



FGCU
Career Development
Services

Job Search Guide

Career Development Services

"From exploration to career success, your future starts here"

JOB SEARCH GUIDE

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Career Development Services

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FGCU Career Development Services supports the mission of the University by promoting student learning and development and helping students fulfill their career expectations. Within this context, we assist students in developing and implementing career, education, and employment plans and decisions.

Overview of Services

Advising on career and major selection, including assessments, major and career information, and assistance in the decision-making process.

Job and internship search advising, including resume/cover letter assistance and preparation for employment interviews and salary negotiation. CDS also assists with student employment, through the use of a web-based job listing system, Eagle Career Network.

Graduate school planning, including assistance with resume/CV/personal statements, graduate school research, and preparation for interviews.

JOB SEARCH TIMELINES

One aspect of the job search that most students don't realize is that it can take, depending on the field, between 3 – 6 months of active searching (more than 15 hours per week) to find and obtain the job they want. It can be even longer in a tight job market. With that in mind, here is one way to plan your time:

Experience Stage - One year from graduation

- ☐ Concentrate on gaining related experience through internships, part-time jobs, service learning, volunteering, or involvement in student clubs related to your field.
- ☐ Start building your network and developing your references (from supervisors and faculty).

Preparation & Research Stage - Six months from graduation

- ☐ Get all your job search materials in order. Have your resume and a version of your cover letter reviewed by Career Development Services staff.
- ☐ Develop and practice your interviewing skills, one of the most important elements of the job search. You can schedule mock interviews with Career Development Advisors as one way to practice.
- ☐ Determine your search strategy based on the type of job you are pursuing.
- ☐ Conduct research on the industry and on all the companies you are interested in.
- ☐ If you are considering moving to another city, conduct web research on the companies in that city.
- ☐ Talk to people in the field to learn the most effective ways to break into it. Keep building your network.

Application Stage - Three months from graduation

- ☐ Ensure you have professional business attire for the interview process. If you need professional clothing but lack the resources to obtain it, Azul's Attire can provide you with up to one free professional outfit per semester. To use Azul's Attire, you can make an appointment with our office. Additionally, check out local thrift shops or attend the semesterly JC Penny Suit-Up event.
- ☐ Start applying to active job postings and sending out prospecting letters.
- ☐ Start using and keep building your network.
- ☐ Update your contact options - put a professional sounding message on your phone voicemail that includes your name. Use a conservative, easy-to-use email address. As for your social media, consider removing all inappropriate content and/or adjust your Privacy Setting to "Only my friends." Also, make sure your profile pictures are professional!

The job search strategy you utilize may depend heavily on the career or field you are pursuing. Every field – whether it is public relations, hospitality, education, health care, law enforcement, or sales – has aspects of the recruitment process that are *specific to that industry*. Part of your preparation for the job search will be to become more knowledgeable about your field's recruitment process. Also, if you are conducting out-of-area job searches, your strategy will likely have to rely on more web-based resources than in-person networking. Overall, the most effective job searches usually involve utilizing a combination of strategies and resources.

ONLINE JOB POSTING SITES

Most job posting sites, even the large ones like Monster.com and Careerbuilder.com, represent only a small portion of the job openings available. The appeal of these sites is understandable: everybody knows about them and they are easy to use. That can also be a problem. With so many job seekers using them, there is tremendous competition. Some jobs postings receive hundreds of resumes from applicants. If you want to use one or two large commercial sites, that's fine, but don't spend any more than 10% of your job search time with them.

- You are better off using “niche job boards.” These are sites specific to a particular field. If you don't know of any, simply use Google to search for them. For example, if you were looking for a job in sports management, simply Google “sports management jobs” and you should get plenty of options. Pick one or two to use.
- Eagle Career Network, the job board that is linked to the FGCU Career Services website, is a good resource for primarily local jobs. Also, only FGCU students and alumni can use it, so it limits the competition. *The Eagle Career Network website is operated by Symplicity, a third-party provider of employment technology solutions. It is not a FGCU website.*
- Most fields or industries have a professional association, and most of them have a website. Check the website of your professional association to see if it has a section for job postings. Not sure of the professional association in your field? Google it! More companies are starting to post on these sites instead of the large commercial sites so that they don't get bombarded with unqualified applicants.
- One of the most helpful resources on the Internet is a site called www.indeed.com. Unlike a job board, this is a search engine that scours the web for job postings based on your search criteria. Since Indeed.com pulls job postings from major newspapers, other job posting sites, and company websites, it can serve as a nice “one stop shop” and save you from having to use ten different job sites. The listings from company websites are helpful so you can go directly to that company's site to check for additional job postings.
- If you are relocating to another part of the country, there may be some job boards specifically for that area. Some are linked from Chamber of Commerce websites.
- **Strategy summary: Easy to use but employer response rate can be inconsistent. However, if you don't have a specific career goal, these sites can be helpful for you to see what is available. Perhaps you will see something that interests you.**

Many students that rely on online job sites will quickly reach a point of diminishing returns, where they have applied to all the jobs they are interested in and have stopped seeing any new postings on the sites. Spending *more* time on these sites is not going to help. Other strategies that are discussed later in this guide will require you to be more proactive in your search, but will probably yield better results.

STUDENT GUIDE TO EAGLE CAREER NETWORK

Eagle Career Network is a web-based job posting system where you can search on and off campus jobs and internships, post your resume for employers to see, and stay informed about events.

To get started, go to <http://fgcu-csm.symplicity.com>



Once you're in the University's system as a student and have an Eagle Email account, an **Eagle Career Network** account is set up for you with your Eagle Email as your username and your Eagle Email password as your password. If your email is not recognized, you can click "Sign Up," and follow the prompts to create your profile.

- Select the "Student/Alumni" icon on the registration page.
- Your login credentials will be the same as your Eagle Mail login.
- If you are logging in for the first time, you will need to complete your account before you can access jobs/internship listings.
 - Click "My Account" on the left-side panel and then click "Personal."
 - Please fill in your information as completely as possible. Click "Save Changes."

If you encounter any issues, including login/signup issues, please contact the Eagle Career Network team for assistance at 239-745-4423.

Job Search

- Click "Jobs & Internships" on the left-hand panel then "Search" from the drop-down menu.
- **Search Tip:** Clicking in the search bar will allow you to search by keyword. You can also use the various filters under the search bar to finetune your search.
- Click on the job title for more information and application instructions.
- Click on "My Job Applications" to check the status of positions you've applied for.
- Selecting the star next to a job listing will add it to your "My Favorites" to review later.
- **For on campus student employment, search using "fgcu" or "florida gulf coast university" using the "Organization" dropdown.**

Internship Search

- Click "Jobs & Internships" on the left-hand panel, then "Search" from the drop down menu.
- Open the "Position Type" drop down under the search bar and click on "Experiential Learning: Internship, Cooperative, Mentor, Practicum, Student Teaching".

Check out the other helpful resources available in **Eagle Career Network**, including document storage, resume builder, and interview training. Also, check out www.employflorida.com to access additional job postings.

For further assistance using Eagle Career Network or to meet with a career advisor to discuss your job/internship search, contact us: Career Development Services—Career & Exploratory Advising | 239-590-7946 | careercenter@fgcu.edu

The Florida Gulf Coast University Office of Career Development Services acts only as a referral service, and makes no particular recommendations regarding off-campus employers. Career Development Services is not responsible for safety, wages, working conditions, or other aspects of off-campus employment. Due to the high volume of jobs received by our office, we are unable to research the integrity of each organization, business, or person listing a job with us. Therefore, you, the student or alumni, are urged to undertake this responsibility yourself.

Eagle Career Network is not an FGCU website. It is provided by Symplicity, a third-party provider of employment technology solutions.

TARGETING, PROSPECTING, AND GETTING A FOOT IN THE DOOR

Targeting: Instead of waiting to see what positions turn up on job boards, you should be “**targeting**” the companies that you want to work for and visiting the company website to check for job postings.

- To find company lists, check the professional association website for the field you are pursuing – these sites often have company membership directories. Or try using the “Find Companies” tool at www.zoominfo.com

Strategy summary: Requires more time and energy than using big, commercial sites, but likely to access more and better opportunities

Prospecting: What do you do if you go the company website and there aren’t any jobs posted? “**Prospecting**” employers is the process of presenting yourself to a company as a candidate for employment, even though there may not be any visible job postings.

- When you are on company website, try to identify the most appropriate person in the company to contact. It may be the person in charge of recruiting or human resources, or the director of the department you want to work in. Use your best judgment.
- Email a “prospecting letter” (you can find an example in our Cover Letter Writing Guide), which is similar to a cover letter. The goal of the prospecting letter is to:
 - 1) Express why you are interested in working for the company.
 - 2) Briefly summarize your qualifications.
 - 3) Communicate your willingness to further discuss possible employment opportunities.
- DO NOT send a generic letter. Customize it to the company.
- The best form of communication is probably email. A phone call can catch someone off-guard and unprepared to have a discussion. Also, if you send an email to the wrong person, it is very easy for them to forward your email to the right person. Include a copy of your resume in the email.

Strategy summary: Highly time consuming, many companies will not accept prospecting letters, and there are no guarantees that you will even get a response to your letter. However, this job search approach has worked for FGCU graduates. And remember, nothing ventured, nothing gained.

A Foot in the Door: Many companies like to hire/promote from within, so it sometimes pays to get a “**foot in the door**” at a company. One study conducted on how companies fill positions indicated that 30% came from internal transfers and promotions. Here are four possible ways to get your foot in the door and try to “prove yourself.” While there are no guarantees any of these approaches will lead to your ideal position, hopefully you will expand your network, gain experience, and meet people who will give you a good reference.

- Volunteer – This is usually most appropriate in non-profits since for-profit companies don’t often accept volunteers
- Internship
- Part-Time Job
- Entry-level Full-Time Position
- Staffing or Temporary Agency – Some companies hire staff through staffing agencies, with the potential of that position transitioning into employment with the company. We suggest using agencies where the employer pays any fees. Be wary of staffing agencies that ask you to pay them to find you work.

What is “networking”?

In the course of your college and professional career, you will have opportunities to meet and work with peers and people from all different walks of life. Whether you meet someone in class, during a service learning project or at a training session, you’ll be presented with chances to establish new contacts and develop relationships to establish your “network.”

Types of Networking

- **Structured networking** is when the benefits to building relationships are explicit. These are intentional activities that have a purpose. Events include professional association meetings, job fairs, or informational interviews.
- **Unstructured networking or “happenstance”** is part of your everyday life. This kind of networking takes place at social events and gatherings such as parties, weddings, and going out to restaurants/ bars where professional networking is not the main focus.

3 Keys to Networking

- Develop your strategy. Identify the type of groups or individuals you want to come in contact with. How are you going to reach them?
- Set a goal to connect with a specified number of contacts each week/month. Keep the numbers small and focus on truly getting to know these people and building a genuine relationship.
- Use a system to keep your contacts organized. Plan on staying in touch with them. Send thank you notes to anyone who helped you. [LinkedIn](#) is one of the more popular ways to do this.

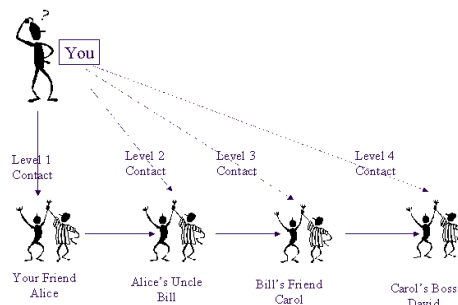
Networking and the job search

- It used to be that a large number of jobs existed only in the “hidden job market.” It is uncertain how many jobs are still there since it is easy and relatively inexpensive to post job openings *somewhere*. What we often see now is recruiters inundated with resumes for job postings. If a job seeker can get their cover letter/resume noticed by using a referral from someone in their network, it is likely to enhance their prospects as a candidate.

The Law of 250

- Every person knows at least 250 other people. Each of your contacts knows at least 250 people. So that’s 62,500 at your 2nd level. Each of your 2nd level contacts knows 250 people - and that’s over 15,000,000
- It is typically not your first level contact that eventually hires you - in fact; you’ll probably find that the hiring contact may be 2, 3, or 4 levels deep.

4 Layers of Separation



How to Follow Up

- After you’ve made an introduction, follow up with your contact through email within 5-10 working days.
- Keep your note short: “It was nice to meet you. I look forward to seeing you again.” Try to be helpful.
- Include a link to an article you both may find interesting or share some professional news. If appropriate, introduce others in your network. Above all, be professional: no text speak, include a signature or footer with your contact information, and proof for typos.

Helpful Hints

- *Focus on building genuine relationships. Find ways to help other people first.* People do not generally like being “used” for their information and contacts. Build a level of familiarity and trust with someone before asking for help.
- *Don’t take “no” personally.* People are busy. Be persistent but polite and move on to other contacts if you do not hear a response after 2-3 attempts.
- *Use the phone after your first contact.* Emails are easy to send and ignore. Try leaving a short message.
- *Develop good questions before you attend an event.* For example: What are you working on now? How is your project coming? What great things have you been up to? Is there any way I can help? Did you see the recent article on _____?
- *Listen. Listen. Listen.* Professionals value learning from their peers. If you are genuine, you’ll find others will be as well.

Elevator Speech—Creating Your Introduction

When introducing yourself, begin by smiling, making eye contact, and extending your hand for a handshake. Your introduction should be brief. In most situations, you may state:

- A greeting
 - Your name
 - Year in college
 - Major
 - Key relevant experience(s)
 - Your career goal
 - A question
1. Nice to meet you. My name is _____.
 2. I will be graduating from Florida Gulf Coast University with a _____ degree in _____, and I would like to begin a career in _____.
 3. Through my experience _____, I have discovered that I bring two key strengths to the workplace: _____ and _____.
- OR**
- I am particularly proud of _____ (a leadership role, work, school, or life accomplishment).
4. My current goal is to _____ (your next step in finding a job).

Expanding the Conversation—Safe Topics

At certain times, it may be appropriate to expand the conversation beyond a basic introduction and exchange of business cards. Think about the acronym REST.

Recreation – You may ask about hobbies or sports the other person enjoys. This is considered an area where you may find common ground. You might phrase your question like this: “What keeps you busy when you’re not at work?”

Education – You might ask about their educational background. “Where did you go to school?” (Don’t presume college) and “What did you study?” may be good starters.

Surroundings – You may seek his/her opinion on the facilities. “What do you think of this hotel for the conference?”

Travel – You may ask about recent or near future travel. “Did you take any vacation this year? Where to?”

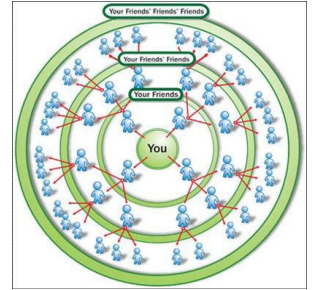
LinkedIn is the world's largest **professional networking** website. The content and relationships that people share on **LinkedIn** are professional. Check out the site at www.linkedin.com. LinkedIn can be used to enhance your networking efforts during the job search. Here is a short tutorial that gives you an overview of how it can be used – <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/how-to-use-linkedin-to-job-search-2062600>

Create Your Profile Checklist

- ☐ **Profile picture:** Dress as if you are going for an interview with a plain background. The picture should be clear; stay away from filters, cropped photos, selfies. The picture only needs to be from the chest up. Try use a professional camera when getting your LinkedIn photo taken. If not, ask someone to take a picture with your cell phone against a blank wall. Career Development Service typically has photographers available for this purpose during the main job fair each semester.
- ☐ **Background photo:** The background photo is expressive of who you are as a professional. Make sure it is professional and, preferably, relevant to the industry you are looking for work in; stay away from photos you may post on your Facebook.
- ☐ **Customize your URL:** Create a unique URL for your profile (www.linkedin.com/in/yourname). You can do this through the "Edit public profile & URL" function on your "view profile" page, to the right of your picture. This URL will be neater and less bulky than the general public domain one that LinkedIn first assigns you. Share this new URL in your email signature line, on your resume, and on your business cards. Customizing this address also allows you to show up in web search results.
- ☐ **Summary:** Describe who you are, what motivates you, what you are skilled at, and what's next. This is a professional summary of your focused, special skills, **not** necessarily your current position title. It should be specialized to your field, yet general enough that it does not limit you from multiple positions within/related to your field. Add your email information for a recruiter to contact you.
- ☐ **Experience:** List the RELEVANT jobs you held, even if they were part time, along with a first-person paragraph summarizing your duties and accomplishments. Even include photos, videos or presentations you have completed.
- ☐ **Organizations:** Describe any clubs or organizations you are a part of and what you did within each organization. Make sure to pair your organization with your experience.
- ☐ **Education:** Starting with college, list all the educational experiences you've had including summer programs
- ☐ **Volunteer experience and causes:** Even if you weren't paid for a job, be sure to list it. Employers often see volunteer experience as just as valuable as paid work.
- ☐ **Skills and Endorsements:** Add at least 5 key skills that you feel you possess now and maybe skills that you would like to improve on. After you add the skills, start endorsing your connections for their skills so they will endorse you back.
- ☐ **Honors and Awards:** If you earned a prize in or out of school, don't be shy. Let the world know about it.
- ☐ **Certifications:** Add any certification you may have especially if it is related to the field you are going into
- ☐ **Courses:** List the classes that show off the skills and interests you're more excited about
- ☐ **Projects:** Whether you led a team assignment in school or built an app on your own, talk about what you did and how you did it
- ☐ **Groups:** Follow groups or organizations you are affiliated with
- ☐ **Following:** It is estimated that about two million companies have presences on LinkedIn. You can learn about companies, their employees, and job opportunities just by signing on.
- ☐ **Recommendations:** Ask managers, professors, or classmates who have worked with you closely to write a recommendation. This gives extra credibility to your strengths and skills.

Build Your Connections

The purpose of the site is to enable registered users to maintain a list of people they know and trust in business. The people in the list are called *Connections*. Users can invite anyone to become a connection. The beauty of LinkedIn is that for each direct connection you establish, you are then linked to the connections of each of their connections (termed *second-degree connections*) and also the connections of second-degree connections (termed *third-degree connections*)



Sending Requests

Don't send the general "I'd like to connect with you on LinkedIn" message! This is a canned invitation and doesn't really make an impact. Instead, follow this simple formula:

- A. Identify how you know this person**
- B. Tell them why you want to connect**
- C. Offer to return the support**

Leverage Your Connections in the Job Search

You can use LinkedIn to stay in touch with your connections so they can let you know if they hear of any jobs, as well as have your closer connections serve as referrals for opportunities you are pursuing. Meet fictional John Smith; recent FGCU grad looking for an entry-level job in human resources.

Scenario #1

He sees that his former FGCU classmate and LinkedIn connection, Sally Jones, is an HR Generalist at a resort in Orlando. The goal for John is to touch base with Sally and let her know his situation.

*Hi Sally,
I hope all is well in Orlando. Congratulations on your position at ___ resort. I am still actively looking for HR opportunities in SW Florida, but am expanding my search to other Florida cities, including Orlando. If you happen to hear about any HR opportunities, feel free to let me know. I will call you next time I am in the area and hopefully we can meet for lunch. I would really be interested in learning how you were able to break into the field. Thanks for your help!
John*

Scenario #2

John sees that one of his second-degree connections is the Director of Human Resources for a company he would like to work for. John can contact his first-degree connection, a friend and former colleague, to ask for assistance in facilitating an introduction.

*Hi Bill,
I hope you and your family are well. I noticed on LinkedIn that you are an acquaintance of Mr. Mike Brown, who is the Director of Human Resources at ABC, Inc. I recently applied for a position in their HR department. If you feel comfortable with it, would you be willing to facilitate an introduction between us, or perhaps put a good word in for me so that my resume gets noticed?
I truly appreciate any assistance you can provide and I look forward to a time that I can return the favor.*

Referral Do not's and Do's

- Do Not reach out to a contact just to ask them to "let me know if you have any openings"
- Do Not send a message with just a "Hi!" and no context
- Do Not send a message saying "Job X or Y at your company is cool! Can you refer me?"
- Do Not send a message that is so long that it would require its own table of contents
- Do Not send a message saying, "It's been a dream of mine to work for your company! Could you refer me?"
- **Do** find a specific role with your contact's company that is a perfect fit for your skillset
- **Do** write a concise paragraph that illustrates your 3 biggest achievements, aligned with the role you would like to be referred to

- **Do** attach your resume when you are asking for a referral

Use the Alumni Tool

LinkedIn Alumni is a tool you can use to access the alumni of your current and past schools. This tool shows you where other alumni live, what they do, and which companies they work for.

You can use this to connect with other FGCU alumni, even if they went to school at a different time than you did. Remember you can “adjust dates” in the alumni tool to control how large your results will be. In fact, if you find someone you’re interested in connecting with, you’d just select “classmate” when choosing how you know the person via a connection request. Don’t forget to personalize the message! Go to [FGCU’s LinkedIn page](#) and click on “Alumni” in the menu on the left side of the page.

Conducting Research

LinkedIn may be especially helpful if you are considering relocating to another city or state. Using the search bar located on the upper right of the home page, you can look for people, jobs and companies in specific geographic areas. For instance, if you are focused on accounting positions in Seattle you might:

- Use *People Search* filters to find Seattle-based members of the LinkedIn professional accounting group
- Use *Jobs Search* filters to find accounting jobs by title and zip code
- Use *Company Search* filters to find accounting companies of a specific size or in a specific zip code

With these results, you can begin to connect to people to start to build your new local network.

STAY ACTIVE! Here are a few other key tips to staying active on LinkedIn:

- **Keep your profile updated.** Your contacts will see when you add new information to your profile. This will help to keep you “top of mind” for opportunities that may come up in your field. Make sure your contact information is easily visible within your profile, including a professional email address and phone number. Also, be sure you have incorporated the “keywords” of your industry into your summary, a “specialties” section, and skills/experience sections.
- **Update your status.** Mentioning job fairs or industry events you have attended helps to show that you are actively seeking to those both inside and outside your network. Also, adding a relevant article with an insightful comment helps to establish you as an expert in your field. Try to update your status at least once a week.
- **Comment on discussion threads in your groups.** Recruiters are looking for activity on your LinkedIn account. Likewise, industry recruiters may be searching specific groups in your field for potential candidates or keying in searches via keyword match.

Final Note: New technologies are emerging almost daily. We encourage students to explore any technological tool or resource that may enhance their job search and career development efforts. It is important, however, to balance those efforts with “old-fashioned” in-person networking. Use web-based systems to *enhance* in-person relationship building, not replace them. Most people tend to have a deeper sense of connection and trust with those that they know personally rather than virtually.