

# Career Connections

## *The Job Search Process*

Congratulations you have graduated and are Actively Seeking employment in your field! As the Outreach and Placement Specialist it is my delight to support you in your job search process.

First, let's look at how the process has changed over the years...

<b>OLD</b> Job Searching Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. View open jobs online</li> <li>2. Pick jobs of interest</li> <li>3. Apply online and submit resume</li> <li>4. Get called for the interview</li> </ol>	<i>Very straightforward, but haphazard and based more on luck and the success of your resume within the Advertised Job Market.</i>
<b>VERSUS</b>		
<b>NEW</b> Job Searching Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decide what you want to do within your field</li> <li>2. Determine where you could work</li> <li>3. Create a Target Company List</li> <li>4. Search company websites for openings</li> <li>5. Establish a contact at each company</li> <li>6. Network your way into a job</li> <li>7. Interview and Get Hired</li> </ol>	<i>Requires more planning and strategy beforehand but allows candidates to access the Hidden Job Market through stronger connections and referrals.</i>

The Office of Career Services offers graduates support and assistance on the NEW Job Search Process through our service called Career Connections! Our passion is to help you become employed within your field promptly after graduation. Keep reading to learn more...

**Step #1:** Schedule an initial Career Connections appointment with the Outreach and Placement Specialist to create a customized plan based on the following advice.

### Define your Goal and Job Search Parameters

- ⇒ What type of work do you want to do?
- ⇒ Do you want to specialize in your field?
- ⇒ What type of company do you want to work for?
- ⇒ What do you need in a job? (i.e. benefits, flexible hours, location, etc.)

### Hone Your Professional Brand through strategic Job Search Documents- *the Resume and Cover Letter*

- ⇒ What are you good at?
- ⇒ What are you experienced in?
- ⇒ What skills do you have?
- ⇒ What sets you apart from others?
- ⇒ What unique contribution can you make to a company?

**Step #2:** Now that you have narrowed down the specifics of your job search and strengthened your job search documents, it is time to get started on your Target List.

### **Find and Research Companies in your Industry.**

- ⇒ Locate companies in the area you're interested in by:
  - Visiting the Blue Ridge CTC online Job Board
  - Working with Outreach & Placement Specialist for recommendations
  - Using LinkedIn (company search section)
  - Using online Job Search Engines (i.e. Indeed, Monster, etc)
  - Visiting local Chamber of Commerce websites
  - Attending career fairs
  - Asking your network (professors, classmates, and professionals, etc.)
  - Using resources available through your professional organizations
- ⇒ Begin researching companies of interest by:
  - Researching online and visiting the companies' websites
    - Find positions that match your qualifications
  - Searching online for articles or other information about them, and following them on Social Media.
- ⇒ Compile a list of all your Top 10 Target Companies based on all of your research.

**Step #3:** Strengthen your professional brand and reputation by developing relationships with other professionals in your field to “network” your way into a job.

### **Formulate a Networking Plan**

- ⇒ Work with the Office of Career Services for direct referrals with Target Companies.
- ⇒ Establish at least one contact at each company on your list to stay up to date on openings.
  - Start by using your existing network- Ask everyone if they know anyone who works at any of your target companies.
  - Use LinkedIn to find connections- Ask for introductions or if you can use their name when contacting the person.
- ⇒ For the remaining companies where you've been unable to find a connection, start asking around and networking, continue to work with Outreach & Placement Specialist for direct referrals.

### **Get Out there**

- ⇒ Register online for Office of Career Services Employer Info Sessions.
- ⇒ Join organizations specific to your community, industry, and profession.
- ⇒ Attend events, such as networking events, career fairs, professional organization meetings, community events, conferences, etc.
- ⇒ Promote your brand. *Make sure everyone knows who you are and what you have to offer.* Build your presence online through social media, blogs, discussion groups, and portfolios, and in-person by volunteering.
- ⇒ Possibly even ask to conduct informational interviews with someone from each target company.

**Step #4:** Improve your Interviewing Skills and practice aligning previous work and volunteer experience with potential employment opportunities.

**Identify Opportunities & Prepare for the Interview**

- ⇒ Schedule Interviewing Prep Sessions with Outreach and Placement Specialist to practice utilizing the STAR technique within your answers.
- ⇒ Monitor the “careers” page of each of your target companies’ websites.
- ⇒ Follow up with each of your contacts and let them know you are looking and what you’re looking for. Ask if they know of any upcoming openings either at their company or somewhere else. If applying for a posted opening, let your contact know.
- ⇒ Be an Impressive Applicant by always dressing the part when making any contact with potential employers!

**Step #5:** Get hired and inform the Office of Career Services of the good news!