The task of job searching can be overwhelming, but you can make it manageable by breaking up your job/internship search into simple steps. Use this checklist to get started.

You can receive assistance with these steps through Jefferson College Employment Services

Step 1: Know yourself.
- I have completed self-assessment activities.
- I have identified my personal strengths, skills, interests, and values.
- I have made a list of possible job titles/fields of interest.
- I can name two or three careers/jobs/internships I plan to pursue.

Step 2: Know where you want to work.
- I have researched employers that might hire someone with my skills, interests, and background.
- I have researched my potential career fields: typical entry-level jobs, salaries, best geographic location for jobs, etc. or I have researched internships and how they fit with my career/educational plans.
- I have identified the top three geographic areas where I’d like to live and work.
- I have identified 10 potential employers for the type of work/internship I am seeking.
- I have determined that my skills match with those required by the job descriptions from my career field

Step 3: Get ready for the search.
- I prepared a resume and cover letter for my search.
- I sought help from Jefferson College Employment Services if I needed it.
- I have had my job search materials (resume and cover letter) reviewed by a professional.
- I have prepared work samples or a portfolio to highlight my experience, skills, and talent.
- I have developed my “30-second speech” for brief encounters with employers, especially for job fairs.
- I have analyzed my education/experience and developed my “story” for employers.
- I have identified and asked three individuals to serve as professional references.
- I have developed my interview skills.
- I have prepared for interviews by practicing my responses to typical questions and/or doing a mock interview.
- I have an interview outfit that is appropriate for the field in which I plan to work.
- I have a professional-sounding ring tone and answering machine/voice mail message.
- I have a neutral/professional e-mail address to provide to employers.
- I have reviewed my online presence, utilized my privacy settings, and addressed any concerns

Step 4: Start Searching
- I have uploaded my resume to www.collegecentral.com/jeffco.
- I regularly check online job search sites and networks for career opportunities.
- I read the appropriate job/internship-search resources for my field(s) of interest.
- I have a system for keeping track of my contacts, interviews, and other job/internship-search activities.
- I follow up on every interesting job/internship lead immediately.
- I have developed a list of potential networking contacts and keep in touch with them.
- I keep a copy of my resume next to my phone in case I receive a call from an employer.
- I follow-up each cover letter with a phone call or e-mail to the employer requesting a job/internship interview.
- I send thank you letters or e-mails to every person who interviews me within 24 hours.
Selected Online Job Searching Resources

**General Sites**
- [www.jeffco.edu/jobservice](http://www.jeffco.edu/jobservice)
- [www.collegecentral.com/jeffco](http://www.collegecentral.com/jeffco)
- [jobs.mo.gov/](http://jobs.mo.gov/)
- [www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com)
- [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)
- [www.susanireland.com](http://www.susanireland.com)
- [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)
- [www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org)
- [jobs.wsj.com](http://jobs.wsj.com)

**Local Sites**
- [www.myleaderpaper.com](http://www.myleaderpaper.com)
- [www.stltoday.com](http://www.stltoday.com)
- [www.bizjournals.com/stlouis/jobs](http://www.bizjournals.com/stlouis/jobs)

**Internship/ Volunteer Sites**
- [www.internships.com](http://www.internships.com)
- [www.allforgood.org](http://www.allforgood.org)

**Government Sites (city, county, state, federal)**
- [www.mo.gov/work/job-seekers/](http://www.mo.gov/work/job-seekers/)
- [www.fbijobs.gov/](http://www.fbijobs.gov/)
- [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)
- [www.makingthedifference.org](http://www.makingthedifference.org)
- [www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads](http://www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads)

**College Sites**
- [www.campuscareercenter.com](http://www.campuscareercenter.com)
- [www.aboutjobs.com](http://www.aboutjobs.com)
- [www.experience.com](http://www.experience.com)

**Industrial/ Job Type Sites**
- [www.hcareers.com](http://www.hcareers.com)
- [www.allretailjobs.com](http://www.allretailjobs.com)
- [www.computerwork.com](http://www.computerwork.com)
- [www.nursetown.com](http://www.nursetown.com)
- [www.medzilla.com](http://www.medzilla.com)
- [www.justtechjobs.com](http://www.justtechjobs.com)
- [www.greenjobsearch.org](http://www.greenjobsearch.org)
- [www.dice.com](http://www.dice.com)

**Other Sites**
- [www2.recruitmilitary.com/](http://www2.recruitmilitary.com/)
- [www.askearn.org](http://www.askearn.org)

Consult the Jefferson College library for job search titles and resources.
Job Search Strategies

Research and Develop

- Know the duties, skills, and training needed to do a job
- Know potential job titles – the same position can have many different titles
- Areas of growth: What are the opportunities for promotion? What skills do the opportunities require? How long would promotion take? What are the benefits of moving up?
- Who are your potential employers?
  - Determine how far you are willing to commute or if you are willing to relocate
  - Look for all the potential employers within that area
  - Bookmark their websites. Where are job openings posted?
- What jobs are out there now? How are they advertised?
- What is the outlook for your career in the next year? 5 years? 10 years?
- Tailor your resume and cover letter to the job to which you are applying. This involves directly connecting your experiences to the skills needed for the job
- Use keywords from the job description to optimize a keyword search of your resume and cover letter. *Keywords* are specific words an employer will look for when using a program to scan your resume/cover letter. They will make decisions about who to interview based on the degree to which your materials match with their words. Use the job description to match the language the employer uses.
- Develop a 30 second speech about yourself for introductions or job fairs. You start with your name and offer information about your educational/work background and indicate your work interest
- Consider using a portfolio or professional binder that displays your accomplishments
- Use your network. Develop contacts especially within the field
- Email or Fax? When given the option send your application materials in an email rather than faxing them. It provides a direct line of communication to the employer
  - Specify in both the email and cover letter what position you are applying for
Applying/ Online Job Applications

- Organization is key when applying for jobs
  - Keep a copy of job descriptions to which you apply.
  - Save your tailored resume and cover letters so you remember what job they were sent to.
  - For web applications keep track of your user name and password.
  - Keep all communication from potential employers filed together.
- Make sure you have access to a computer and ask for help if you are not confident in your PC skills. Employment Services can assist you with your job applications and has computers available.
- Take your time on handwritten application. Neatness counts.
- Set up a professional sounding email and phone number.
- Gather all the information you will need for a job application and keep it in one location (previous employers including (city, ST, and dates) education, skills, training, references.
- Give yourself plenty of time to fill out an application at least 1-2 hours.
- Give each application your best effort. You may have completed many applications, but it is the first time this employer is receiving it.
  - READ THE INSTRUCTIONS.
  - Provide all requested information as completely as possible. Do not leave blanks.
  - Use proper grammar and spelling and make sure to proof read.
  - Attach or upload your resume/ cover letter as requested. Note: it is helpful to save your documents as a PDF file before uploading to prevent formatting changes.
- Tailor your application to fit the position. Highlight relevant qualifications, skills, computer knowledge, etc. Use keywords to enhance your application.
- Hints:
  - Save as you go, so that you do not lose information because of a technology glitch.
  - Do not use the back button on the browser because it may send you to the beginning of the application.
  - Keep in mind that accounts may expire, so make sure to login to check on your accounts periodically.
- Prepare for potential red flags
  - Don’t use “fired” or “quit” instead “involuntary separation”, “will discuss at interview” or “resigned”, “voluntary separation”.
  - Job Gaps- be prepared to discuss. Include schooling and can indicate that you are job hunting.
  - No work history- consider using volunteer work, babysitting, lawn mowing, or other similar jobs.
  - Criminal Record- know your record and what information the employer is seeking (i.e. misdemeanors vs. felony) and answer accordingly. Be honest, failure to disclose may result in lack of job offers or termination. Certain charges and/ or convictions may limit your career options.
Networking

Networking is all about relationships. It is a great way to meet new people and learn more about a career field. In fact, most job openings are filled through networks! While not always easy, networking can be just the thing that lands you that next job!

There are many places and people to include in your network:

- Family, friends, neighbors, co-workers
- Peers & Professionals
- Jefferson College clubs and organizations
- Professional clubs and organizations
- Jefferson College Alumni
- Contacts from jobs or internships
- Contacts from volunteer experiences
- Contacts from information interviews
- Contacts from Job Fairs
- Missouri Career Center
- Social networking sites (LinkedIn, Twitter)

Why should you network?

- Good way to learn about your career field
- Learn about possible job openings or receive references and recommendations for job openings
- Professionals can teach you what the career field will be like, while peers will be your colleagues
- Possible mentor or colleague relationships or even business partnerships

Tips

- Set goals for yourself and follow up regularly
- Keep track of everyone you speak with including their contact information and your conversations
- Don’t be shy. People are often very willing to talk about their experiences if they are asked.
- Start small, possibly with a group associated with your hobbies or interests.
- Ask lots of questions and listen even more.
- Determine how you can help others and take genuine interest in them.
- Think positively and don’t fear rejection what is the worst that can happen?
- Don’t doubt the power of connections. You never know who someone knows!
- Keep track of your contacts

Networking is not:

- A onetime thing- Once you start it is important to keep up your networks.
- Only when you need a job - Nothing is more frustrating than the person that only contacts you when they need something.
- A one way street. Networking should be mutually beneficial for each party.
Networking and Social Media

Social Media is a networking tool that allows communication including sharing text, pictures, videos, and other types of media. Most people are connected to social media in at least one form, so it is important to know how this connection can both help and harm your job search. Nearly half of employers report checking the online presence of job seekers and many use that information to make employment decisions.

The most common sites today include:
Facebook, Linked In, Twitter, and Pinterest

Linked In is a professional networking site where you can showcase your work history, skills, and experience. You can connect with other professionals, search for jobs, and share current career news.

Advantages of social media

- Networking and connect with people in your field. Grow and engage your network.
- Research
  - About potential employers
  - Preparing for an interview
    - News about company
    - People who will interview you
    - People who have or do work there
- Create a positive brand for potential employers. Branding or creating your professional image allows you to showcase your skills and influence how you are perceived. Your brand is the message you want to send out and includes what you say, where you say it, and how you say it. Remember that a first impression leaves a lasting impact that is hard to change if it is negative.

Crafting an image

- Consider the key attributes you want to convey
- Consider what sets you apart and the potential you bring to an employer
- Review your current activities and see if they support that message and adjust if necessary

Managing a negative social presence

A negative social presence may include inappropriate comments, photos, or controversial messages. While there is no taking it back, here are some things you can do now:

- Explore your privacy settings, set them to friends only
- Remove or un-tag yourself from pictures that may have questionable content
- Consider the information before you share: What does this say about me? Does that match my brand or the image I want to portray?
- Maintain good grammar and spelling
- Consider joining a professional networking site
- View and edit your page frequently
Expectations and Emotions

Job searching can be a time intensive and emotional process.

- Typical emotions a job searcher can experience are:
  - Fear
  - Happiness
  - Anger
  - Stress
  - Desperation
  - Denial
  - Excitement
  - Anticipation
  - Anxiety
  - Hope
  - Frustration
  - Self-doubt

- These are a common range of emotions, but if you find yourself struggling with your reaction
  - Identify your emotions. How are you feeling? What is the source of that emotion?
    - Empower yourself by identifying how you feel and why
    - Talk to someone to process your feelings
  - Change your frame of mind. Instead of questioning yourself, recognize the skills and abilities you have to assist a potential employer
  - Realize that an average job search takes 6-18 months. Job searching is a process, so don’t get too impatient
  - If what you are doing isn’t working – change your approach. Seek help from Employment Services or the Missouri Career Center
  - Set up your support system to see you through the process.
  - Make a plan. Decide how you will handle these feelings moving forward and prepare for the next stage of your job search
  - Stay positive!
  - Don’t take rejection personally. Take the opportunity to reflect and learn. Don’t worry yourself about things that are out of your control
  - Review your strengths and successes.
  - Think about how you handled these emotions in the past. What helped, what could you do different
  - Review your job search strategy. Consider opening your search options or obtaining additional training, education, or experience
  - Take action! Practice or seek additional help
  - If your reaction is preventing you from moving forward speak to a counselor.