



# Job Search Strategies

## STAGE 1: SELF-REFLECTION

Self-reflection will assist you in making an informed decision and target your job search to relevant industries & companies.

### QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR SELF-REFLECTION

- What are your interests?
- How can you add value? What are you seeking?
- What are your career interests, values and goals?
- What position type, geographic target, industries or career fields, job titles or functions interest you?
- What relevant education, extra-curricular activities and work experience will you need?
- What are the relevant personality types, skills or abilities?
- What are your career objectives?
- How can you align your goals, interests and values with the right company's culture, values and goals, key achievements and strengths?
- What are your areas of improvement?

## STAGE 2: EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS

Research methods:

- Online including a Comet Profile (<https://comet.is>) (e.g. company website, online newspaper, blogs, social media)
- Newspapers, magazines
- Employer associations
- Networking (e.g. career chats)

What to research:

- Possible industries, roles and companies
- Career paths
- Culture and working environment
- Trends and recent events
- Geographical areas

Example: Targeted company research

- Company history, leadership and ownership
- Locations
- Industry or sector
- Number of employees (Office/Australia/Worldwide)
- Customers/products/services
- How do they conduct their business
- Leading competitors
- What are the benefits & drawbacks of working for this type of company
- Trends/recent developments in company/industry

## STAGE 3: NETWORKING

Make contact

- Approach people who will likely want to talk to you.  
Timing is key

- Be confident, introduce yourself
- Help others: seek out a guest standing on side-lines and introduce yourself; invite others into your group's conversation. They may return the favour
- Show interest and give your full attention
- Leave on a 'high note'. Politely excuse yourself from the conversation before it begins to die down

Reflect and follow through

- Make notes (who did you meet, what did you talk about, any follow-ups needed. Best done as soon as you leave the party)
- Assess how you did: strengths and areas for improvement
- Follow ups: e.g. if you agreed to call someone or send something then be sure to do it
- Keep in touch with who you met and build new relationships

Top tips

- Be professional (do not swear, insult people or get drunk)
- Treat everyone with respect
- Don't be pushy, wait your turn
- Have fun, smile
- People love to talk about themselves, their job & what they are doing at the moment so ask about that
- Avoid confrontation and arguments
- Watch your tone and body language
- Stick to the positive
- Remember your new contacts' names & collect business cards
- Start a spreadsheet to track your professional contacts which includes their names, contact details, their relationship to you, position & company, interactions you've had & any skills/likes/hobbies/conversation topics

## STAGE 4: PREPARE JOB SEARCH KIT

- Write your draft resume and cover letter – tailor to specific jobs
- Create business cards
- Appropriate, professional voicemail and email address
- Practice your handshake
- Create a portfolio (e.g. awards, qualifications & reference letters)
- Contact your potential referees
- Seek help (e.g. friends, family, Career Service)
- Create a weekly schedule and plan of action (tip: add reminders to your phone and email calendars)
- Create a communication strategy
- Prioritise job search methods
- Update your LinkedIn account & ensure all social media accounts are set to private or are work appropriate

## STAGE 5: EXPERIENCE AND TAKING ACTION

- Apply for jobs
- Develop your skills e.g. participate in the community, join a group or team, or volunteer
- Attend networking events, socialise with key professional and social contacts
- Follow up where required
- What are the key events you could attend?
- Who can you contact from your network?

## STAGE 6: REFLECTION AND REPEAT

Job searching is an ongoing cyclical process.

- What were successful and unsuccessful methods?
- What transferable skills did you develop?
- What would you do differently? Any areas for improvement?
- Achievements (small and large)?

## JOB SEARCH TIPS

- Always carry (clean) business cards, a nice pen & mini notebook
- Always look your best, you never know who you'll run into
- Pre-plan possible questions or conversation starters
- Do your research
- Utilize job alerts
- Go directly to the source
- Fact-checking is a must, do your homework & use trusted sources Safety first, *watch out for scam job listings*, beware of the "Too good to be true". Follow the rules, ensure it is legal
- Ask for help and advice from trusted sources
- Privacy and protection - *Do not give out personal information, protect your identity*
- Avoid unprofessional, lewd, slanderous or obscene interactions or communication (especially online)
- Keep track of your job searches, research and applications – a note pad is perfect
- Target jobs you are qualified for or interest you

## JOB SEARCH METHODS

- Advertisements in newspaper or online search engine
- Careers Fairs
- Campus recruitment
- Centrelink and National Vacancy Database
- Noticeboards (e.g. shop windows, counters, community boards, radio, online)
- Approach employer directly or approached by employer
- University (e.g. PACE)
- Networking
- Professional and industry associations
- Social media and Comet (<https://comet.is>)

- Careers fairs or events
- Internal promotion or referral
- Community agencies
- State employment services offices
- Employment agencies (beware of hidden costs)
- Self-employment
- Business newspapers – trends, who is hiring and who is firing
- Referred by a personal/work contact or networks (such as family, friends, teachers, mentors or formal colleagues)

## CONVERSATION STARTERS - "ELEVATOR TALK"

Possible topics	Topics to avoid
Hot new business book or trend	Politics
Economy	Economy (depends on what is happening)
Recent news or newspaper article	Negatively about other people
Employers	Religion
Hobbies	Buying your products/services (don't be too pushy)
Family	Sex
Networking event/organisation that brought you together	Complaints about life/career/employer
Business skills	Leaving your company
Helping each other	Drugs and drinking in excess
Travel	Criminal activity

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Hi, I'm <your name> from <company/uni>...
- What business/industry are you in?
- What have you been up to since I last saw you?
- What brings you to this conference/event?
- What do/are you enjoy/ing most about this event?
- Who are you looking to connect with today?
- How did you get you start in the <\_\_\_> industry/job/company?
- What advice would you give someone just starting out?
- What do you like most about working for your employer?
- What projects are you working on right now?
- What do you find the most challenging about your industry/role these days?
- How is <current event> impacting your industry/business right now?
- I'd love to hear one of your client success stories – how did you make a difference in the client's life or business?

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