

Identifying Job Options and Conducting a Search in a Tough Economy

Career options outside the
academy: industry, government
and nonprofits



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Know What You Want

- 1. How would you like to make a contribution or impact?**
- 2. Where do you see yourself working?**
 - Large corporation, small business, government, nonprofit, industry, education
- 3. What type of work environment? Where do you do your best work?**
 - Structured organization, enterprising start-up, creative organization, technology company, hours, travel
- 4. What is your ideal location?**
 - Urban, suburban, rural, international

Do Your Research

- **Learn about the industry**
 - Language, trends, industry concerns, leaders, associations, geographical specific
- **Organizations**
 - History, work environment, strategic planning, projects, competitors, mission, culture, type of people
- **Job postings**
 - Duties, skills, qualifications, salary, advancement opportunities
- **Employer sectors**
 - Large employers, small growing employers, major trends/issues, types of jobs

Researching the market

- Use RESEARCH & CRITICAL THINKING to understand opportunities as well as barriers.
- Balanced optimism: Understanding reality, believing in opportunity, planning to be lucky.
- Identify challenges where YOU can be part of the solution.

Researching Opportunity

- “Follow the money.” What US government programs will be hiring because they got stimulus money (check out the stimulus bill at <http://www.ncsl.org/>)?
- What areas of the United States do NOT have a deficit and have lower unemployment?
- Internationally, do similar research. Where are there local opportunities and resources? Where are there opportunities with international organizations or global corporations?

Sources for market research

- Unemployment nation-wide in February 2011 was 8.9%. For people with college degrees it was 4.4%.
www.bls.gov (US Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- State governments <http://www.ncsl.org/> plus websites of individual states
- Nonprofits <http://www.mncn.org/> (MN)
National nonprofit career information:
www.idealists.org
- Federal hiring -- USAjobs: www.usajobs.gov, plus <http://www.ourpublicservice.org>

Sources, cont.

- Minnesota workforce statistics: www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi
- Interested in science careers? Go to <http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/>
- International jobs? Start with www.devnetjobs.org or www.fpa.org (Foreign Policy Association job board)
- Check out the websites of the professional associations for your particular field to find specialized job information. And TALK to professionals in your field.

Job Search Strategies

Employers

- Inside the company
- Colleagues/referrals
- Contacts/networking
- Agencies
- Ads
- Resumes

Job hunters

- Resumes
- Ads
- Agencies
- Asking friends/family
- Contacts/networking
- Inside the company

The Least Successful

1. Using the internet
2. Mailing resumes at random
3. Ads in professional/trade journals
4. Ads in newspapers
5. Employment agencies

*Also, known as the **Open Job Market!***

The Most Successful

1. Identify employers using yellow pages or similar resources
2. Knock on the door of employers that interest you
3. Ask for leads from family and friends

The Hidden Job Market

- Academic departments
- Professional associations
- Temporary agencies
- Volunteer
- University job fairs
- Business/trade journals
- Friends, family and co-workers
- Knowing people who are connected to opportunity

Nearly 80% of jobs are filled via the hidden job market!

Position Yourself

- **Networking (Combined Strategy: Online & Offline)**
 - Informational interviews
 - Joining professional organizations
 - Shadowing professionals
 - LinkedIn
- **Indirect experience**
 - Being active in professional organizations
 - Courses or training
 - Experience in a related field
- **Direct experience**
 - Job, internship or volunteer experience in your career field
 - Temporary or trial work at your chosen organization

Where To Start

- Start with your immediate circle of friends / family
- Expand to colleagues, professors, classmates, alumni, and others you share common interests
 - Tell them what type of job you are looking for
 - Give them a resume / business card stating your skills and background
 - Always follow-up on leads
 - Always send a thank you

Strong introductions in 30 seconds or less

- Who am I?
- What are my interests/passions?
- Where do I want to be in the future?
- What do I have to offer?
(accomplishments, skills)
- Example: “I’m Anna Zhang. I’m getting my masters in public policy this spring, and I want to help rural communities in Minnesota develop new types of business.”

Practice starting conversations

Exercise:

- Take 5 minutes to write a 30-second elevator speech.
- Practice with 2 others in the room whom you have not met before.

Informational Interviews: Goals

- **Brainstorm**
 - *Seeking ideas, not a job*
- **Research**
 - *Seeking information, not a job*
- **Job Specific**
 - *Seeking information about a particular job*

Ask for.....

- Information (trends, challenges, opportunities, great organizations in the field)
- Advice (skills I should develop, changes in my resume, related jobs I should consider)
- Referrals: Who else should I talk to? May I use your name?

Tips for Success

- Be prepared
- Be an active listener
- Take notes
- Limit your meeting (normally 30 minutes)
- Be appreciative
- Send a thank you note
- Keep in touch

Global thinking: Looking for jobs outside US

- Research opportunities through websites and conversations
- Network, network, network. How can your local network connect you to international opportunities?
- Consider internships and other apprenticeships (such as Peace Corps) to get experience on the ground
- Study languages and cultures. Know the job search conventions in your target area.

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Salary Negotiation Tips

- Do your market research. Know the salary range for the jobs you target.
- Know your own financial bottom line
- Know when & what you can negotiate and use good negotiating skills. Establish your **VALUE** to the organization first, then discuss salary & benefits. Talk to your career office for further information.

Timing

- Salary questions come up early when applications request either salary history or requirements.
- Salary questions come up later in the interview when a salary number is being negotiated
- As much as possible, push the salary question to the late stage so you can communicate your unique value **BEFORE** discussing compensation.

When it's the right time to talk salary...

- Begin by summarizing the job as you understand it.
- Follow by asking, “What is the normal range in your organization for a position such as this? Further, what would be the normal salary range for someone with my qualifications?”
- If employer refuses to reply to your question, then state what you believe to be a reasonable range. Allow negotiating space.
- Negotiate salary separately from benefits.

Closing the agreement

- Get the offer in writing
- Clarify questions before accepting
- Thank them – set a positive tone for beginning your new job

Summary

- Research your options
- Develop strong professional relationships
- Present your knowledge, skills and abilities effectively for each organization you target
- Be prepared to negotiate fairly and professionally to finalize the offer

Take Action!

- What 3 actions will YOU take in the next 2 weeks to move your job search forward?
- Be specific: I will identify and contact 2 professionals in my field for informational interviews by April 15. I will talk to my faculty advisor this week to ask her for 2 names.
- Write this down and tell someone else – and arrange to report on the results.