

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

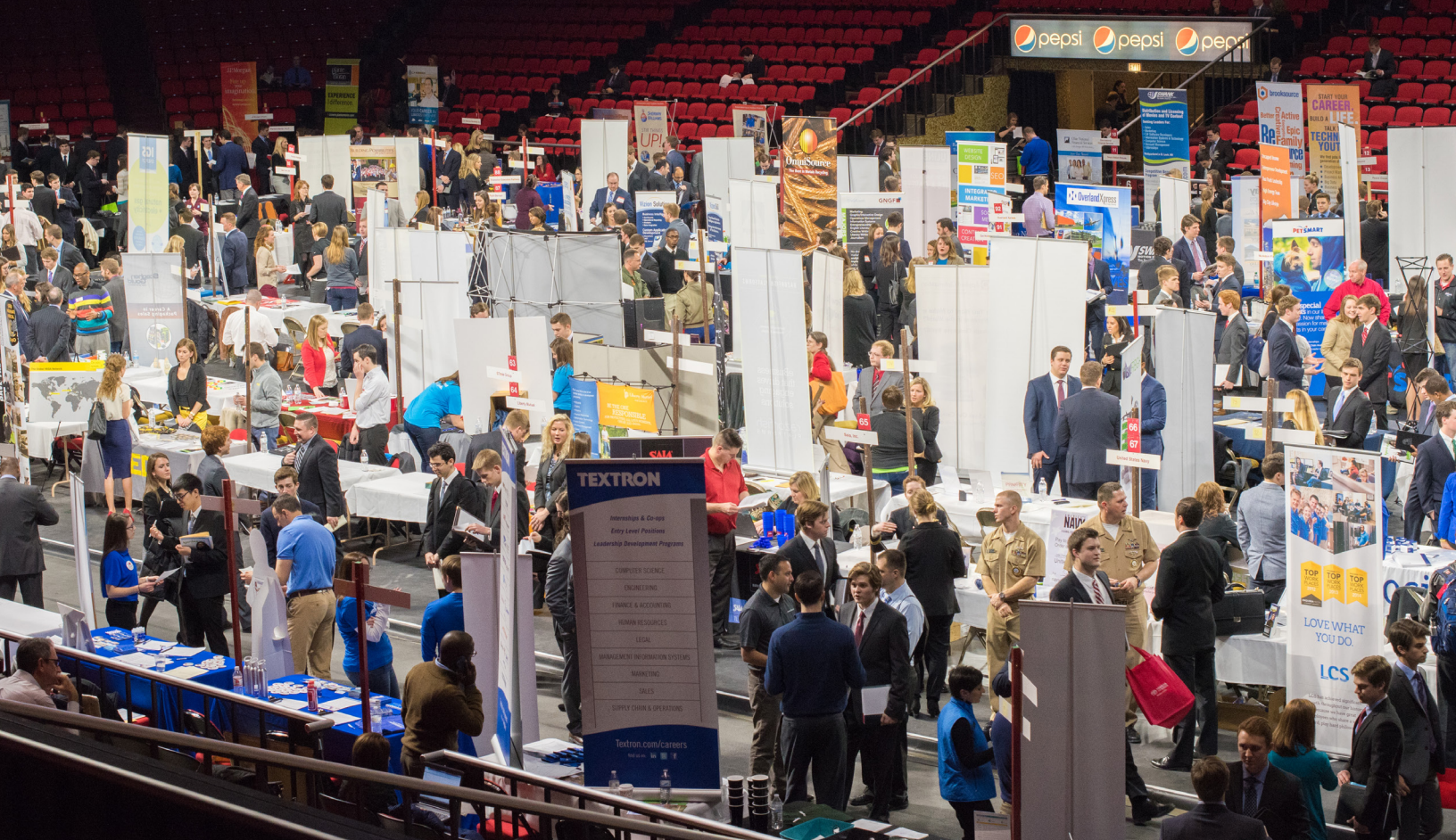


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INTRODUCTION

Looking for meaningful employment is often time-consuming and takes a good deal of commitment. Locating a position that matches your interests, needs, abilities, and goals may not be easy, but it is time well spent as you go about launching your career.

The process need not be frustrating. In fact, if you follow the strategies outlined below and take full advantage of the resources available to you, your job search will be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life.

Before jumping into specific job search strategies, take time to consider these points:

- » Even in the toughest economic times, thousands of positions become available and are filled every month.
- » The most qualified candidate does not always get the position. The best jobs often go to the candidates who know the most about how to get the job.
- » Your academic discipline does not mandate the type of position you will enter. By properly presenting your skills and abilities, you can benefit from a broad range of opportunities.
- » Your initial decision is not necessarily where you will spend your entire career. The average graduate this year will have seven or eight positions in three or more different career fields in his/her lifetime. Nonetheless, your first job may have an impact on the types of jobs for which you will be able to compete successfully in the future.
- » The more targeted you are in your search, the more you can concentrate on the opportunities in the field of your choice, and the more effective you will be in your job search campaign. Lack of focus is not a virtue in the job search.

JOB HUNTING PRELIMINARIES

The job search, in its simplest terms, is a marketing and branding strategy. The candidate represents the product and the world of work represents the market. In order to properly “market” yourself, you need to take time to discover what your product (you) can do for your market. This research is called self-assessment and involves the examination of what you can offer a potential employer.

Each candidate has countless skills and abilities that, when put in the realm of the workplace, can assist an organization in meeting its objectives. Successful job seekers will take time to identify their specific skills, interests, and goals, and focus their job search in the area(s) where they see a potential “match” between themselves and the positions available.

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

The best way to get a feel for a certain position or industry is to talk with people currently employed in your target area. These conversations are called “informational interviews,” and if done properly, can put you head and shoulders above your competition.

To begin the informational interviewing process, you should contact people within your personal network. This may include your family, friends, roommates, past employers and professors. Ask these contacts for names of people within occupations or organizations that interest you. In addition, develop your own LinkedIn profile and use it to find connections. LinkedIn [**MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/linkedin/index.html**] is a very powerful resource for connecting and networking with classmates, faculty/staff, and industry professionals. Connect to Miami alumni through the Miami University Alumni Association LinkedIn group: **<https://www.linkedin.com/grp/home?gid=35898>**

Before beginning the process of informational interviewing, it is imperative that you thoroughly research your field of interest and organizations and employers you may want to work for. This preparation will allow you to present yourself as knowledgeable, interested and mature. You will not make a favorable impression by asking questions that could be easily answered in the organization’s literature or through other readily available online resources. Refer to Career Services website for research links: **MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/company-and-organization-research-resources/index.html**

Your questions should demonstrate that you have researched the field and that you have a genuine interest in learning more about the career area you have chosen. Appropriate questions include inquiries about day-to-day responsibilities, skills needed to succeed in the position, typical career tracks, and current issues in the field. You will find sample questions that will help you begin the development of your own list of questions in Appendix A.

The most effective means of making contact with potential sources of information begins with an e-mail or request to connect through LinkedIn. The e-mail will act as a means of introduction and allow you to inquire about the possibility of an appointment—either phone, Skype or in person. In this e-mail/LinkedIn request, be very specific about your interest in career information, not your desire for a job. The e-mail should be brief and business like both in content and format. A sample letter is provided in Appendix B-1. Remember, if your first contact is via e-mail, your content and format should be formal and similar to a written letter. A sample e-mail is in Appendix B-2. You should indicate that you will follow-up with a phone call to arrange a mutually convenient time for an appointment. 30 minutes is a reasonable length of time to request for a meeting, whether in

person or via phone or Skype. During the follow-up phone call, be prepared to ask the questions you have developed in case the contact person does not have time to see you in person. A sample phone script is located in Appendix C.

If you are granted an appointment, make certain that you are dressed appropriately, arrive early, have your questions ready, and bring a small notebook along for taking notes. Be polite and considerate by being prepared and organized, and by spending only the agreed upon time with your contact person. Typically, these people will also want to know more about your career plans and preparation. Offer to show them your resume to acquaint them with your qualifications. You might want to request specific advice about your resume and job search. Be careful here: you do not want to appear to be asking for a job!

Before you close the interview, be sure to request a business card to begin your file of future job search contacts. You might want to ask your contact to suggest any articles, books or websites for you to read about their organization or field. A good concluding question would be to inquire about other people in the profession with whom you could speak to gain more information about your chosen field. This will give you additional “contact people” from whom to seek information. If approached correctly, many people are happy, if not flattered, to share their expertise with someone genuinely interested in their line of work. If you experience some rejection during this process, be cordial, and do not become discouraged.

Follow up with a thank-you letter or e-mail whether you conducted the informational interview in person or on the phone. This follow-up contact is very important because it shows sincere appreciation and also demonstrates your professionalism. A sample letter can be found in Appendix D. Also, take a few minutes to summarize what you have learned. What are your positive and negative impressions? How do your skills and interests match the occupation? Would you enjoy performing the duties described by your contact?

Note that it is not uncommon for people to evaluate and modify their goals or job choice during any part of this exploration stage. Although this stage of the job search process need not be unnecessarily lengthy, it does take time. However, it is better to commit time to exploring your job choice and confirming your goals at this point rather than continue with a possibly misguided job search.

THE ACTUAL JOB SEARCH

By this point, you have identified where you feel you can make the best contribution to prospective employers and have researched the field thoroughly enough to know how you can best present your background and qualifications. Before going on, let us discuss the attributes that are needed for a successful job search.

- » **Persistence.** Rejection is a very real—and natural—part of the job search. It is an incredibly unique individual who can complete a job search without being rejected by some employers along the way. The successful job seeker is the person who learns to accept the fact that rejection is a natural part of the process but who continues to contact other potential employers until an appropriate position is found. Remember that every “no” gets you that much closer to the “yes” you are after. The real key lies in learning from your mistakes and making adjustments as you continue your search. If rejections become excessive, it is a good idea to consult with one of our career advisors for advice and guidance. This will help you to identify and avoid repeating any fundamental mistakes that may be undermining your effectiveness.
- » **Organization.** Any task becomes that much more difficult, time consuming, and cumbersome if you go about it in a disorganized manner. With each contact being a possible job lead, it is imperative that you stay organized and keep track of all correspondence and communication with prospective employers.
- » **Confidence.** A positive mental attitude toward yourself and your ability to locate, secure, and succeed in the position of your choice is essential. A success-oriented attitude will allow you to overcome the inevitable obstacles in your employment search.

YOUR BROADER JOB SEARCH

1. No one job search resource captures all the jobs that are available to you.
2. Employers in different industries post their internships and jobs in different places - sometimes on Miami CAREERlink (mobile ready), sometimes on their own websites and sometimes on sites that are specific to a major or field of study. Refer to Career Services website for example of websites with job postings: **MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/beginning-your-job-search/index.html**
3. The majority of jobs available through our career fairs are not posted on Miami CAREERlink (mobile ready), but are shared with students through the Career Fair website and career fair booklets; and
4. Many internships and jobs are never posted anywhere and are only available through networking, job shadowing and informational interviews.
5. Use Career Services ‘Job Search Checklist’ (see Appendix G) to support you through your specific search.
6. For more information on your Job Search refer to Career Services website [**MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/index.html**]

So, as you search through the sections below, do not feel discouraged if you cannot find the opportunities you are looking for in any one particular job search resource.

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

Basically, students obtain employment in five ways:

- » personal “networking” including LinkedIn;
- » direct contact with employers;
- » on-campus interviewing;
- » answering online advertisements;
- » staffing services.

The successful job search combines each strategy as it pertains to the individual job seeker’s goals. For instance, a search for a position with many openings, such as sales, engineering, or accountancy will put more emphasis on on-campus interviewing, whereas a search for a position with fewer openings, such as communications, advertising, or working in a nonprofit, will emphasize networking and direct contact. The point is that each individual’s job search will be different, and you need to plan a strategy that utilizes a combination of these tactics.

Networking and LinkedIn

Without a doubt, one of the most effective, and most underutilized, methods of obtaining employment is through personal networking. The reality of the job market is that many positions, some say as high as 70-80 percent, are filled without ever being advertised. This creates what is called the “hidden job market,” and the most effective way to break into this market is through your personal network, including the use of LinkedIn.

Refer to our website [MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/linkedin/index.html] for LinkedIn information and how it relates to networking and your job search.

Your network is a group of people who know the types of position(s) you are seeking, such as friends, family, faculty, and your LinkedIn connections, who are willing to keep you abreast of current job openings and introduce you to appropriate people with the authority to make hiring decisions. In fact, once you have developed your network, these contact people may be able to provide valuable information about their industry or organization, and expand your network by giving you the names of other people in the field. These people do not take over the responsibility of your job search, but they can be of invaluable assistance to you.

One key to a successful network goes back to self-assessment and your ability to articulate the type of position you are seeking. It is also imperative that you constantly attempt to expand your network and keep your contact people informed on the progress of your search. Giving each contact person, or member of your network, a copy of your resume will allow them to gain a clear understanding of your background and abilities. The illustration below demonstrates how one goes about developing a personal network.

Developing Your Network



Begin with people you know, such as faculty members, friends, family and acquaintances. By expanding your network to include their friends and acquaintances, you will be amazed at the depth of your personal contact list. Do not forget that you can also greatly expand your network by conducting informational interviews and making contacts through LinkedIn.

Keep in mind that people will be more willing to assist you if their good will is not abused. No one likes to be taken advantage of. Be very conscious of the use of peoples' time and express appropriate gratitude for their assistance.

Direct Contact

If you are seeking employment with specific organizations or with organizations in a specific geographic area or industry, an effective strategy is to contact employers directly. This method is frequently misunderstood to mean the mass e-mailing of 100-300 resumes and then passively waiting for a response. This is not only ineffective, but can be very time consuming, expensive, and frustrating.

One way to begin the direct contact approach is to use online databases and resources, such as:

- » OneSource, a comprehensive, searchable research database sponsored by the Miami Libraries that provides access to detailed business intelligence about companies, markets and executives in the U.S. and around the world [<http://www.lib.miamioh.edu/indexes/redirect/1266>]
- » Career Insider, Vault Career Insider offers inside information about companies you may be considering. Click on "Find a Company" under the "Getting Started On Vault" section. Student ID and password required [MiamiOH.edu/careers/secure/vault/index.html]
- » LinkedIn, Jobs Directory: <https://www.linkedin.com/jobs2/directory/>

- » Career Services Website, Company and Organization Research: **MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/company-and-organization-research-resources/index.html**

However you locate the information, your task is to identify those organizations that most closely match your occupational goals. Research the organizations by reviewing their websites and utilizing other company research sites mentioned above. Choose a manageable number of these organizations (no more than 50) and make a list of names and addresses of key contact people within these organizations. Some online directories list contact names and others do not, but even if you do obtain a name, it is best to call the organization to make sure you have the right name and to make sure the person is currently in the position listed in the directory. If there is not a specific person listed as a contact, the phone call is imperative. Try to determine the person who most likely will have the authority to hire you. For instance, in sales it may be the District Sales Manager, for public relations it may be the Director of Public Relations or the Director of Corporate Communications, and so on. In smaller organizations and nonprofits, it may be a vice-president, director, or even the president. When you call, be certain to get the proper spelling of the person's name and his/her complete title. In any case, avoid sending "Dear Sir or Ma'am" or "To Whom it May Concern" letters.

When you have developed this list, your next step is to write a customized e-mail/cover letter and e-mail/mail it along with a copy of your resume. Be extremely cautious about using existing published samples and simply substituting your particular information. Cover letter guides are available in our office and via our website [**MiamiOH.edu/careers/converted/cover-letter-examples.html**]. (NOTE: when available, you should also apply online through the employer's website. However, this should not be done in lieu of e-mailing/ mailing your cover letter and resume directly to the appropriate contact person. *An exception is when the job posting specifically states that applications will only be accepted online.*

After sending this correspondence and waiting an appropriate amount of time for the letter to be received (7-10 business days), it is time for you to follow up with a phone call. The follow-up call should be made to inquire if your letter/e-mail was received, offer any additional information needed, and ask about the possibility of an interview. Persistence and professionalism are essential at this stage of the process. If the response to your request for an interview is denied, ask whether there would be a convenient time in the future for you to again contact the employer in case a position should become available at a later date. If everything goes well, this phone call will result in setting a mutually convenient time for your interview. This call should then be followed up by a letter thanking the employer for the opportunity to interview and confirming the date, time, and place of the interview.

On the day of the interview, you will want to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the time of the interview, be courteous and friendly, and demonstrate you have researched the position, organization and industry. After your interview, you will want to follow up once again with a formal thank you note expressing your gratitude for the employer's time and consideration, your interest in the position, and possibly a major point brought out in the interview.

Information on interviewing skills is presented in the Interviewing guide available in our office and on our website [MiamiOH.edu/careers/letters-resumes-interviews/interviewing/index.html]. You may also wish to take advantage of our Mock Interview Service. Simply schedule an appointment on your Miami CAREERlink account [miamiu-csm.symphlicity.com/students/] or call (513) 529-3831 for an appointment.

Because of the number of resumes received by employers, it is essential that you distinguish yourself from other candidates. Accomplishing this will take effective paperwork and persistent follow-through on each contact. Depending on the success of your first set of inquiries, it may be necessary to add newly selected employers to your list of prospects. As you do so, keep in mind the critical importance of follow-up.

On-Campus Interviewing & Miami CAREERlink

Career Services has a vibrant and well-respected on-campus interviewing program. Annually, over 1700 employers conduct interviews, attend one or more career fairs, and/or post internships and full-time employment opportunities on Miami CAREERLink.

When you complete your profile and upload your resume(s) on Career Services' Miami CAREERlink [miamiu-csm.symphlicity.com/students/], employers have access to your resume (in the Student Resume Book) and information about your area(s) of career interest. Many employers use the Student Resume Book to identify candidates and invite them to interview on-campus. You also gain access to job and internship listings of employers who may not come to campus to recruit. In addition, Career Services notifies students of upcoming programs, career fairs, and information useful to your job search. It is important for you to routinely (at least once a semester) update your account and your resume(s). The key to taking advantage of on-campus interviewing and Miami CAREERlink is for you to actively check your account for invitations to interview or attend information sessions and prepare for your interviews by attending training programs and signing up for a mock interview.

Please note that in order to participate in on-campus interviews or a mock interview you must complete a Basic Interviewing Skills program [MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/career-fairs-and-programs/programs-workshops/index.html] once during your time at Miami.

Answering Advertisements and Online Job Postings

Many employers use online resources and job boards to advertise their job openings. Some employers still post their jobs in newspapers (both printed and online). To overlook this avenue to employment is to overlook an abundance of immediate openings in a specific geographic location or a specific occupation. Although depending solely on this one method can be a major error, ignoring it as a part of your comprehensive job search strategy will also be a mistake. Take the time to determine where employers in your desired field or industry advertise their job openings. Professional associations often include job openings in their journals. Some employers post vacancies on their own websites, and if they do, this may be the preferred way to apply for this company's job openings. Also consider newspapers within your desired geographic location. And finally, do not overlook the Internet job banks such as CareerBuilder.com, indeed.com, USA Jobs, LinkedIn and Idealist.org. As described earlier, you can locate many useful sites by visiting Career Services' Website [MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/beginning-your-job-search/index.html].

Career Services also receives current job openings daily and posts them on Miami CAREERlink [miamiu-csm.symplicity.com/students/].

Staffing Services

There are numerous private staffing agencies and employment agencies in the business of obtaining employment for their clients. Although you may want to investigate the possible use of these services, some staffing agencies tend not to be of much assistance to the entry-level job seeker. If you decide to seek the service of a staffing service, first check their credibility through the Better Business Bureau [www.bbb.org] and previous clients. Before signing any agreement or contract, be certain you know exactly what type of agreement you are signing. Be especially conscious of the payment clause. Many agencies will expect a sizable fee for their service. In general, commercial employment agencies who charge a fee are not very effective for new college graduates.

Staffing services who do not charge a fee (the fee is paid for by the company looking for an employee) may be a viable short-term option for recent graduates as they continue to look for a full-time job. Career Services website has additional information to help you research Staffing Services [MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/beginning-your-job-search/areas-of-interest-for-college-of-creative-arts-majors/staffing-services/index.html].

JOB SEARCH PRESENTATION

To be successful in your job search, you must combine your knowledge of job search strategies with effective forms of

presentation. In the written form, (e.g., resumes, cover letters, thank you letters, etc.) you must learn to write in a style that clearly presents your individual skills and potential. Attention to detail is extremely important. In interviews, you must present yourself as mature, interested, and confident. Developing proper presentation skills can make the difference between success and failure in your job search.

Resume Preparation

Your resume is a one-page document (for most students) that outlines your skills, qualifications, interests, and accomplishments while providing a clear, concise description of your background. Your resume is your calling card and many times provides the all-important first impression for your potential employer. With this in mind, the importance of a well-organized, grammatically correct, and visually appealing resume is self-evident. Refer to Career Services website for more information on writing your resume [[MiamiOH.edu/careers/letters-resumes-interviews/resumes-and-cover-letters/index.html](https://miamioh.edu/careers/letters-resumes-interviews/resumes-and-cover-letters/index.html)].

OptimalResume (login required) is an online resume-building tool that provides sample templates and a variety of resume styles to help you produce a professional-looking resume. To access OptimalResume, go to [[MiamiOH.edu/careers/secure/optresume.shtml](https://miamioh.edu/careers/secure/optresume.shtml)], select “overview of services”, and click on the OptimalResume link.

Letters

As you go through the job search process, there are a variety of letters you will need to develop: cover letters, follow-up letters, thank you letters, etc. It is essential that each letter be individually tailored and written to make you stand out from your competition. This correspondence will reflect your communication skills, attention to detail, and professionalism.

Many students benefit from assistance in developing their resume and job search correspondence. There are a variety of resources available to you through Career Services. Refer to Career Services website for more information on writing your resume, cover letter and other job search correspondence: [MiamiOH.edu/careers/letters-resumes-interviews/resumes-and-cover-letters/index.html](https://miamioh.edu/careers/letters-resumes-interviews/resumes-and-cover-letters/index.html)

As you begin to develop your “paperwork” and you desire individual help, Career Services has career advisors available by appointment to answer your questions and provide instruction.

INTERVIEWING

Effective interviewing skills are essential to a successful job search campaign. Proper execution of the strategies outlined above will lead you to the point of face-to-face interaction with your potential employer. The first step is often a 25-30 minute

screening interview that gives you and the employer a chance to evaluate a possible “match” of interests. Before going into the interview, you must prepare by knowing yourself and learning about the organization with which you will be interviewing. This is a critical step that too many candidates overlook to their own detriment. Take time to reexamine your skills, abilities, interests, and career goals and determine how you, as a candidate, meet the employer’s needs.

During the interview be positive and enthusiastic. Demonstrate to the interviewer your interest in the organization and in the position for which you are interviewing. Answer questions honestly and allow your personality to come out. Also, be certain to demonstrate your knowledge of the organization and prepare questions that will allow you to more thoroughly examine the organization and its opportunities.

After the interview, jot down for reference some major points brought out in the interview. This will help jog your memory during the next phase of interviews with the organization. Also, be certain to write a formal thank you letter/e-mail after each interview.

A successful screening interview will lead to subsequent follow-up interviews typically done at the place of employment. This allows you to meet various people in the organization and involves an in-depth evaluation on the part of both you and the employer. Depending on the employer, there may be anywhere from two to five interview stages until the point where a job offer is given. The process may also include testing or a day at the facility or in the field with someone in the position for which you are applying. No two interviewing processes are the same, but the goal in all interviews is to determine mutual interest. Thus, both you and the employer will be evaluating the “match” during each stage.

Like any other skill, proper interviewing techniques develop with time and practice. Read the *Interviewing* guide, which is available in our office and on our website [MiamiOH.edu/careers]. This guide outlines specific interviewing strategies and contains a list of typical interview questions. After you read this booklet, you will want to practice answering some sample questions with a friend. For more in-depth instruction, take advantage of the Mock Interview program that allows you to practice interviewing with a Career Services staff member. This mock interview is digitally recorded to allow you and the staff member to evaluate your performance and discuss tips for improvement. In addition, we organize Mock Interview events several times throughout the semester where Miami Alumni or other professionals return to Miami to conduct mock interviews and provide feedback to current students.

As a reminder, always research the company/organization prior to your interview. The following will help you stay informed: a) Career Services Stay Informed site [miamicareers.tumblr.com/post/47797072378/stay-informed]; b) Company and organization research [MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/company-and-organization-research-resources/index.html]; c) nonprofit organization research resources [MiamiOH.edu/student-life/_files/documents/career-services/pdfs/nonprofit.pdf].

EVALUATING THE OFFER

After the interview process, if the employer determines an appropriate fit exists between you and the organization, a job offer will be extended. The job offer is normally made over the phone and is followed by a letter outlining the details of the offer. At this point, a time frame is usually set for your decision. Time frames vary, but two weeks to a month is typical. If you are not prepared to make a decision in the specified time period, some negotiation and extensions are common. Just as you expect the employer to be sensitive to your situation, you should also be sensitive to the employer's need to properly project hires.

If you should receive multiple offers, you need to examine each one very closely in terms of what is important to you in a job (e.g., advancement, challenge, work environment, salary, security, etc.). It is a good idea also to take heed of your "gut" reaction. As you go through the many contacts you have with each employer, you will develop a feel for whether or not you will be comfortable in a given work environment. Trust your instincts, but do not be hesitant to seek guidance in evaluating various offers you may receive. There are two rating forms provided in Appendix E that can be used in evaluating and comparing job offers. Depending upon your career objective, you may want to add to or change the criteria on the checklists. The different formats of these two rating systems will provide different perspectives on your job choice.

It is best to accept an offer with a phone call and follow it up with a letter of confirmation. This letter should include the specifics of your offer and once again express your eagerness to begin your career with your future employer. As a courtesy, you should also write to the other employers you are currently in contact with to let them know that you have accepted an offer. Also, be certain to inform your network of contacts and your references that you have secured a position and thank them for their help.

There are many ethical considerations to think about during your job search. For example, your acceptance of an employment offer should be made in good faith and honor a contractual agreement with the employer. The single most serious ethical breach is renegeing on an employment acceptance. For additional information, please refer to Appendix F, "Some Ethical Considerations To Guide Your Job Search."

SOME FINAL TIPS ON CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL JOB SEARCH

We hope this guide has answered some of your fundamental questions concerning the job search. However, at the same time, we hope it will encourage you to more fully explore various job search strategies and the wealth of assistance available to you as you map out your plans. The final tips that follow may be particularly useful to you:

- » Make an appointment with a career advisor to discuss a workable plan of action and timetable for your particular job search.
- » Familiarize yourself with the services provided by Career Services.
- » Review our website [[MiamiOH.edu/careers](https://miamioh.edu/careers)] and the multiple career and job-search websites [[MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/beginning-your-job-search/index.html](https://miamioh.edu/careers/internship-job-search/beginning-your-job-search/index.html)] that are linked to this site.
- » Be sure to pay proper attention to the quality of your job search paperwork. More than one job search has been scuttled because of a poorly constructed resume or improper correspondence.
- » Remember the importance of follow-up. It is the single most important ingredient in a successful job campaign.
- » Carefully review employer websites for vacancies and online application opportunities.
- » Do not put all your eggs in one basket. Use a variety of job search strategies concurrently.
- » Take the time to develop appropriate career goals and focus your efforts on realistic job targets.

Finally, keep in mind the importance of maintaining a positive attitude as you go about the process. This will set the tone for a successful job search campaign and assure that you present yourself in the best possible light. GOOD LUCK!

For additional information about Career Services, please refer to our website at: [MiamiOH.edu/careers](https://miamioh.edu/careers)

Appendix A

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS: Sample Questions

- » How did you get into this field?
- » Which majors are most successful in securing employment in this field?
- » How would you describe a typical day/week on the job?
- » What are the most satisfying aspects of your job?
- » What frustrations or drawbacks do you experience in this position?
- » How would you describe the work environment (work pressure, deadlines, routines, new activities, etc.)?
- » How often do you travel and for how long?
- » What percentage of your time is spent interacting with people? Writing reports? Reading job-related publications?
- » How much contact do you have with people outside of your organization? What is your relationship to these people?
- » How does your career affect your lifestyle (the amount of work required, your material needs, and time for leisure, travel, outside interests, and family)?
- » What are the latest developments and primary issues in this field today?
- » How do you see the jobs in the field changing over the next five to ten years?
- » What educational degrees, licenses, or other credentials are required for entry and advancement in your kind of work? Are there any that are preferred or helpful, although not required?
- » What are the trade/professional groups to which you belong and which do you find most beneficial to your work? Do any of them assist college students interested in internships or entry-level positions in your field?
- » Which other career areas do you see as being related to your work?
- » What personal characteristics, personality traits, values, interests, etc., do you believe are necessary or helpful for success and satisfaction in this occupation (or organization)?
- » How do people usually learn about job openings in your field?
- » What do you wish you had known about this career field before you entered it? What about this employer? How is the organization structured? What kinds of entry-level jobs are available within organizations like this?
- » Do you have a formal training program? Could you please describe it to me? What percentage of training occurs in the classroom? On the job?
- » What are the typical career paths within your organization?
- » Are there any books, periodicals, or websites that you would recommend?
- » What special advice would you give to a young person entering your field?

Appendix B-1

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW: Sample Introduction Letter

814 S. Main Street, #5
Oxford, OH 45056
November 10, 20XX

Ms. Janet Smith
Vice President, Marketing
XYZ Corporation
8500 Martingale Road
Ourtown, OH 45999

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am currently a sophomore at Miami University and am seeking information about a variety of occupational fields that interest me. A career advisor from Miami's Career Services recommended that I conduct some informational interviews to learn more about employment opportunities in these fields.

More than other disciplines, the field of marketing appeals to me because it seems to be an occupation that must continuously redefine itself, especially with the growth of social media. I have been researching various positions and tasks involved in this occupation, and now would like to talk with someone who is actually working in this field.

Ms. Smith, getting firsthand information from accomplished people such as you would help me make an informed decision about my career choice. I would certainly appreciate any information and insights you could provide.

I will telephone you next week in hopes of arranging a meeting at your convenience. I look forward to the possibility of meeting with you to discuss career options in marketing.

Sincerely,

Marty I. Roudebush

Marty I. Roudebush

Appendix B-2

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW: Sample Introduction E-mail

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am currently a sophomore at Miami University and am seeking information about a variety of occupational fields that interest me. A career advisor from Miami's Career Services recommended that I conduct some informational interviews to learn more about employment opportunities in these fields.

More than other disciplines, the field of marketing appeals to me because it seems to be an occupation that must continuously redefine itself, especially with the growth of social media. I have been researching various positions and tasks involved in this occupation, and now would like to talk with someone who is actually working in this field.

Ms. Smith, getting firsthand information from accomplished people such as you would help me make an informed decision about my career choice. I would certainly appreciate any information and insights you could provide.

I will telephone you next week in hopes of arranging a meeting at your convenience. I look forward to the possibility of meeting with you to discuss career options in marketing.

Sincerely,

Marty I. Roudebush
513-529-3831

Appendix C

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW: Sample Phone Script

(based on information from
Miami Alumni Career Education and Development site)

In phone calls that follow a letter, e-mail or LinkedIn connection, the following format can be effective:

- » Introduce yourself.
- » Question: “Have you received my letter/e-mail/LinkedIn connection and had a chance to review it?” If the answer is no, ask the person if they have a few minutes, then briefly summarize the contents of your letter.
- » Question: “Would you have some time to meet with me next week? I would need, at most, 30 minutes of your time.” If the answer is no, say, “I know that your time is valuable. Could you suggest a day and time that is better for you?” If the answer is still no, ask for a few minutes on the phone and then proceed with the questions you have prepared.
- » Emphasize that you do not expect them to know of positions but are merely looking to gather information.
- » If the person states that they are not hiring right now, you might say, “That is okay. At this point I am not looking for a job, just some firsthand information about the _____ field. The interview should last no more than 30 minutes.”
- » Before ending the conversation, confirm the next steps - the date, time and place of the meeting you’ve arranged, or the referrals you’ve been provided and how you will contact them. Express thanks for the time and help given.
- » At no time should you express irritation at someone who becomes testy or even antagonistic. While uncommon, such responses do occasionally occur. Treat everyone with respect and professional courtesy. You never know when you may meet them again in the future.

Appendix D

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW: Sample Thank You Letter

814 S. Main Street, #5
Oxford, OH 45056
November 28, 200X

Ms. Janet Smith
Vice President, Marketing
XYZ Corporation
8500 Martingale Road
Ourtown, OH 45999

Dear Ms. Smith:

I would like to thank you once again for the information you provided on Thursday. Your insights on the field of marketing were extremely helpful in clarifying my career goals.

As you suggested, I made an appointment with Mark Lowry at Marketing, Inc., to discuss his career in marketing research. I appreciate this referral and am sure it will be very beneficial. Also, thank you for recommending the Sales and Marketing Management website to me. I am looking forward to reading it.

Again, thank you for your information and time.

Sincerely,

Marty I. Roudebush
Marty I. Roudebush

Appendix E

Job Offer Checklist

Directions: Using the following list of questions as a guide, reflect on the suitability of your various job offers. Use the chart at the right to compare and contrast your two most viable job alternatives. Check the appropriate response for each job offer, add your totals, and indicate them at the bottom. Draw upon this information as you weigh your decision.

	Offer #1		Offer #2	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Will the job use the skills you want to use in your work?				
2. Will the environment be conducive to your productivity?				
3. Will you be able to establish compatible working relationships with your colleagues?				
4. Will the job offer sufficient variety and stimulation?				
5. Will you have the opportunity to continue to learn and grow professionally?				
6. Will the formal and informal lines of communication be open for feedback and suggestions?				
7. Will the purposes of the organization be compatible with your values and priorities?				
8. Will the salary meet your basic needs?				
9. Will advancement opportunities exist within the organization?				
10. Will you "feel good" about your job?				
11. Other criteria:				
<hr/>				
TOTAL				

Appendix E (continued)

Rating Your Job Offers

Directions: Rate each job factor listed below by circling one of the scores (1 = Poor, 2 = Average, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent). At the bottom of the grid, subtotal your scores in each column and add your subtotals for the total score.

Job Factor	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
Use of Your Skills	4	3	2	1
Responsibility Level	4	3	2	1
On-the-Job Training	4	3	2	1
Coworkers	4	3	2	1
Supervisors	4	3	2	1
Working Conditions	4	3	2	1
Evaluation/Feedback on Your Work	4	3	2	1
Commuting Distance	4	3	2	1
Advancement Possibilities	4	3	2	1
Reputation of Organization	4	3	2	1
Location of Job	4	3	2	1
Subtotals	+	+	+	

TOTAL

Scoring*

- 44 - 41 Excellent Job Offer (the kind most people dream of)
- 40 - 34 Good Job Offer (better than most people can hope for)
- 33 - 28 Average Job Offer (most job offers fall here)
- 27 - 20 Poor Job Offer (accept only if nothing else comes along)
- 19 - 0 Dismal Job Offer (forget it)

*Some job factors are more important (or have higher priority) than others. For some people, for instance, the "Use of Your Skills" may be more important than "Location of Job." In this rating sheet each job factor was weighted equally. When evaluating your score you may also want to weigh these factors in terms of their importance to you.

(Both evaluations in Appendix E excerpted from For Your Action by W. Wallace, C. Wagner, & N. Siska)

Appendix F

Some Ethical Considerations to Guide Your Job Search

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in ethics. Ethical considerations come into play in a variety of interpersonal and organizational relationships, and the job search is certainly no exception. From time to time during your job search, some questions might arise which have important ethical implications. For example...

Should I interview for positions simply to improve my interviewing skills? Can I continue to interview after I accept an offer if an attractive opportunity presents itself? Can I accept, and then later reject, a job offer? These and other questions can pose a variety of ethical dilemmas for students.

Despite some well-publicized exceptions, the great majority of employers operate ethically, and they seek prospective employees who share the same high standards of ethical conduct. Likewise, most students consider themselves to be ethical individuals. However, some erroneously believe that, in the competitive job market, “anything goes” if it results in a satisfying career opportunity.

As a member of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), Miami University expects students to observe the following principles during their job search campaigns. In fact, you may be suspended from using our services for unethical behavior. These principles provide an ethical framework for conducting an effective job search and emphasize common professional practices you should recognize and follow.

- » Interview only if you are sincerely interested in the position. Do not use interviews as “practice.” Instead, arrange for a videotaped mock interview at the Office of Career Services.
- » Be certain to provide accurate information on your background, including work experience, GPA, major, etc. Falsification of such information is a serious breach of ethics and is grounds for termination of employment if discovered after you are hired.
- » Respond promptly to invitations for on-site or second interviews. Accept them only if you are sincerely interested in the position. Never interview just to get a free trip to the job location.
- » Follow established procedures if you must cancel an on-campus interview. Notify employers immediately if you must postpone or cancel on-site interviews.
- » Exercise prudence in your on-site interview expenditures and be sure to keep receipts for travel and lodging expenses. Determine the appropriate-ness of unusual expenses in advance. You should never submit requests for reimbursement to cover personal expenses such as dry cleaning, phone calls, entertainment, etc. Prorate expenses if you visit more than one employer on a single trip.
- » Carefully discuss offers with employers to verify terms and reach mutually acceptable response deadlines. Notification should be made in writing and in a timely manner.
- » If you must request additional time to consider an employer’s offer, do so with as much advance notice as possible. Keep in mind that employers often face internal deadlines over which they may have little control. If an extension is granted, be certain to promptly confirm the arrangements in writing in order to avoid problems later.
- » Your acceptance of an employment offer should be made in good faith and honored as a contractual agreement with the employer. **The single most serious ethical breach is renegeing on an employment acceptance.**
- » Do not continue to interview after accepting an offer, and be certain to notify other employers with offers pending.
- » Notify our office when you accept an offer so we may better assist students still seeking positions. This information will be kept in confidence.

Appendix G

Job Search Checklist

Each student's job search is different. Some will find Career Services' career fairs, Miami CAREERlink postings, and on-campus recruiting an important part of their search. Others will need to develop an individualized search directed towards employers and organizations that do not recruit at Miami but may be interested in hiring Miami students. We encourage you to meet with a Career Advisor and develop your job search strategy. Whatever your strategy, Career Services has an abundance of resources that are easily accessible on our website [[MiamiOH.edu/careers](https://miamioh.edu/careers)].

Presented below is a job search checklist designed to help graduating Miami students organize and conduct an effective job search. For December graduates, the amount of time allotted to job search activities will be compressed. August graduates may expand the timetable. Used in conjunction with our online resources, workshops, individual career advising appointments, and other services, this checklist will help you plan and conduct an effective job search. For additional information about Career Services, please refer to our website at: [MiamiOH.edu/careers](https://miamioh.edu/careers)

FALL SEMESTER

- Develop and finalize a resume and basic cover letter for use in your job search. Bring your resume in during Resume Drop-In Hours for a critique by one of our Career Assistants.
- Use Optimal Resume as a tool for building your resume. Access is available on our website: [MiamiOH.edu/careers](https://miamioh.edu/careers), select the "Resumes, Cover Letters, and Interviews" tab and then "Resumes and Cover Letters" on the left side bar, then click on the "Optimal Resume" link under "Create Your Resume" (student ID login required).
- Review and update your Miami CAREERlink profile, including an updated resume.
- If you have not already attended a *Basic Interviewing Skills* program, check our program schedule for dates. **Anyone who intends to interview on campus or participate in a mock interview must attend one of these programs during your time at Miami.**
- Attend one or several of our Job/Internship Search workshops, including *Resume Workshops*, *Cover Letter Workshops*, *Resumes and LinkedIn*, *Advanced Interviewing Techniques*, *Finding Job 1: The Job and Internship Search*, *Business Etiquette & Networking*, and *LinkedIn 101: Building Your LinkedIn Brand*.
- Develop a list of professional references, confirm their willingness to be a reference and provide them with a copy of your resume, and, if appropriate, a copy of your customized cover letter and a job description.
- Schedule a career advising appointment to review your resume and cover letter, and to discuss and plan your job search. Appointments with your Career Advisor can be made online through Miami CAREERlink.
- Schedule a mock interview with Career Services. Complete the *Telling Your Story* workbook prior to your mock interview in order to practice articulating your skills, abilities and knowledge.
- Attend one of our Career Fair Training Sessions to prepare for the fall Career Fair. Programs are listed under "Programs" on the Career Services website [[MiamiOH.edu/careers](https://miamioh.edu/careers)].

Appendix G (continued)

- Attend Career Fair at Millett Hall held annually in September. Research the employers attending, the jobs they offer, and the majors they recruit. Many recruit all majors.
- Participate in Interview Day at Millett Hall the day after Career Fair.
- Use social networking sites as a part of your overall job search strategies. Attend *LinkedIn 101: Building Your LinkedIn Brand* to learn about the ins and outs of networking and how to leverage LinkedIn and other online networking tools as resources for managing and expanding your network.
- Attend *LinkedIn 101* if you need help crafting your LinkedIn profile. Check our website for weekly LinkedIn Headshots in Armstrong Student Center for FREE! We also offer free headshots during Fall Career Fair and Spring Internship & Career Expo.
- Research potential employers specific to your area(s) of interest. Use Career Services website “Internship and Job Search” [MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/index.html] to help you identify employers and other online job search resources.
- In addition to networking via social media, network using your faculty, family, former employers and friends to inform them of your career interests and gain valuable career and job search advice.
- Begin making direct contact with potential employers. Send customized cover letters and resumes to the appropriate hiring managers. Use names received from your network, LinkedIn, or online resources [MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/beginning-your-job-search/index.html]
- Follow up with potential employers by telephone and e-mail to discuss your interest in the position and a possible interview.
- Send e-mail thank you notes and/ or handwritten thank you notes immediately following each interview.
- Download the Career Services’ App [MiamiOH.edu/careers/converted/app.html].
- Regularly check Miami CAREERlink for your on-campus interview opportunities, set up automatic job alerts, and to research employers.

WINTER TERM

- Continue to research, network and inform contacts of your job search plans.
- Continue to set up informational interviews.
- Update all documents and profiles, including: LinkedIn, Miami CAREERlink, your resume, and cover letters to include new skills or positions from the Fall semester.

SPRING SEMESTER

- Review the steps listed under Fall Semester and update your Miami CAREERlink account and revise your resume if necessary.
- Continue to interview on and off campus and attend Career Services workshops and programs.
- Attend *Spring Internship & Career Expo* (Spring ICE).
- Follow up with contacts made at *Spring ICE* and request interviews when appropriate.

Appendix G (continued)

- Maintain contact with your network for possible job leads and continue to make direct contact with additional employers.
- Regularly check Miami CAREERlink for your on-campus interview opportunities.
- Arrange an advising appointment to discuss additional job search strategies and questions.
- TIP: *Spring Break* is a good time to schedule off-campus interviews.
- Continue to review major/field specific websites [[MiamiOH.edu/careers/internship-job-search/beginning-your-job-search/index.html](https://miamioh.edu/careers/internship-job-search/beginning-your-job-search/index.html)] for potential job openings.
- Evaluate job offers and notify career services once you have accepted your best fitting job. For more information on how to evaluate a job offer, refer to Career Services' *Job Search Strategies* guide [[MiamiOH.edu/student-life/_files/documents/career-services/pdfs/job-searchstrategies.pdf](https://miamioh.edu/student-life/_files/documents/career-services/pdfs/job-searchstrategies.pdf)].
- Once you have accepted a job, thank and inform your references, support network, and any employers who may have extended a job offer.
- *If still available for employment upon graduation*: our career counseling and advising appointments are open to alumni who have graduated from Miami within the last 12 months. For those who are further along in their career and searching for employment or contemplating a career change, our Online Career Resources are available to assist you in your search.
- Continue to network and make direct contact with employers.

Titles in the Career Development and Workbook Series include:

Cover Letters & Other Job Search Correspondence

The Graduate School Option

Interviewing

A Job Search Guide for International Students

Job Search Strategies

Mapping Your Miami Journey

Resume Preparation

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Your Job Search

Telling Your Story

Translating Your Study Abroad Experience

The Value of Service in Your Career Search

Your Journey Begins Now

To obtain any of the titles listed in the Career Development Series,
please visit MiamiOH.edu/careers or stop in Career Services.

Download the Career Services App!

Search for: **Miami University Events**



MIAMI UNIVERSITY

CAREER SERVICES

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