

# STRATEGIES FOR JOB SEARCH SUCCESS: New Graduates

Looking for a job can be a full-time job. The process is long and requires daily attention. You should strive to apply the same diligence to the search process as you did to your academics. The process will be challenging, but the power is in your hands and the CAC is here to help. The resources below can help you develop, navigate and ultimately find success in landing the right opportunity for you! Here are four key points to focus on for a successful job search:

1. Develop a Job Search Strategy
2. Network & Follow Up, Follow Up & Network
3. Communicate Professionally and Effectively
4. Master the Interview

## 1.) Develop a Job Search Strategy

- Set up an initial appointment with your Career Pathway Advisor [on Handshake](#). If you are not in the area, you can schedule a phone appointment.
- [Fine tune your resume](#), and if necessary, your cover letter or portfolio.
- [Identify opportunities](#) based on your preferences utilizing Handshake, Indeed, and LinkedIn.
  - Identify at least 5 opportunities to submit your application for weekly
  - Keep your mind open, the broader the better – cast a wide net
  - Apply to at least 1 opportunity per day
  - Do not Quick Apply, if there are other application options available – employers can tell if you're cutting corners
  - Follow up early and often – employers remember candidates who reach out

## 2.) Network & Follow Up; Follow Up & Network

- [Network](#) your way into the company – know somebody that knows somebody.
- Strive to have at least three touch points for each place you apply (Alumni, HR, Hiring Manager).
- [Up your LinkedIn game](#) and make sure your profile is complete and professional.
- Cross reference: use LinkedIn to identify and connect with Alumni and others in your network (friends, neighbors, relatives etc.) within industry or organizations to secure informational interviews and learn.
- If you secure an [informational interview](#), don't ask for the job, ask for advice. Learn more about the person, the company, and the industry.
- If you apply to an opportunity and don't hear anything for 2 weeks, this is normal! Be sure to follow up initially after 2 weeks, then once a week thereafter for hot opportunities.
- Develop a strong [elevator pitch](#). Your description of yourself and your goals should be consistent in your communications to employers. See example messages below.

## 3.) Communicate Professionally and Effectively

- Good, professional communication is accurate, complete, and understandable to the intended audience.
- Types of professional communications include written (email, print), verbal, and professional/social media.
- Good communication serves as the best representation of yourself upon first contact, creating value, credibility, and confidence.

*Here are some templates/examples to guide you as you connect with professionals:*

### Basic Email:

*Good morning and happy Wednesday. I am reaching in regards to the [Name of Opportunity] with [Company] and the opportunity to launch my career with your firm. As a recent graduate of Lake Forest College majoring in [Major], I am very interested in the [Name of Industry] industry and securing an entry level role with your organization. I would appreciate opportunity to learn more about your team, the role, and how I can have an impact. Attached is my resume for your review.*

### Specialized Email:

*[Student] a driven, high-achieving recent graduate with a double major in Finance and Communications. My leadership and entrepreneurial spirit cultivated by involvement with the Student Programming Board as the Executive Secretary and creation of a business plan for a company has allowed me to develop critical business development and management skills. I also served as a contributor for the Stentor, the Lake Forest College newspaper. Last summer, completing an internship with a bank helped open my eyes and drive for a career in corporate finance. [Company] stands out as a leader in the industry and represents the type of organization that I would help me learn, grow, and develop into a strong finance professional. I would love to learn more about your organization and the opportunity to join your firm.*

*Attached you will find my resume for your review. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or would like to connect this week. Thank you in advance for your time and thoughtful consideration.*

*Best Regards,*

*(Your emails should focus on who you are, why you are interested in the industry and company, your skills and experience, and what you want to learn.)*

### LinkedIn Message:

Hi \_\_\_\_\_

*I am reaching out to you because I am a recent Lake Forest graduate and I saw that you have been with \_\_\_\_\_ for a while. I am very interested in the industry and would love to learn more about how you became successful in your career. When would be the best time for us to connect?*

## 4.) Master the Interview

Below you will find the interview tips that may help you as you prepare for your conversation with employers. Also check out the [“Preparing for an Interview”](#) resource on Handshake.

- Dress appropriately. This means wearing professional attire.

- Bring at least two extra copies of your resume, something to write on and a prepared list of questions you can refer to during the interview. (They will ask if you have any questions!)
- Make sure to **research** the organization, the department, the role. It is also a good idea to have some knowledge of an anecdotal point about the company or your interviewer such as a recent press release, award, or accomplishment to use as a conversation starter.
- Take a look at the interviewer's profile on LinkedIn, and if there is anything interesting there that sticks out, or that you find particularly interesting, be sure to bring that up during your conversation.
- Have a few questions ready. Here are a couple to get you started:
  - How did you get your start in industry?
  - What are the core values/culture of the company?
  - Tell more about your growth strategy, and how does this role fits into your goals?
  - How would you describe those individuals that excel on your team?
  - Tell me more about the training program and professional development initiatives.
- Anytime you get asked, "Tell me about at time or a situation when...", this is an opportunity to demonstrate your skills and experience via a story. When describing the situation, in your mind you will want to organize your response using the STAR method:
  - S: Situation – what were the circumstances?
  - T: Task/Responsibility – describe the issue or action items (in a way that is not too negative or detrimental)
  - A: Approach – elaborate on your process to address and find a solution
  - R: Results – what were the outcomes and your personal takeaways?
- Make sure you know your own personal story/narrative well. You will almost certainly get asked "Tell me something about yourself." When answering this question, stay away from talking about school or academics and try to show who you are. For example, elaborate on your experiences abroad and why you chose to go, speak about a volunteer experience, or mention an activity you enjoy. Share these details in a compelling way that permits the interviewer see into who you are as a person.
- It's a good idea to pause briefly before answering a question. This brief moment will give you just the time you need to organize your words before you speak.
- Finally, have a glass/bottle of water on hand – your throat may get dry while doing a lot of talking.