

JOBS

Hampshire College Career Options Resource Center

For many of us, a career that fits well with our skills and interests is essential. A career is more than a job; it's about how you want to live your life. You may build a career over a number of years, often with a series of jobs as well as further education. You may even have two or three different careers in a lifetime!

Hampshire students and alumni have strong skills and diverse, unusual experiences that attract employers. But how do you find an employer? CORC can help you prepare for an effective job search: attend CORC workshops, visit the CORC web pages, and meet with a CORC career counselor to discuss your personal objectives. This guide outlines the fundamentals of an effective job search strategy.



Clarify Your Focus

- Analyze your interests, values and skills to discover careers that incorporate them. CORC counselors can help with this.
- Take another look at your Division II courses, projects and retrospective for inspiration. Does your Division III research or project lead you to a particular field?
- Develop a “master” resume that includes every experience you can think of, even if it doesn't seem important. The entire history of your experience contains clues to your life goals. You can tailor and condense the resume when you target particular employers or job openings.
- Research careers and organizations that interest you. The CORC library and web site, the Hampshire Alumni Network, and the Internet are good places to start.
- Decide upon the direction your job search will take – at least initially.

Network for Information and Referrals

Networking is connecting with people who can 1) give you information about a career field, organization, or geographic location that interests you, and 2) refer you to specific job openings.

Up to 80% of all positions are filled without employer advertising. These positions are the Hidden Job Market and they are filled by – sometimes even created for – candidates who come to an employer's attention through such means as employee recommendations, referrals from family, friends and professional associates, and recruiters. Networking – using your contacts to connect with an employer – is your key to the Hidden Job Market. (Source: Jobstar.org)

FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE CORC'S NETWORKING GUIDE.

Use All Available Sources of Job Leads

In addition to networking:

- Become a member of the CORC JobSeekers Listserv, where we post job opportunities appropriate for new graduates as well as alumni with 3 – 5 years of experience in the workplace. The postings cover a wide range of career fields and geographic locations. Visit corc.hampshire.edu to join.
- Browse our subscription job search databases, as well as dozens of career links organized by areas of interest, at corc.hampshire.edu.
- Participate in Five College Career Fairs and Employer Information Sessions for access to hundreds of employers who come to the Amherst area every year to recruit students. For a schedule, visit CORC's web site and choose for students / resources / calendar of events / five college information sessions.
- Look in local newspapers and even in the Yellow Pages for organizations in your area of interest. If you're looking for jobs in a distant location, you can often find newspaper classifieds online. Town libraries usually have Yellow Pages for most major cities.

Target Interesting Employers

If you identify certain organizations that you would really love to work for:

- Check the organization's web site for job postings.
- Research the organization's mission, service, products, culture and performance. In addition to their web site you might ask for their annual report, talk to current employees, clients, etc.
- Find out the name, title, and telephone number of the person most likely to be doing the hiring - e.g., a department manager, the head of Human Resources, the president of a small company, the director of an agency. Look for this information on the organization's web page, or phone/email and ask.
- Organizations seek job applicants in a variety of ways. Small nonprofits tend to look only when someone resigns, at which point they usually want to hire quickly. A good network of contacts is a vital source of information about job openings in the nonprofit sector.
- Job seekers use a variety of effective ways to "get their foot in the door" of an organization: internships, volunteer or part-time positions, temporary or contract jobs, etc.

Take a Post-Baccalaureate Internship

- This can give you additional work experience to strengthen your credentials in a specific field. It's also a good way to explore your interest in a field before committing to a full-time job or graduate program.
- **A research study of nonprofit employees done by The Forbes Funds showed that 7 out of 10 began their nonprofit career with an internship.**

Expand Your Options

- Consider temporary work, which will expose you to various work responsibilities, work environments and career professionals who can assist you in defining your interests or career choices. Also, temporary work may lead to permanent, full-time employment.
- Give thought to taking a less than perfect job, which may set you up for a better one. Internal candidates often have an edge. Also use this tactic to gain experience, enhance your resume and expand your network.

Present Yourself Professionally

- Take care with your resume and cover letter, which often form an employer's first impression of you. There are norms for content and design that employers expect, and that help them read and comprehend quickly. Learn how to design application materials that grab attention; read CORC's guides for writing resumes and cover letters (available in CORC or at corc.hampshire.edu) and make an appointment with a CORC career counselor.
- Dress your best for interviews, regardless of the "dress code" at the organization. If you're in doubt about how to dress for an interview, lean toward conservatism. It is better to be overdressed than underdressed.
- Practice talking about yourself. This will help you both with networking and with interviews. Have coherent, fairly brief responses ready for questions about what your experience has been, what your strengths are, what you want to do with your life, what career you want to pursue. Not sure? Come up with your best vision for the next year or two. Practice answering these types of questions out loud, with a friend or in front of a mirror. CORC counselors are happy to help you practice with the types of questions interviewers might ask.

Be Organized

- You talk to a lot of people and send out many applications when searching for work; it can quickly get confusing. Avoid embarrassing situations and lost opportunities by keeping some sort of record of your networking and job search activities. Come up with a simple system that makes sense to you, or use some version of the Job Search Tracking Form included in this guide.
- Among the many things you have to remember when looking for a job, one of the most important is to thank the people who give you information, advice, leads, references, or an interview. Put it in writing (email is fine for more casual contacts). The people you thank will be impressed and happy to remain part of your "professional network."

JOB SEARCH TRACKING FORM

Contact Name & Title: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Contact Information:

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

I was referred to this person / organization by: _____

I applied for the position of: _____

ACTION	DATES / NOTES
I applied for the position on:	
I followed up on:	
An interview was scheduled for:	
I notified my references on:	
After the interview I sent a thank-you note on: *	
I followed up on:	
A second interview was scheduled for:	
NOTES	

* Send an individual thank-you note to everyone who interviews you.