough with people who can provide recommendations down the line? What professional organization might you want to join?
3. For the jobs you are targeting, talk to professional associations and people who have those jobs about what is customary regarding performance reviews, promotions, and raises.

12.4 How to Secure Your Job during Difficult Economic Times

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the signs of a potential layoff.
2. Get strategies for how to handle a layoff and move on to a new job. The recent high unemployment numbers underscore that an important part of career success is staying employed even when the economy is difficult. The first three sections we covered in this chapter all contribute to securing your job:

- Doing well in your daily work increases your value for that job.
- Maintaining open communication and a good relationship with your boss ensures that you stay positively in mind if layoff decisions need to be made.

- Having a broad professional network means other people may support your case.
- Being mindful of career advancement helps because organizations like to keep strong performers.

However, sometimes even good workers get laid off. Companies buy or merge with other companies, and this often means there will be overlap—for example, two human resources (HR) departments, two accounting departments, and so forth. The new company may not need or have a place for everybody. Organizations may close their doors altogether. Enron, Bear Stearns, Lehman Brothers, and several nonprofits with money invested with Bernie Madoff closed quickly, without any warning in some cases. Therefore, knowing that layoffs can happen through no fault of your own, you want to be able to see the warning signs (so you have more time to react) and manage a layoff so you get the most support and momentum to move on to a new job

Watch for Warning Signs before a Layoff

It's hard to predict the exact timing of a layoff, but certain events indicate that you should start paying closer attention to the health of your organization and the security of your job:

- Changes in the economy
- Changes in industry
- Changes in an organization's financial standing

- Changes in management
- Changes in behavior of managers, coworkers, and subordinates
- Changes in job responsibilities
- Changes in performance feedback

If the overall economy is stagnant or depressed, repercussions are felt throughout many industries. Public schools are impacted by state budget cuts. Hospitals face shrinking federal funds.

Nonprofit endowments decrease and, subsequently, so do their operating budgets. Consumers spend less, so retail stores have lower sales and lower revenues. Businesses have less money to spend on advertising, technology, consulting, and other business services. If the economy takes a hit, your employer likely takes a hit. If the economy suffers a deep blow, it might be enough to threaten your employer's ability to maintain its workforce.

Sometimes specific industries are hit especially hard. Housing has undergone a recent contraction, so mortgage services, builders, housing-related equipment and supplies, and other real estate-related companies are struggling. If you hear that your employer's competitors aren't doing well or that your broader industry isn't doing well, follow the news more closely. If an industry your employer serves isn't doing well, that impacts you just as directly. For example, when car companies were having financial trouble, the advertising agencies that relied heavily on automotive company business also were hard hit.

The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics tracks hundreds of different jobs and gives estimates on future job prospects for that role.

You may be tempted to disregard your organization's internal memos, newsletters, or even annual report, but it is a good idea to stay current with your organization's health. Is it profitable? Does it have a diversified customer base—that is, a lot of different customers, so you are not relying on any one group? Is your employer growing? Is the growth related to your job, or is it in a different geography or different functional area?

If your organization's management changes, that is a sign to follow your work environment and prospects more closely. It is customary for a new executive team to want to bring in their own people. If you are new to your career and many levels below the executive team, this may not affect you now, but it's something to remember as you advance upward in your career. In addition, if your immediate boss changes, the new boss may want to bring in his or her own team, and that does affect you, regardless of how junior you are.

Earlier in this chapter, we talked about keeping open communication, developing relationships, and getting feedback. You want to do this on a regular basis because changes in the behavior of your boss or colleagues (or team when you start managing others), as well as changes in your responsibilities or your performance feedback should be watched closely. You want to have time to turn things around if you discover people are not happy with your work. If you can't ameliorate the situation where you are, you want to have time to look for your next opportunity and leave on your own terms.

Improve Your Situation If You Do Get Laid Off

A layoff doesn't have to mean you did a bad job. If you are let go for performance-based reasons, by all means learn from that. If you are fired because you didn't get along with your boss or coworkers, try to establish better relationships at your next job because professional relationships are important. If you were laid off due to a bad economy, restructuring, or other external reason, let the job go and focus on moving on to your next job.

To make the most out of a layoff situation, you can take action steps at different stages:

- During the termination process
- Before your final day with the organization
- After you leave the organization

Manage the Termination Process

Layoff scenarios will vary based on how much lead time the organization has to prepare and how many resources it has to support the layoff. A small business with few employees will handle layoffs differently than a large, global company with thousands of affected employees. The following is a roadmap for managing the termination process in a large organization that has resources to provide support for laid-off employees.

Once a layoff is announced, you will meet with HR to discuss the terms of your severance and your end date. Prepare for this meeting by reviewing your organization's manual and any information about the severance policy. Some questions to consider include the following:

- How is severance pay calculated (typically by years of service, but additional compensation is sometimes given after long tenure, if little warning is given, or if many employees are affected)?
- What happens to bonuses or other compensation that haven't been paid yet?
- What happens to retirement benefits that still need to vest?

- What health coverage and other benefits are available?

  Ideally, you have a friend in HR who can explain the policies to you before the termination meeting so you know what to expect and what you want to negotiate if you need more than the policy dictates. Severance packages are negotiable.

  During the termination meeting, listen closely and take notes. Fully understand the severance package being offered. Ask questions if anything is unclear. Agree to get terms of the severance package in writing. Schedule a follow-up meeting for after you have a chance to review these items. Do not negotiate yet because you want to take time to prepare.

  Remember that the organization probably regrets having to lay you off and wants to help you. Once you have received your offer, check what is customary for organizations similar in size and in your industry. You might want to negotiate for some of the following items:

- More severance pay
- Longer health-care coverage
- Payout for bonuses accrued up to your end date
- Immediate vesting of your retirement benefits
- Outplacement or career coaching to help get your next job
- Payouts for unused vacation, sick, or personal days
- An end date further out (Your end date may determine things like bonus pay, retirement vesting, and even accrued vacation days, so the further out your end date, the more you might accrue.)

Secure Your Relationships before You Leave the Organization

Collect contact information for the people with whom you'd like to keep in touch. Don't forget to share your personal contact information because most of your colleagues are used to reaching you at your work e-mail. Arrange with the IT department to have an automatic reply to your work e-mail that enables people who are trying to reach you specifically to have access to your personal information. If you do not want to share your personal information with everyone who may contact you at work, create a temporary account on Gmail or Yahoo! specifically for this forwarding purpose. Have the temporary Gmail or Yahoo! account forward to your primary personal e-mail and then you can decide if you want to share your information at that time.

Thank your boss, management, colleagues, and direct reports. Even if you are not personal friends with all these people, you may need them for references or job leads. For people whom you know you want for references, ask them while you are still on staff so you can do so personally. Get their personal contact information, in case they get laid off, too, or otherwise leave the company. Collaborate with your boss on what details of your layoff will be distributed both inside and outside the organization. You want to make sure you have a consistent and positive story.

Check with HR to see if there are consulting opportunities within the organization or openings at subsidiaries or partners of the organization. Find out if a formal process is necessary to submit your résumé or arrange interviews.

Some organizations require that you leave your office the same day you are laid off. You may not have time to take all the preceding steps. If you know this is a possibility where you work (check what is customary for your industry and also how your organization handled layoffs in the past), make sure you have personal contact information well before any danger signs are visible. Make sure you can quickly pack your office and take what you need. Do not keep your personal contacts only on your office computer or office phone because you might not have enough time to pull these contacts off before you lose company access to this information.

Get Ready to Start Your Search Right after You Leave the Organization

It's fine to take time off to recharge, but don't mistake your severance period for a paid vacation. Use that time to start your job search while you still have a cash cushion. Don't wait until you are running out of money and then cram in an anxious and desperate job search.

Run your numbers on how much cash cushion you have (given severance, savings, and so forth) to give you a timetable for your job search. A proactive job search typically takes three to six months. If you need money coming in sooner, you might want to build in time for temporary or consulting work in addition to your job search.

Your job search is now your full-time job. Schedule time for specific job search activities. Prioritize your job search so you are not tempted to spend this new "free time" reorganizing your house or doing non-career-related projects.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Changes in the broad economy, your industry, your organization's financials or management, or the feedback you are getting may signal a potential layoff.
- If you do get laid off, manage your termination process to get the maximum support to which you are entitled.
- Before you leave an organization, collect contact information and say thank you. Relationships with your former employer are still important.
- Don't wait too long to start your job search, so you won't feel rushed or pressured to land a job right away.

EXERCISES

1. Start the habit of following the broad economy and your target industry. Add *The Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, *Fortune*, *BusinessWeek*, or other general business publications to your reading list.
2. Compose a checklist for yourself with what you need in a layoff situation so that when you start your new job, you have it as a reference tool. Remind yourself to keep personal contact information somewhere other than just on your professional equipment. Remind yourself to review your organization policies and build relationships with HR before you need them.

12.5 How to Manage Work Conflicts

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand potential challenges you may face in the workplace.
2. Get strategies for how to handle problems and when to use formal channels, such as human resources (HR).
3. Learn how to avoid burnout and maintain work and life balance.

Day-to-Day Workplace Conflict Is Often about Managing Relationships

When you work side by side with people, many different people and personalities are interacting, so conflicts inevitably arise:

- A talkative colleague interrupts you when you are trying to work.
- A teammate on a project isn't pulling his or her own weight.
- A competitive colleague takes credit for your ideas.
- A person from whom you need information is unresponsive.

These examples present challenges in day-to-day relationships. Relationship management is a key skill to mitigate common workplace conflicts. Your mentors, especially your shepherd, can help you by forewarning you of colleagues who might be problematic and advising you how others have learned to work with those people. You might simply need to set boundaries and establish a working relationship for the future.

If a colleague interrupts your work, don't continue the conversation. If you engage her in conversation, she might think you welcome her interruptions. Let her know you have a deadline and ask if you can come by at a set time. Make sure you schedule a time that is specific and limited. She will likely get the message—though it may take a few times—and stop interrupting you. You have set a boundary and a standard for how you wish to be treated.

If a colleague isn't pulling his own weight, your strategy will depend on his seniority to you (if you are peers, it's less complicated than if he's senior), your working history, and whether you expect to be working together in the future. React more carefully if your lazy colleague is senior, in case he has more influence with your boss. If your working history has been good in the past, you might decide to give your colleague the benefit of the doubt or reach out and candidly offer your help. If you expect to be working together on an ongoing basis, it is more important that you first establish a good working relationship. Get

help from your mentor on how to deal with the situation in a way that reflects the culture of the organization as well as the relationship and power dynamics.

If a competitive colleague takes credit for your idea, make sure you document your ideas and speak up so that she is unable to do this. She might not realize it's your idea and is merely repeating what she heard. She might do this intentionally, but once you stand up for yourself, she'll move on to others. This underscores how important it is to have regular updates with your boss where you can let him or her know firsthand what you are contributing.

If a colleague is unresponsive, recognize that there will be many situations where you have to influence people to help you, even when it is someone over whom you have no direct authority. This is a great skill to learn. The causes as to why someone may be unresponsive differ widely, but you can help the situation by making clear requests with specific deadlines. People are busy, and if you don't get what you need, rather than assume someone is deliberately being unhelpful, be clear and help people help you.

These are just some examples of workplace conflicts, but others will occur because your work environment combines many different personalities, roles, and cultures. Good communication and relationship-management skills will help you tremendously. If you have mentors who can provide a sounding board, as well as the cultural and historical context for people's behaviors, that will help tailor your good foundational skills to your current environment.

Workplace Issues Sometimes Are Complex and Require Assistance from HR

It is always a good idea to work with your mentors to help manage workplace conflict. Depending on the seriousness of the issue, you may also want to call on HR, which includes people specifically trained in employee relations, employment law, and other areas helpful to mediate workplace conflict.

In the "Learn How Your Employer Runs Its Business" section of this chapter, we recommended you read the company policy manual within your first ninety days. Often, you are required to sign confirmation you have read and are familiar with the policies. It's important to keep the manual handy so that you know how to manage some of the following uncertainties or conflicts beyond daily relationship struggles:

- Can I check my personal e-mail and online sites during work hours?
- Can I pursue a job on the side?
- Can I date a colleague?
- Can I take or e-mail my files with me if I want to work from home.?

- Is it harassment or discrimination when I'm offended by something a colleague said or did?

  Technology policies evolve quickly because of the increasing importance of social media. By the time this book is published, standards likely will have changed. Currently, some employers monitor all employee e-mails sent on office equipment, whether from a personal e-mail account or not. Some employers block access to sites like Facebook or LinkedIn. Be careful if you have a personal blog. Your employer may still consider that what you say reflects on them. You want to check what is allowed and customary at your own workplace.

  Generation Y (born 1980–1995, so they are today's entry-level workers) is an entrepreneurial generation. It is not unheard of to find people with a side business, perhaps a website or a consulting business. This could be a violation of company policy, so even if you do the extra work on your own time and don't think it interferes with your work, you want to make sure it is not a violation. A conflict of interest might occur, and working another job could be grounds for dismissal.

  Similar to a job on the side, office dating may be explicitly covered in company policy. Even if it isn't, weigh the decision carefully to date a colleague. If the relationship doesn't work out, you still have to see this person. In addition, even if you and the colleague you are dating are both fine with the decision to date, other colleagues may react differently. When you are early in your career, you have a short track record, so your reputation is built with what you do every day. Weigh possible adverse perceptions carefully.

  Don't assume you can just e-mail or take your work files out of your office. If you are dealing with customer data or information that must be kept confidential, taking information offsite may be against company policy. Your home office equipment may not meet security requirements. You might have to log into a specific server to access your work files so that security is maintained. Again, don't just assume. Check your employer policy.

  If you think a colleague is harassing or discriminating against you, this is a good example of when you might want to speak with HR. When you bring issues to HR, they need to start an official investigation, so make sure before you do this that there really is a problem and not a misunderstanding that you can handle on your own. Maybe the boorish colleague does not mean to discriminate, but just has terrible judgment or poor taste. Your mentors can help you assess the situation based on exactly what happened, what they know of the colleague in question, and any other nuances specific to your employment

situation. You should never tolerate harassment or discrimination, but use good judgment on the best course to pursue.

Workplace conflict can be tricky and varies widely, so it's impossible to cover every scenario or make very specific recommendations. Some good rules of thumb include the following:

- Focus on maintaining good relationships with open communication and clear boundaries.
- Know your company policy, and check to see if answers to your questions are readily available.
- Use your mentors as a sounding board and information source for nuances and historical examples you can't readily research.
- Use HR for support. It is always helpful to have a friend in HR who can share information and counsel outside of official meetings.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Many workplace conflicts can be minimized with good relationship management—open communication and clear boundaries.
- Do not assume that you can do personal work on office equipment or take work home on your personal equipment. Check company policy on personal e-mail and social media policy, confidentiality, and any other issues about which you have questions.
- Use your mentors for advice and information.
- Use HR as a resource if a serious office situation occurs, such as harassment or discrimination.

EXERCISES

1. How good are your relationship skills? Many of the scenarios listed can happen in school or another nonwork environment. Think about where you have had difficult relationships in the past, and think of helpful strategies you used. Think about areas you may need to develop, and plan how you might work on these before you start your job.
2. Try to find a company policy manual for the industry or type of company in which you are interested. What are the policies regarding personal e-mail and social media, working a side job, and so forth? Talk to people in the jobs you are targeting to find out what is customary.

12.6 How to Have a Life and a Career

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand why quality of life outside work contributes to career success.
2. Get strategies for how to maintain a healthy life outside your job. Personal Finances Impact Career Success

Some employers check credit history before extending offers. One of the reasons for this is the notion that a person's ability to handle money responsibly is a signal of overall responsibility. This is a well-defined example of how your life outside of work (in this case, your finances) impacts your career success. When you transition to your first job, you have a number of financial issues to manage:

- If you borrowed money for school, you may have to start loan repayment.
- You may need to secure your first off-campus residence.
- You won't have health insurance through your school, so you need to secure medical coverage.
- You have your first significant paycheck and need to understand withholdings, taxes, and perhaps retirement plans.

Even if this isn't your first job, financial transitions will occur throughout your life—for example, buying a home, getting married and commingling finances and legal obligations, and having children.

For both the entry-level and the experienced worker, your financial situation dictates how much risk you can take, which may limit your opportunities. If you are living paycheck to paycheck, you might need to tolerate a less-than-ideal work situation. You might not be able to take a chance on a new business or a job change.

Personal finances matter. You can start some good habits start early in your career:

- Check your credit annually. You can get a free credit report at each of the major credit bureaus at https://www.annualcreditreport.com/cra/index.jsp.

- Manage your debt. If you have student loans, get confirmation about when you need to start repaying and how much. With other debts, make sure you pay at least the minimum on time. Late fees and penalties for underpayment can add significant amounts quickly to your original debt. Don't forget to consider future graduate school plans as you review and organize your debt load.
- Get adequate insurance coverage. You want to be able to focus on your career and not have to worry about unexpected medical bills or something happening to your home derailing your focus. Types of insurance that most people need include medical insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, homeowners or renters insurance, and disability insurance

Health and Well-Being Are Important to Your Career

In addition to good finances, good health is part of the foundation for career success. You physically can't do the work if you don't take care of your health. Once you know your typical work schedule in your new job, schedule time for exercise. Some workplaces have gyms, or you might look at nearby gyms as an option to make time for exercise.

Schedule your annual physical, dental appointments, and other routine medical care. Put these appointments into your professional calendar so you don't schedule meetings on top of these and push them off to the side. Try scheduling as many routine checkups as possible before you start your job so that you can focus 100 percent on the new job.

Make time for breaks, eat lunch, drink water, and practice good health habits even during the workday. When you are new, you have a lot of information to process and you may be tempted to work through breaks or lunch, or never leave your desk. Set your Outlook calendar to remind you to stretch. Block off your lunch hours and make dates with colleagues so you keep the time free. You need to replenish your mental and physical energy so you are able to focus and do good work.

You might be tempted to work past the regular day, or do career-related activities after work (e.g., professional networking, training). While this is admirable, you also want to pursue hobbies and personal interests outside work. First of all, personal hobbies make you a more well-rounded person, which helps your career. Second, focusing on personal hobbies gives you a more diverse network, which also helps your career. Finally, pursuing personal interests gives you a much-needed mental break, which should help you be more focused and possibly more creative in your job.

Personal Relationships also Need Attention

Not every relationship needs to contribute to your career success. Consider involvement in your community. Don't forget your social circle from college and other non-work-related situations. Similar to personal hobbies, personal relationships outside work make you more well rounded and give you a diverse perspective. It is easy to overlook these relationships, so schedule time on your calendar on an ongoing basis so that these relationships are not continually pushed aside for work reasons.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Life success contributes to career success, such as the areas of personal finance, health and well-being, and relationships.
- Schedule the time and specific activities for each of your nonwork areas so that they are not forgotten in the immediate pressures of work.

EXERCISES

1. Go to https://www.annualcreditreport.com/cra/index.jsp and order your credit report. Fix any errors, and read it thoroughly to understand the current state of your finances.
2. Itemize your current financial responsibilities. Make a list of bills you need to pay. Make a list of action steps before your next job, for example, if you need to find a place to live. Check your insurance coverage.
3. Schedule routine medical checkups. Set your calendar for when you need to make your next appointment so that when you are busy on the job you can be assured that your calendar will remind you to make appointments.
4. Pick which personal hobbies and relationships you will prioritize. Make specific plans with dates, times, and activities and how you will incorporate these interests and relationships once you start working.

12.7 How to Get Your Next Job

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the signs of when you might want to start looking.
2. Get strategies for how to look for a new job while you still have one.

Your Career Is a Succession of Jobs

In the beginning of this chapter, we introduced the notion that your career is a succession of jobs. So you should start your career fully expecting to hold multiple jobs. Even if you stay at the same organization, your job within the organization will change:

- You may take on increased responsibility. The schoolteacher becomes a grade or department chair, then an instructional coach, and then perhaps an administrator. The accountant becomes a project manager and then a client relationship manager.
- You may change focus on a different specialty or area of expertise. The schoolteacher moves from an elementary grade to middle school, or from one subject to another. The accountant who worked in the financial services practice moves to the technology practice and works with different clients.
- You may work for a different part of the organization. The schoolteacher at a public school may decide to work in the Department of Education (effectively school headquarters). In this way, he is still in education but working centrally across schools on operations, curriculum design, or another central role. The accountant may move from client-facing work to a central role helping the overall firm. She might focus on marketing, using her firsthand accounting knowledge to get published and speak at conferences as a representative of the firm. She might focus on human resources (HR), becoming a recruiter for the firm. Your own organization is a possible source of future jobs, so you should know your organization much more broadly than your current job. Know the different departments. Know the different clients and constituents your organization serves. If your organization is part of a larger group or has partners or subsidiaries, get to know these as well. You want to know the structure, what types of jobs are available, and the protocol for moving from one part of the organization to another. Some organizations have very clear rules about applying for internal jobs—for example, you need to get your current boss's permission before applying; you need to apply through HR or use another special application.

Multiple Options Exist If You Want to Change Organizations

Staying in your current organization is not your only option. Keep in mind, however, that in the beginning of your career, it is valuable to establish a track record. Staying at a job for one year or longer has value in the duration itself because you show that you have staying power and can follow through. People change jobs more frequently now, so prospective employers are not as critical when they see various employers on a résumé. However, multiple short stints of two years or fewer raise a red flag for employers that you might leave them just as quickly, or are otherwise unable to last. Recruiting and onboarding is expensive and time consuming, so prospective employers shy away from candidates who might be a flight risk.

That said, several signs might show that you have outgrown your current organization:

- You are no longer challenged, and your organization is too small for you to make a lateral move into other areas.
- You want to focus on a different specialty or skill set than you can in your current organization.
- You want to relocate, and the organization is not present in your new geography.
- You have a business idea and decide to work for yourself.

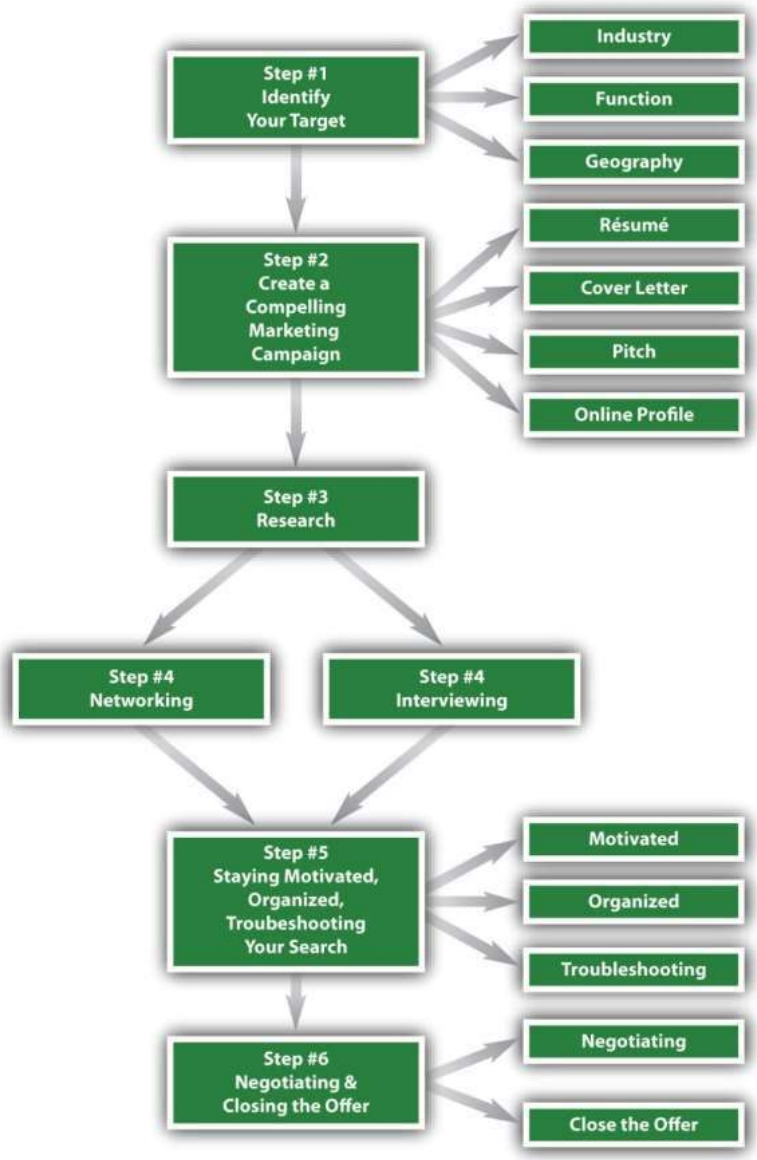
Each of these options represents a different type of opportunity and therefore a different search.

If you are leaving for a challenge, then your search needs to focus on jobs with broader responsibility or expertise requirements than you have now. Be clear on how you will measure the amount of challenge: Are you looking to manage a team? Are you looking to have responsibility for a budget or finances? Are you looking to learn a specific skill? Your ability to define specifically what you want in your next job will enable you to search for those opportunities in a targeted way.

If you want to focus on a different specialty, skill, or geography, then you want a career change. You are not just taking the outline of your job and moving it into the context of another organization. Rather, you are changing a fundamental piece of it—industry, function, or geography.

If you are leaving to go into business for yourself, this is also a career change from traditional employment to entrepreneurship. You will have the day-to-day job as well as sales, marketing, operations, finance, and all functions of running a business. The schoolteacher who decides to open a tutoring service will still be teaching but also will need to market his services, sell to prospective parents, bill his hours, collect money, balance his books, and so forth. The accountant who opens a private practice similarly has to market, sell, and run operations of an accounting firm, in addition to accounting.

Revisiting the Six Steps Will Help You Launch a Thoughtful, Proactive Search



The job search always starts with targeting so that you can customize each subsequent step to your target. Once you have determined how your next job is defined, you can move through each of the same six steps you used to get this first job.

Remember to update your marketing materials to reflect everything you have accomplished in this new job. It is good practice to update your résumé on an ongoing basis even when you are not considering a new job. Whenever you complete a new project, take on additional responsibility, or learn a new skill, add it to your résumé. This way, you are not scrambling to remember everything you accomplished (you can always edit it). Another benefit to frequent updating is it is a built-in check and balance that you are accomplishing, progressing, and learning in your job. If six months have passed and you have nothing to update, look into opportunities for training or taking on additional projects to stretch your skills and experience.

Networking is another job search step that will have changed from your first search to this current job. Your network has grown since your first job search. It now includes people you have met in your current job, as well as any professional groups you might have joined. It also includes people you met as a result of your first search. Don't overlook helpful people from your first search.

Obligations in Your Current Job Must Continue to Be Met

The six-step job search is effective because it is thorough and enables you to retain control of your search. Because it is thorough, it takes time. You must be able to spend time on your job search without compromising your ability to do your current job. From an ethical standpoint, you have committed to this job, so you need to produce. From a practical standpoint, you need to have good references from your current job for your next job, so you must maintain good standing with your current organization.

You will be able to do a lot of your job search outside normal business hours. You can update your marketing materials, research new possibilities, and reconnect with your existing network on evenings and weekends. Once you start networking outside your immediate circle and interviewing for specific jobs, you will start to intrude on your normal workday. Save your lunch hours, vacation days, and personal days in anticipation of using them for your job search.

Another area for preplanning is your appearance! If your organization does not require formal business attire, then you will stand out in your interview suit. You might consider dressing more formally on regular days so that your interview clothes do not diverge so far from your daily wear. You also might consider not wearing a blazer at your current job, but then adding it once you are offsite.

Plan ahead for if and when you will let mentors and your boss know about your job search. You will want references from your current job, ideally from your direct supervisor. In some cases, you want to keep your job search confidential, so you can refer prospective employers to a customer who knows your work, a senior colleague who has worked with or directly supervised you, or a former colleague who could speak more freely. Check your organization's policy regarding references. Some strict organizations do not allow employees to give references. Find out what is available to you because the reference-checking process is critical to the job search process.

Finally, plan for how you will leave your current job gracefully. Two weeks' notice is a national standard, but this varies by industry, company, and job. If you have a specialized function, a senior role, or are currently on a long-term assignment, it might be expected that you will give more notice than two weeks. You might be expected to train your incumbent, or even help find this person. Unless you have an employment contract (rare and typically reserved for the most executive-level jobs), remember that most jobs are employment at will, so you can leave at any time with no notice. However, you want to exit gracefully so you maintain good relationships with your organization and colleagues. People move around in their careers, and in the future you may find yourself working with some of the same people.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A career requires a succession of jobs, which can be within the same organization.
- You may want to leave your organization if you are no longer challenged, need to change your industry, function, or geography to something your current employer cannot accommodate, or to start your own business.
- Use the same six-step job search process you used to get your current job, but update your marketing materials, network, and references to reflect your new experience.
- Make sure to meet your obligations in your current job while making time for your job search.
- Make sure that you leave your current job in good standing with your organization and colleagues by giving enough notice and helping with the transition, if needed.

EXERCISE

1. If you are reading this and haven't even started your first job, career planning may seem premature. Imagine your future and think about what you'd like to be doing in ten, twenty, and thirty years—even if you have to guess. What skills do you want to be using? What people do you want to be serving? Toward what objective or mission are you working? List the skills you want to learn and the experiences you want to have in your early jobs to prepare you for this career future. You now have an outline of what you want to accomplish in your first job and what signs to look for to see if you need to move on from that job.

12.8 Chapter Review and Exercises

Getting any one job is only one step to building a career. Your career is made up of many jobs where you will add to your skills, experience, and relationships. At the same time, your career is built one job at a time. You need to do well in the job you have currently, not just look to more responsibility before you have mastered the current ones. Focus on doing your current job well. Cultivate mentors and professional relationships with people who are knowledgeable and supportive. Be proactive about steering your career forward by getting regular performance feedback and asking for promotions and raises when warranted. Know how to continue to do well on the job, even in difficult economic times and through challenging work situations. Lean on your professional relationships, but also do your own research on company policy and talk with human resources (HR). Doing well in the work environment depends heavily on your ability to manage relationships, so focus on your communication skills and ability to set boundaries. Remember to have a life outside your professional work. Do not neglect personal relationships. Take care of your health and personal finances. Pursue hobbies and interests that don't have to benefit your career. Finally, building a career isn't just about getting a job, but you also must know when to leave your job. Be clear about your objectives for your next position. Don't forget to explore opportunities within your current organization, but don't be afraid to revisit the six steps of the job search and find another position. Remember to maintain your obligations in your current job while you are looking and to exit gracefully. Then start identifying your target, create a compelling marketing campaign, conduct in-depth research.

Chapter Takeaways

- Start strong by taking advantage of onboarding support new employees typically get, such as time with HR on new hire training programs.
- Take care of practical logistics, such as paper work and learning your physical environment.
- Get confirmation about exactly what you need to get done day one, week one, month one, and the first quarter.
- Develop a good relationship with your boss by being available for updates and asking for feedback.
- Mentors are an important part of your professional network to provide advice and a sounding board for ideas and concerns.
- Do not use your boss or your boss's boss as your mentor, so you can candidly speak about your issues and get an objective, outside perspective.

- You can choose from several types of mentors: guardian angel, shepherd, and board of directors. Ideally, you will have several mentors.
- You develop strong mentorships naturally by meeting with people and letting relationships grow. Be a good mentee by being proactive and flexible about scheduling, and by being responsive to your mentor's needs.
- In addition to mentors, you develop relationships with people at all levels, in different departments, and both inside and outside your company.
- Build relationships proactively by setting aside time to meet people and practicing how you will introduce yourself.
- Doing well on your job is but one part of overall career management. You also want to look at your future goals and make sure you develop the training, experience, and relationships necessary to reach these goals.
- Some organizations have formal processes for giving performance reviews, assigning promotions, and granting raises. You want to know what is customary for your organization.
- If your organization does not have official processes for performance reviews, promotions, or raises, you will want to schedule time to discuss these with your boss.
- Regular performance feedback is critical to ensure you are doing a good job and are on track for your career goals. Promotions and raises are not a regular occurrence, but are for extraordinary contributions, such as if your responsibilities increase or you have exceptional results in your work.
- Changes in the broad economy, your industry, your organization's financials or management, or the feedback you are getting may signal a potential layoff.
- If you are laid off, manage your termination process to get the maximum support to which you are entitled.
- Before you leave an organization, collect contact information and say thank you. Relationships with your former employer are still important.
- After you leave, don't wait too long before starting your job search, so you do not feel rushed or pressured to land a job right away.
- Many workplace conflicts can be minimized with good relationship management, open communication, and clear boundaries.

- Do not assume that you can do personal work on office equipment or take work home on your personal equipment. Check company policy on personal e-mail and social media policy, confidentiality, and any other issues about which you may have any questions.
- Use your mentors for advice and information.
- Use HR as a resource if a serious office situation arises, such as harassment or discrimination.
- Life success contributes to career success, such as the areas of personal finance, health and well-being, and relationships.
- Schedule time and specific activities for each of your nonwork areas so that they are not forgotten in the immediate pressures of work.
- A career requires a succession of jobs, which can be within the same organization.
- You may want to leave your organization if you are no longer challenged, need to change your industry, function, or geography to something your current employer cannot accommodate, or to start your own business.
- Use the same six-step job search process you used to get your current job, but update your marketing materials, network, and references to reflect your new experience.
- Make sure that you can meet your obligations in your current job while making time for your job search.
- Make sure that you leave your current job in good standing with your organization and colleagues by giving enough notice and helping with the transition, if needed.

Chapter Review

1. How is career success different from job search success?
2. What is the significance of the first ninety days on the job?
3. What different types of mentors and relationships do you want to cultivate?
4. What ways can you proactively focus on career advancement?
5. What key things should you do before, during, and after a layoff?
6. What are some work conflicts and possible solutions?
7. Why is your personal life important to career success?
8. What are some reasons you may want to look for another job?