

Job Search Strategies for Graduate Students

Welcome!

Please collect:

- Job Boards for Graduate Students
- Job Search Worksheet



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What we're talking about today

- Getting prepared
- Finding positions
- Keeping momentum & avoiding pitfalls



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Who's here?

Turn to your neighbor and share:

- Your name
- Program or Department
- What you are looking for (potential fields, areas of interest for work)



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Academia → Industry Spectrum

Academic Research
Positions & Most
Postdocs

Think Tanks,
Research Arms of
Gov. Centers

Other
Roles



Institutes and
Centers

Research at Non
Profit; Company



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How long will it take (minimum, likely time)?

It will take at least...

- A. One week
- B. One month
- C. Two – three months
- D. Up to six months
- E. A year



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How long will it take (minimum, likely time)?

It will take at least...

- A. One week
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- D. Up to six months
- E. A year

It will take you several months

- Job searches last at least 2-3 months (normal)
- Longer for niche fields
- Longer if you're **not sure what you're looking for**



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For today, I'm assuming:

You already have a few ideas about the kinds of jobs you'll be looking for.



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What you'll need:

- Resume (almost **all** jobs)
- Cover letter (for most jobs)
- Portfolio/work samples (some jobs)
- LinkedIn profile (many jobs)



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Identifying what you're looking for

- Fill in some ideas on Step Two of the handout
- Not at all sure? Let the questions be a guide for some self-reflection later



You don't have to know 100%

But, the more you can understand your own experience and research a prospective field, the better the fit you'll eventually find.



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Three core job search strategies:

Job Boards

Employer
Sourcing

People
Connections



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Job Boards

- HuskyJobs
- Professional association job boards
- Journal & publication job boards
- Government job boards (usajobs.gov)
- Industry-specific (idealist.org)
- General (indeed.com)



Keywords

- Top skills for a job or field – technical or non-technical
- Field-specific vocabulary
- Related to what tasks you do on the job



Prevent job board **freak out**

- Keywords count
- Set up searches if feature is available
- Visit 1-3x per week, not every single day
- Double check for postings on company website



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Example 1: M's Story

- Only applied to jobs on Indeed.com and even Monster
- Wasn't getting interviews (except for sales)
- Started using **industry-specific job boards**
- Started finding many more interesting jobs



Employer Sourcing

- Build a big list of companies or organizations you like
- Organize it (size, region, focus, products, etc.)
- Follow on LinkedIn
- Read industry news
- Apply to postings on their webpages
- Attend their events



Example 2: J's Story

- Graduated March 2016
- Only knew of 1-2 non-profits of interest
- Applied to all the jobs there, no interviews
- Came into our office in June
- Started **researching** non-profits and found 9 more
- **Tailored each cover letter** to reflect the research
- Started getting interviews



People Connections

- **Most effective** strategy, but takes longest to work
- Gather inside info about jobs, learn about company fit
- Will take time to see results
- Try variety of ways to find and meet people
- “Weak ties” are how we learn about stuff
- Events and one-on-one



Where do you talk to people?

- Career Fairs
- Informational interviews
- Departmental events & receptions
- Events in the professional community
- Trivia night, airplanes, cycling team



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Should I talk to a recruiter? (maybe, maybe not)

- Internal recruiter
- External recruiter
- Headhunter



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Example 3: T's Story

- Graduated in June 2016, engineering field
- Started to apply to jobs online in June
- Applied to many positions, no interviews.
- Came in to our office in July 2016
- Began **talking to engineering people** in July & August (informational interviews)
- Landed a job in October as a result of those summer conversations



All of these strategies won't help if:

- You never tailor your materials (cover letter, resume, etc.)
- You never practice interviewing
- You never explain your graduate degree in the new field's language



Assemble your resources

- Consult the job board list
- Visit the careers.uw.edu calendar to scan for events
- Brainstorm about potential alumni of your program to reach out to for coffee chats

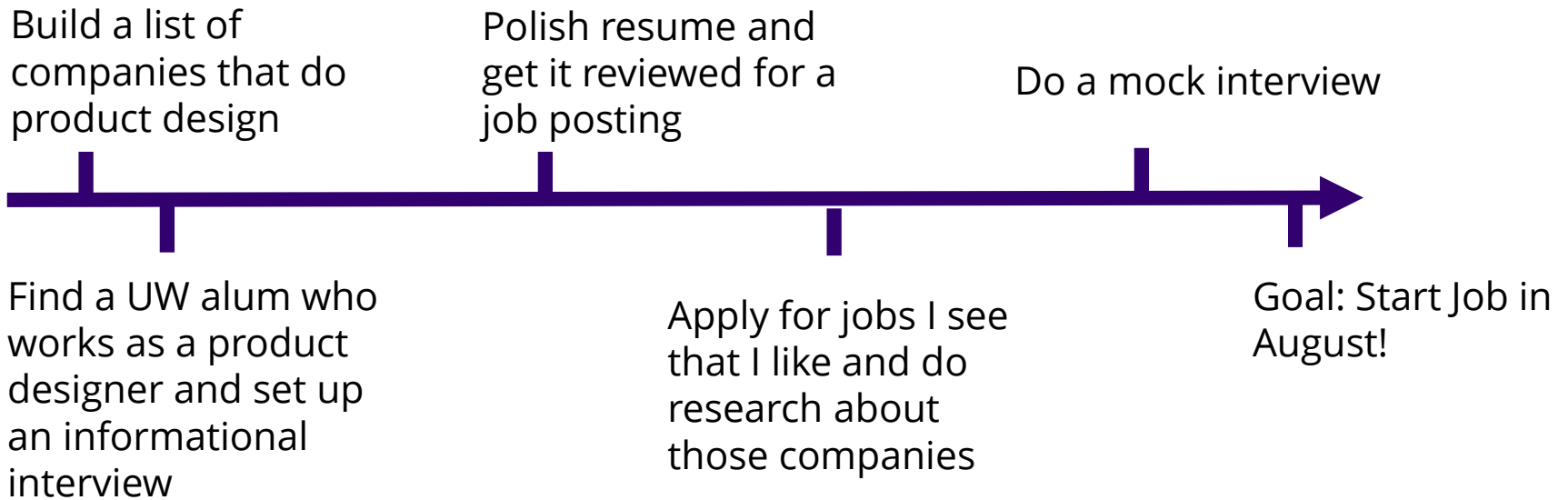


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Build a job search timeline



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Share your timeline

- Share one or two items on your timeline with someone sitting next to you
- Consider brainstorming more ideas together



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Getting stuck because:

- Untailored materials
- No one knows how your experience translates
- No one knows why you're interested
- You're a tiny bit underqualified
- You're a tiny bit overqualified
- Not enough applications
- Way too many applications



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Example 4: L's Story

- Education graduate degree
- Started job search 5 months before graduation
- Tailored materials, did networking and great research
- Came in **2nd place** in **3 job searches**
- Finally found a contract role
- Contract role launched her into a full time directorship about 6 months later



Resources for when you're stuck

- Talk to a career counselor
- Check your materials
- Remember the wait time (companies take forever to get back)
- Practice while you wait



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