

Job Searching in a Tough Economy

Job searching often feels like a job in and of itself. In a tough economy, fewer opportunities and more applicants makes the hunt that much more challenging. Whether you're a college senior, recent grad, or seasoned employee suddenly faced with a lay-off, there are several steps you can take now to launch your job search.

- Develop a job search plan. Setting realistic goals, timeframes, and expectations at the beginning will save you a lot of frustration in the long run. View a [Job Search Video Workshop](#) before jumping in headfirst.
- Get your creative juices flowing. Effective job searching requires a multi-faceted approach, so don't be afraid to think outside the box. Internet job sites and the local want ads are okay but non-traditional sources of information are often gold mines for job seekers. Check out newsletters, e-listservs, professional associations, social networking sites, blogs and more.
- Go directly to the source. Companies are slashing their recruiting budgets left and right, so they may not have the funding to post opportunities on public job boards. Instead, visit their web pages or speak to an HR professional about open positions. Don't know where to start? Utilize employer directories such as [Career Search](#) and develop a company list to target your research.
- Know what employers want. Check out Career Services' [Employer Tips](#) video series and get the inside scoop from a handful of recruiters on topics such as resume writing, cover letters, job searching, interviewing, and more.
- Network! Nearly 65% of new hires report learning about open positions through other people. Attend structured networking events, such as [Career Conversations](#), that foster connections between emerging professionals and industry veterans.
- Widen your scope. If hiring is down in your field, consider how your transferrable skills, previous experience, and qualifications could be applied to other industries. Hiring freezes and cutbacks may mean fewer full-time positions, so don't rule out part-time jobs, internships and volunteer experience. Getting your foot in the door will help to set you apart from other candidates when new opportunities arise.
- Be proactive, be patient, and be flexible. Your job search may take longer than the average six months. Now, more than ever, it is necessary to take advantage of any potential job leads that come your way: career workshops, job fairs, professional mix-'n-mingles, or leadership programs, among others.
- Remain positive. Recession-talk is enough to make anyone nervous, but if you're in the throws of a job search, a hopeful outlook is a must. Make an appointment with a career counselor to discuss your job search plan or join an online job seekers' support group. [Help Wanted: A Blog for Job Seekers](#) is a new resource devoted to helping full and part-time job seekers.