

Use these steps to help plan your job search

Identify Your Skills

Skills are often divided into two categories: work specific or technical skills (hard skills) and employability or transferable skills (soft skills). Hard skills are what we have learned and soft skills are how we use what we have learned. Skills are not limited to work experiences and can include those which you have gained through volunteering, personal learning, crafting, recreational activities, caring for others, or running a household. These are called transferable skills.

Choose the Type of Work

Look for work that matches your education and skill level. If you cannot decide or do not know, you may benefit from career planning help. There are many free resources in person and online to assist with coming to a decision.

Research Employers

You have decided what you want to do, now where do you want to work? Check out company websites, career and job fairs, LinkedIn, and industry associations to find the best fit for you. Conduct an informational interview to gather information and advice about a specific job, company, or industry.

Access and Build Your Allies

Talk to people and let them know what type of work you are looking for. Your network can include neighbours, current or past co-workers, community contacts, family members, friends. Networking can be done online through LinkedIn or Facebook and remember everyone you meet is an opportunity to expand your network.

Find Job Openings

Use job search websites to find opportunities. Remember that competition for these postings is fierce as so many people have access to the sites. Apply quickly as many of these postings fill in less than a week.

Tip Sheet: **JOB SEARCH PLANNING**

Create Your Documents

Put together a master resume which contains all your soft, hard, and transferable skills, paid and unpaid work, education, professional development, and certification. Create accomplishment statements to clearly describe how you work and that showcases your value. Target every job with a unique resume using information from your master resume which is relevant to the reader and demonstrates a match for the position. Create a cover letter and use this additional space to expand on important skills or experiences that connect you with the position you are applying for. If uploading your documents online, consider the requirements of the applicant tracking system (ATS) and ensure you follow certain protocols for the computer scan.

Apply

When applying online, work at completing all fields, even if the information is on your resume. Read and follow all the directions for your application and ensure that your document file matches their requirements (.docx, .pdf, .txt, etc.). Once you have applied, check your junk mailbox daily as some automatic replies may be filtered out of your inbox. Remember that there is a lot of competition with online job postings so use your networking to find opportunities to email your resume directly to a person.

Prepare for the Interview

Do not wait for the invitation, start preparing how you will answer common interview questions like 'Tell me about yourself' or behavioural questions that are best answered using a story from past experiences. Make a list of your strengths and areas you need or want to improve on and consider how you will speak confidently about both. Practice with Skype, Facetime or Zoom as these platforms are often used to conduct one-way screening and live video interviews.

Follow Up

Follow up with your applications after a week if you have not heard back. Understand that the employer's timeline to hire may not match your timeline for need to get a job and some take longer than others.

