

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER**  
**JOB SEARCH AND TACTICS GUIDE**

It has often been said that searching for a job is a full-time job itself. While the internet has made many of the tasks involved with a job search easier and faster, you should still prepare for a full-time search to take anywhere from 3-6 months and at least 10 hours of dedicated time per week. Gone are the days when you could send out 30 resumes and end up with three or four interviews. A successful job search in today's world requires extensive preparation, daily effort and persistence over the long haul. This guide is intended to cover the basic strategies and techniques, and not necessarily as an all-inclusive resource. If you need additional help setting up or executing your search, please contact us for individual assistance.

## KEY FACTORS IN UNSUCCESSFUL JOB SEARCHES

*Uninspiring resumes – The format, content, accuracy and general appearance of a resume must make a positive statement. It is the first indicator of an applicant's background, knowledge, strengths, and past accomplishments. A quick, "thrown-together" version will eliminate you from consideration immediately. Tailor your resume to the position you are pursuing.*

*Unprepared candidates – A poor impression is created immediately when it becomes apparent that the job hunter has not done his/her homework, knows very little about the company and the organization, and is not prepared for the interview.*

*Poor communication skills – The individual is unable to clearly explain how he/she qualifies for the position and does not relate specifically to job requirements. Correspondence, related to ad replies and direct contacts, is not tailored to address each situation.*

*Other key factors to consider: Poor Body Language, Lack of Enthusiasm, Unrealistic Requirements, Emotional Attitudes, Personal Presentation, Ineffective References*

## PREPARING FOR AN EFFECTIVE JOB SEARCH

### SELF-ASSESSMENT

Before you even start, you need to take the following step: **Decide where you want to go using Self-Assessment and Career Exploration.**

The first phase of any job search entails *self-assessment*. If you have not completed this process and have not developed a career focus or identified some career goals, your job search will be very difficult. Employers are seeking individuals who are able to articulate their skills and goals.

The Career Development Center can assist you with the self-assessment process through a series of career counseling meetings. To schedule an appointment contact us at . We also recommend that you utilize the **FOCUS Education and Career Planning System** [click HERE](#) and the websites listed for major and career research [click HERE](#)

### DEVELOP A PLAN

Once you can articulate what you want to do, you must craft an effective **resume, cover letter, and networking "elevator speech"** that concisely convey that goal and why you are qualified.

For more assistance with these important tasks, [click HERE](#)

***In addition to knowing WHAT you want to do, it is always a good idea to develop an understanding of WHERE you might want to do it as well.*** Through the networking process you will ultimately be able to develop an extensive list of potential employers, but identifying a few "top targets" right at the beginning can help give some direction to the networking process and give your connections a better idea of how they can assist you.

Some things to consider as you develop your initial list:  
**Geographic location:** In what city/State/Country do you want to work?  
**Industry** – What industry and type of position are you interested in?

**Size (# of employees)** – How big a company do you want to work for?

Defining these three questions goes a long way in determining which companies will be a good fit before you go too far down the road in pursuing them.

**Do something every day.** Spending 6 hours on one day on your job search efforts and then doing nothing for 4 days is not a good way to carry forward the momentum for your search. Try to do at least one thing (make a networking call, research a company, apply for a job) every day. Ideally, you should schedule a dedicated time each day (about 1-2 hours if possible) and treat your search like a work assignment.

**Keep good records.** Make sure you use a daily organizer, journal, spreadsheet, file card system, or notebook to record the results of your contacts and applications. Missing deadlines, appointments, calls or interviews can prove deadly to your search. Be reliable and organized!

However, while applying for posted jobs online should certainly be one element of your search it should never be your only search method.

The best way to think of the internet, as it relates to your job search, is as a more efficient way of doing the same things job seekers did before the internet (things like finding contacts, researching companies, etc.). A successful job search has a number of essential elements and the internet is your tool to complete those elements, the most important of which is Networking.

More than 80% of jobs are never advertised. This means that no matter how many hours you spend sending out resumes and applying to job postings, you are still competing with huge groups of people (sometimes even several thousand for any one job) and only seeing 20% of available jobs. Given this fact, the way you increase your odds of finding employment is to decrease the pool of people you are competing with for that 20% of available jobs and gain access to the other 80%. Networking is your tool to do this. The more effectively you are able to use your network, the more productive all of the job search tools listed above will be.

## TOOLS FOR AN EFFECTIVE JOB SEARCH

An effective job search will use ALL of the tools available to you as a candidate and will incorporate NETWORKING in conjunction with each tool. The basic tools for an effective job search which we will explore in this guide are:

Informational Interviewing

SHU's Online Recruiting System (PioneerLink)

Non-SHU Job Posting Websites

Job and Career Fairs

On-Campus Interviewing

Targeted Mailings/Emails/Cold Calls

Recruiting/Staffing Firms

## NETWORKING

**Networking** is an organized way to link contacts together to form a "net" of people who can give you support and information. Looking at the hiring process from the employer's side, wouldn't you rather interview and hire employees who were referred to you by employees and friends than go through the tedious process of selecting faceless applicants from hundreds of resumes?

## GETTING STARTED WITH NETWORKING

First you need to **make a list of whom you know**. Think of former colleagues and bosses, teachers, professors, alumni, roommates, roommates' parents, coaches, people in professional organizations, parents' friends, relatives, etc. until you have about 200 names. The internet has made the process of developing and organizing your network even easier. Social Networking websites such as LinkedIn ([www.Linkedin.com](http://www.Linkedin.com)), Facebook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)) now make it much easier to understand who might be in your network and how they can assist you. Even if you contact your network "offline", these online tools can be an excellent way to find leads and contacts you may not have known you had. More and more companies are now recruiting on Twitter as well, directly posting job opportunities there.

LinkedIn is an especially valuable tool in the job search process because it is a strictly BUSINESS-ORIENTED networking site which allows you to see your contacts, but also ALL of your contact's connections...and THEIR contacts connections. So, you can instantly do a search in LinkedIn and determine if you

## ABOUT THE INTERNET AND NETWORKING

When most people talk about the internet and a job search they immediately assume that this means going to a job posting website (Monster.com, CareerBuilder.com, etc.) and applying for posted jobs. The internet has become a very valuable tool for a job search and, in fact, most companies now recruit almost exclusively online. In recent years it has even become common for employers attending career fairs to refuse to accept paper resumes, instead directing candidates to apply online (there are a host of legal and procedural reasons for this).

have a connection to someone at the organization you are interested in joining. ([CLICK HERE](#) for a better idea of how you can use LinkedIn and sites like it as a part of your job search).

SHU alumni also have access to our Alumni Online Community and Directory which can be a valuable resource for finding friendly contacts at target organizations. [Click HERE](#) to get connected!

Another excellent way to develop your network is by joining **professional associations** related to your field of interest. These can typically be found by a quick search engine investigation. Many even offer student memberships and discounts and are great ways to get to know real people in your intended field.

Networking, or put more simply, using your connections to find a person who can help you, becomes an essential part of every remaining job search tool. Networking makes every “cold call” into a “warm call”.

## NETWORKING TIPS

- Tell everyone you know that you are looking for work. Use social networking sites to help spread the word and proactively identify your friends connections that could help you (LinkedIn)
- Make your information specific. Contacts will find it a lot easier to help you if that have more specific information.
- Be considerate. Don't take up too much of your contact's time or expect him/her to bend backwards for you.
- Be professional and willing to accept advice. Your reason for contacting them is to gather information, so listen.
- Ask for referrals. If the person you contact cannot help you, try and get the name of someone who can.
- Have a script for what you are going to say on the phone, particularly if you are leaving a BRIEF voice mail message mail message – do not “wing it” or you may ramble
- Make sure you are flexible for meeting times and don't miss a scheduled meeting.
- ALWAYS thank your contact for his/her time.
- Don't give up.
- Follow-up, follow-up, follow up. You can follow-up via email, phone, and mail. Be professional and very persistent, but not pushy. Do exactly what you say you will. Missed deadlines and appointments can derail your efforts. Don't give up. Once your networking pays off and you find a job, inform your networking contacts so they are not wasting their time by continuing to hunt for you. Express your gratitude once again for their time and effort.

## INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING

This is a form of networking in and of itself, however using your networking resources to identify people who will be willing to speak with you is a powerful way to ensure that you get the greatest benefit from the informational interview process. If you are in the process of choosing an academic major, making career choices, changing careers, or beginning a job hunt, then informational interviews may help you explore your possibilities. An informational interview is a conversation, (in-person, by telephone or via email) which you schedule with a particular individual for the purpose of gaining information from an “insider” point of view. Unlike job interviews, informational interviews do not require you to sell yourself to an employer. Informational interviews are arranged regardless of an existing vacancy. Informational interviews are arranged with those likely to provide information directly or with those who can refer you to persons with information. While not actual job interviews, informational interviews help you expand your network of contacts and ideally can result in a referral for an actual job opening. However, since so many jobs are not advertised sometimes merely having a conversation can lead directly to employment opportunities.

For more information on what Informational Interviewing is all about [click HERE](#) for our more detailed guide on the topic.

## PIONEERLINK SHU'S ONLINE RECRUITING SYSTEM

Create an account on PioneerLink, Sacred Heart University's on-line job posting/resume management system and online events calendar. This is our main resource for communicating all events, opportunities and services. **ALL current students and alumni should activate an account.**

Upload your resume to PioneerLink as soon as it is completed. Once you've uploaded your resume to the document section, the Career Development staff reviews your resume. Review may take up to 72 hours depending on the volume of resumes submitted, so do not wait until the last day of a deadline for a job to post your resume, you could miss the deadline!

Internship and full-time positions posted on PioneerLink are posted specifically for SHU students and alumni. Because this job board is specific to SHU, you are automatically in a better position for success when you apply to jobs within the system because recruiters have come here looking specifically for SHU students and alumni. Your pool of competition has been reduced from

millions on a board like Monster to possibly as little as a dozen SHU students/alumni interested in similar positions.

In addition to applying for positions online, your registration will allow you to access our database of over 4,000 recruiters. Interested in a certain company? Do a quick contact search and email the recruiter we work with directly. You have automatic credibility with them as a SHU student/alumni since they have worked with our office in the past. Even better, run this contact or company through your network on LinkedIn and see if you have an even better relationship you can use to gain leverage with this employer.

Beyond these job search tools, registering with the Career Development Center allows us to keep you updated on events and opportunities, including our weekly email, *HOT Jobs of the Week*, an update of all recently added jobs and internships in our system.

If you are in an active job search you should check this site frequently as an average of 10 new opportunities are added every day! **All current SHU students already have an account and can get their login info by clicking [HERE](#).** SHU alumni interested in creating an account should contact our office at [CareerDev@sacredheart.edu](mailto:CareerDev@sacredheart.edu)

## NON-SHU INTERNET RESOURCES

Most of the major job search websites (e.g., Monster, Career-Builder, etc.) are so crowded with competitors that they are ultimately of little value for most job seekers. The best way to succeed on internet job boards is to put yourself in competition with the *smallest group* possible. It's best to spend the bulk of your time on the sites that cater to your specific industry (pick your favorite search engine and type in your field and "job"). In an active job search, job related websites should be checked as frequently as possible and resumes should be refreshed every month. Don't get too bogged down, though, and spend all of your job search time on these sites. Spend the bulk of your time trying to reach real people at these companies, but apply online for any positions of interest since this will be a formality required at some point even if you do find a connection to help you within the organization. Whenever possible, create searches that will have results emailed to you. It's also helpful to re-post or update your resume on the sites every few weeks.

## ON-CAMPUS RECRUITMENT

The Career Development Center sponsors several on-campus-recruiting events throughout the academic year, including fall and spring Internship & Career Fairs and on-campus interviews. On-campus job fairs are an opportunity to network, as well as find specific opportunities. These are powerful opportunities to make "face to face" connections. Recruiters are much more likely to continue conversations with people they have met in person

than someone who merely applied anonymously online. Alumni are always invited to participate in these events. Register with PioneerLink to be informed about these events.

## JOB/CAREER FAIRS

As with all other Career Development Center events, alumni are invited to participate in SHU career fairs as well. Job Fairs are another great source to learn about companies throughout the country. In addition to SHU job fairs, the Career Development Center's online calendar lists job fairs being held for various industries and in various locations including New York, New Jersey, and Boston. Our online calendar of events can be accessed through PioneerLink.

## TARGETED MAILINGS/EMAILS & COLDCALLS

One of the main uses of your network is to identify people you know who can help you get into conversations with people working in the same companies/industries you are interested in. Connections made in this fashion are "warm" calls, but sometimes you will have no choice but to try a "cold call" instead. A cold call is any contact (email, phone, in-person) with someone with whom you have no previous connection or relationship. This method does not usually have a high success rate, but done in conjunction with all the other methods outlined in this guide, it can be a valuable addition. Finding the people (and their specific contact info) is typically the biggest challenge. Professional associations, chambers of commerce and online directories will all assist you in identifying companies to target for employment inquiries. Research the company, find (if possible) the name of a specific person to whom you can send a well-crafted cover letter and resume and follow up with a phone call.

Sacred Heart University students also have access to **CareerSearch**, an extensive online database that includes over one million companies along with contact names, addresses, phone numbers and a variety of company background information. Individuals can search by industry, location (including distances from specific zip codes) and keyword. Contact results can be further narrowed and saved or downloaded. The database can be accessed at <http://www.careersearch.net/v2/client>. If you are logging in for the first time, go to "New Users" on the left-hand side of the page and create an account for yourself. THE CLIENT REFERRAL CODE IS **SHU04**. You will use this code each time you log on to the system. PLEASE REMEMBER TO "LOG OUT" WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED USING CAREER SEARCH, AS ONLY ONE PERSON AT A TIME IS ABLE TO USE THE SYSTEM. IF YOU DO NOT LOG OFF BUT SIMPLY CLOSE OUT THE SCREEN, THE SYSTEM WILL STILL BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE LOGGED IN AND WILL NOT LET OTHER USERS INTO THE SYSTEM. THANK YOU!

## HEADHUNTERS/PLACEMENT AGENCIES

Third-party recruiters are often hired by organizations to fill positions and are a great resource for employment. Third-party recruiters are Employment Agencies, Search Firms, Contract Recruiters and Resume Referral Firms. A third-party recruiter may be helpful to you in your job search, but be sure to read all the material and ask questions. Some contract recruiters require that you sign an exclusive agreement with them; make sure if you go this route that you have an attorney view the contract before signing. Typically an agency will have you fax a resume and cover letter before having you come in for an interview. Make sure the agency does placement in full-time positions in your field. It is often wise to register with a few different staffing agencies.

For an extensive list of third party recruiters, sorted by niche, click [HERE](#)

The MOST important thing to remember in any search is NEVER give up. If you have any questions about how to conduct your search, or need any assistance, be sure to contact our office.