

LOOKING FOR A JOB IN A TOUGH ECONOMY

The key to finding and keeping work in tough times is the same as in good times: **action**. Economic uncertainties and fluctuations make it especially important for job seekers to learn how to conduct an effective search and to be *actively engaged in the process*. If you are looking for an internship or a full time position, you must be proactive. Assessing one's strengths and taking steps to improve skills are things to do to improve your chances. Some recommended steps are outlined below.

DON'T PROCRASTINATE!

Looking for a job or internship takes time and needs to be a priority. While there are likely to be competing demands on your time a job search requires time and energy. If you are really serious about finding a job or internship, you must reserve time in your schedule to focus on it.

STRENGTHEN YOUR CANDIDACY AND MAKE CONNECTIONS

If you are completing your degree this year what are you doing now to build your resume? Are you interning, volunteering or actively involved on campus or in the community? Many employers, especially in a tight economy, recruit interns for their full-time openings. If there is an organization that you'd really love to work for, think about how you can position yourself within it to enhance your chances of 'being at the right place at the right time' should an opening occur.

PREPARE YOUR JOB SEARCH MATERIALS EARLY

You need a good resume. You must be ready to respond immediately as you become aware of jobs for which you want to be considered. Use [CDC's resources](#) on [resume writing](#) (288 kb pdf), [interviewing](#) (49.9 kb pdf), [cover letters](#) (36.5 kb pdf). Current students can have draft documents reviewed during Counselor on Call.

USE MULTIPLE STRATEGIES

It is important to strike a balance between looking for advertised openings and unadvertised openings (the hidden job market). An effective job search is not limited to surfing the Internet. Most job openings are not advertised, so it is important to concentrate on the hidden job market through networking.

NETWORK!

Most people find a job through other people. Networking resources include professors, family, friends, neighbors, professional associations, current and previous employers (or internship supervisors) and alumni. Tell everyone you know that you are looking for a job and ask for suggestions or contacts. Use the [Alumni Career Network](#) to identify Binghamton graduates working in particular fields, locations, or for specific employers and seek their advice. Alumni want to help so take advantage of his resource.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY AND FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE

Realize that getting a job is your responsibility, while simultaneously recognizing that there are external factors beyond your control. Don't waste precious energy and time on "woe is me" or other negatives.

COMPETE!

Throw your hat in the ring, and do so often. If you don't apply, you will definitely not get the job. Do not let what you hear about the job market immobilize you. If you don't apply and don't let people know you're looking, you won't be selected. Guaranteed. But, compete SMART. Do a quality job search.

USE CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER EVENTS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Many employers connect with Binghamton candidates through the CDC. It is important to make the most of what is available right here at the University. CDC sponsors several programs and events where students have an opportunity to network. Bring a resume and dress to make a good first impression. Check [CDC's website](#) for topics and schedule.

CDC RESOURCES

- Read the Quick Reference Guide, "[How to Find a Job](#)".
- Use [OptimalResume and OptimalInterview](#) to market yourself effectively.
- Current students can bring a draft to Counselor-on-Call for review.
- Use [eRecruiting](#), CDC's web-based service as part of your job search. Many employers contact CDC for assistance in identifying candidates for openings. Students submit resumes through eRecruiting to participate in On Campus Recruiting. Every matriculated undergraduate and graduate student has a personal eRecruiting account.

CONSIDER SHORT-TERM SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES OR TEMPORARY POSITIONS

It's possible to pursue professionally oriented positions that are temporary, educational, and/or service-oriented. Short-term experiences can serve as a way to gain experience, increase self-confidence, earn money, and perhaps lead to something more permanent. One way to secure "bridge" or "interim work" is by "temping" through a temporary employment agency.

Depending on one's personal situation, the period immediately following graduation or in between jobs could offer a "window of opportunity." Creatively exploiting this "window" can have a profound effect on one's future. It can be an exciting time to experiment with careers of interest or perhaps experience another culture; what is gained can be life changing and move you closer to clarifying long-range goals. Consider service programs such as VISTA, Peace Corps, Healthcorps or Teach for America. CDC's website links to many short-term experiences in the section "[One Year Opportunities](#)". You can also learn about One Year Service Opportunities through [Idealist.org](#)

KEEP AT IT!

A job search rarely produces results immediately. It takes time and effort. Some leads will take you to dead ends, and, unfortunately, rejection is part of the job search process. Try not to lose focus and keep going. Pick yourself up and get back in the race.

POSITION YOURSELF FOR THE FUTURE

While you may have to accept a position that isn't your "dream job," keep in mind that many kinds of experiences can be career stepping-stones. Make choices that increase your future options. Learning new skills, volunteering in a field that professionally interests you while working "just for money," thoughtfully investigating graduate school, and effectively networking are positive steps to take for the long term.

Remember: most big breaks don't just happen—they are created.

Make your own breaks early!