

Job Search Guide

There are several ways in which you can approach a job search, and this is a quick overview of various methods to help you get started. Job-hunting success is directly proportional to job-hunting effort, so be prepared for results that match the amount of time and effort you put into the search. Also, your success depends on your method. If your current methods are not working, consider modifying your strategy rather than continuing down the path that is not currently leading anywhere. A successful job hunt is usually created by combining two or three of the methods below. When using a variety of systems, you can avoid job-hunt-burnout due to boredom, and you are also more likely to cultivate multiple opportunities.

Must-do (for all methods below): During most types of job searches, the first round of contact is with someone in Human Resources, and that person's job is to **eliminate** candidates so that the hiring manager has an outstanding pool of applicants. If you can personally contact both the Human Resources representative **and** the hiring manager (find this person by asking other employees or through method 1 or 4 below) to communicate your interest and qualifications, that personal connection can go a long way in making sure you are part of the candidate pool as they sort through the abundant resumes.

1. Networking (86% success rate – 12 times higher than the success rate for distributing resumes¹):

While probably the most time-consuming, this process is the most effective in finding opportunities in line with your interests, because people you already personally know will put you in touch with people they personally know, based on the ideal job characteristics you share with them. Then the person you meet as a result of that connection will already have an interest in helping you based on your relationship with the mutual friend. Your respectfully assertive approach and interest could be the incentive the manager had been waiting for to create a position. Then you are the first candidate in line when the new job is created. You can also follow these steps with organizations you find through the four methods below because all relationships you build within organizations can help you land the job.

Preparing to network:

- Make a list of people you know (family, friends, people at parties, classmates, former supervisors, teammates, waiters, doctors, people in church or synagogue, professors, people on the Tech Trolley, etc.)
- LinkedIn can help you find people from the Georgia Tech network (and other communities you're in). For GT, visit the official Georgia Institute of Technology LinkedIn page, click "see alumni", and then use the interactive filters to identify people you'd like to meet in your preferred function, company, and/or location.
- Identify three characteristics of your ideal job; for example, which industry, area of business marketing, using my skill-set of analyzing financial statements. Be prepared to describe why you are looking for a job with these characteristics and why you would be great in that type of position. When meeting with people who are willing to help you in your job search, it helps them immensely if you can narrow your criteria in this way because they will not know where to start and may be less interested in helping you if you say, "I need a job, any job."

Before & during the networking meeting:

- Call or write to the people on your list to ask for 30 minutes of their time to discuss your interest in investment banking, corporate marketing, etc. The message should be succinct, up-beat, pleasant, and confident. List your three ideal characteristics and say that you would like to find out how they got into that industry and what trends are going on now in that field. Usually, no matter how busy or important these people are, they will be flattered that you want to learn about their career path and will make time to meet.
- Once someone has agreed to meet, do not stay longer than the 30 minutes you requested unless it is **obvious** the other person wants the meeting to continue, or unless you end up meeting over lunch (which takes longer). They will admire your respect of their time if you stay true to your original request.

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- Before the meeting, be sure to prepare your list of questions, such as: Tell me about your career path, what trends are going on in this field, what advice do you have for a young person interested in this field for the person and be ready to specifically discuss your interests.
- During the meeting, be sure to gauge the balance of air time because you want to give the person the chance to share with you (50%), while also having your own chance to articulate how your experience or training would fit well with what they are saying about that industry (50%).
- After about 25 minutes of conversation, if the person has not mentioned any opportunities in their organization, ask if they know anyone else that you should meet. The person will usually think of someone and offer to put you in touch.

After the networking meeting:

- Send a thank you note to the person before the end of the day of your meeting.
- Call or write the contacts the last person provided. Repeat the above steps for each contact.
- Keep records on individuals and companies contacted so you can track your progress.
- If you get a job with any of the contacts someone gave you, write back to the person who gave you that contact to keep them updated on your progress.

You may have many meetings before you receive an official interview, but you will learn **a lot** along the way, you will endear yourself to people in great positions because you are interested in their careers, and it will lead to a job if you stick to it and follow-up on every lead you receive.

2. Using Canvas CoB Careers and the Georgia Tech CareerBuzz sites: This method allows you to access employers quickly and easily, and you know they are seeking Georgia Tech students for open positions. While you have already made the first cut simply by being a Tech student, it's important to stand out among the crowd. Follow the "must-do" tip above.

3. Career Fairs: These offer environments in which you can meet many employers in person. Follow-up with contacts you meet by email or phone because you want to be memorable, even after they have met hundreds of other candidates. Research the company before you talk to them.

4. Pursuing organizations that are of interest to you: Methods 2, 3, and 5 are great ways to explore possibilities and get ideas about the types of positions out there. However, through those processes, you are at the mercy of the employers and the jobs they have opted to post through these sites and events. You can discover and develop your own opportunities with organizations that truly interest you. Most organizations post job openings on their websites. You can apply directly for these opportunities, and it is helpful to also try to personally contact the hiring manager. If the organization in which you are interested does not have any positions listed, you can still contact potential hiring managers within that organization and tell them about your interest. Your respectfully assertive approach and interest could be the incentive the manager had been waiting for to create the position. Then you are the first candidate in line when the new job is created. The steps in section 1 above can help drive these possibilities.

5. Searching job posting boards such as Monster.com, CareerBuilder.com, etc.: This method allows you to access many employers very quickly. However, this is just as easy for your fellow job-hunters, so the employers are being inundated with applications from people they do not know. How will you stand out? Follow the "must-do" tip above.

¹According to Richard Bolles in *What Color Is Your Parachute?*