The Carleton Career Center Job Search Guide
Introduction

Searching for an internship, full-time job or other opportunity toward your future career is a process that takes time. Getting organized and starting early will be your best path to success. View these next steps and tips to help you get organized and focused.

This guide will help you to feel confident in your job or internship search and will discuss the following:

- Recruiting timelines
- Getting started
- Diversifying your job search
- How to be a competitive candidate

Recruiting Timelines

Industries have different recruitment cycles which means that new opportunities (both jobs and internships) are being posted on a daily basis. However, most organizations are starting the hiring process earlier in order to solidify top candidates. Starting earlier in your search will give you a better chance of being ready and available for the best opportunities possible.

While hiring timelines can vary greatly, below are ‘typical’ recruiting timelines for different industries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Late Summer/Early Fall 8-10 months in advance</th>
<th>Winter/Spring Terms 4-6 months in advance</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Consulting Firms</td>
<td>- Non-Profit Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- For-Profit Businesses</td>
<td>- Research Institutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Large Media &amp; Tech Companies</td>
<td>- Educational Institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Financial Services</td>
<td>- Arts Organizations</td>
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<td>- International Organizations</td>
<td>- Environmental Organizations</td>
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<td>- Federal Government</td>
<td>- State and Local Government</td>
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<td>- Small Startup Organizations</td>
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Getting Started

Focus

Before you can begin applying to positions, it is important to figure out the fields of interest and types of positions you will pursue. Examine your priorities and values such as: proximity to family, salary, work-life balance, working with people or numbers, etc. While priorities will change throughout your life, this is a good place to start.

Fields of Interest

- Arts/Museums
- Business/Finance/Consulting
- Communications/Media
- Education
- Engineering
- Environment/Agriculture
- Government/Public Sector
- Healthcare
- Info Systems/Tech/Library
- Legal Professions
- Science/Research
- Social Service/Advocacy

Priorities and Values

- Proximity to family
- Salary
- Work-life balance
- Working with people
- Working with numbers

It is also wise to think in terms of Plan A/Plan B or variations on a theme. Pursue your “dream” job, while at the same time keeping your options open as it can often introduce you to new and interesting opportunities. No position is perfect but wrestling through your priorities is what will lead to your own success.

Do your Research

Take some time to utilize resources such as Career Beam and Spotlight on Careers (available on the Career Center website) to research organizations, position titles, and key contacts to narrow your search and become more knowledgeable about opportunities available to you now.

Prepare Application Documents

Before you start outreaching, you will need the following documents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Documents</th>
<th>Others you may need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resume</td>
<td>Unofficial transcript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover Letter</td>
<td>Writing sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>List of references</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that getting your documents started is the key. Your resume and cover letter will always be a work in progress and will change throughout your search. So don’t get too hung up on having this information perfect before you begin your search.

Get Organized

Before you initiate contact with hiring managers and alumni, you will want to set up a system for tracking resumes submitted, networking contacts, interviews and other resources. Use the Career Center template in the Finding a Job section of our website.

Once you apply for a position, save the job description in a folder on your computer so that you can refer to it later on during the interview process.
Diversifying your Job Search

There is not one, stand alone method to utilize in your job search. The key is to use a number of different tools and techniques to pursue jobs or internships including: advertised postings, networking, and prospecting. Incorporate the mix and match method through the following resources to apply for opportunities AND be resourceful about finding unadvertised postings on your own accord.

On Campus Recruiting

Every year, over 130 organizations collaborate with the Carleton College Career Center in order to recruit talent (like yourself!). Meeting these representatives face to face and presenting yourself in a professional manner can make a distinctive difference in your career. Apply for opportunities on the Tunnel and speak with representatives at information sessions, tabling, and panel events.

- **Tunnel Postings**
  Many organizations work with the Career Center to post opportunities and collect a packet of resumes of Carleton students specifically. Stay tuned for email notifications about opportunities related to your area of interest.

- **Information Sessions**
  Attend these sessions to learn more about the industry, the employer, the position, as well as application tips and advice. If you attend and ask informed questions, you are letting them know that you are a serious candidate and worth bringing in for an interview.

- **Tabling Sessions**
  Stop by employer tables in Sayles-Hill to learn more about their organization and meet a representative in person. These are typically scheduled during busy common times around the lunch hour.

- **Informal Office Hours**
  Meet one-on-one with employers to make a personal connection and learn more about the organization. While this is similar to 30 Minutes, it is important to remember that you are meeting with someone who is actively hiring.

Advertised Postings

Organizations are consistently seeking current students and recent graduates to fill new opportunities and they do this through a number of different methods. Below are a few resources to stay on top of these openings.

Top Job/Internship Posting Sites

- **The Tunnel**
  Carleton’s job and internship database with over XX postings per year. Many organizations use this site to post opportunities for Carleton students specifically.

- **Liberal Arts Career Network (LACN)**
  This site contains both job and internship postings from over 35 top liberal arts colleges and universities (available on the left-hand side of the Tunnel).

- **Nationwide Internship Consortium**
  Internship listings from a collection of 17 national colleges and universities (available on the left-hand side of the Tunnel).

- **GoingGlobal**
  A great resource to search for opportunities abroad or for international students seeking domestic opportunities.

- **External Job Sites**
  SimplyHired, Indeed, LinkedIn, Idealist, departmental emails, and others. Visit the Career Center website for more options related to various industries.

Organization Websites

While not every organization is able to recruit at Carleton, they nearly always have open opportunities on their website. Check back regularly to stay on top of deadlines.

You do not have to match 100% of the requirements of the position in order to apply. When in doubt - apply!

Try not to be discouraged if you do not receive a response to your application. It is not uncommon to apply to ten jobs and only hear back from one of them.
Career Fairs
These in-person and virtual events can be a great way to meet hiring managers and learn more about current or upcoming opportunities. A few to keep in mind include:

- **MN Private College Job & Internship Fair (February)**
  The biggest recruiting event of the year. This fair hosts over 250 organizations each year and is held in the Minneapolis Convention Center. **Transportation is provided by the Career Center.**

- **Selective Liberal Arts Consortium (SLAC) (multiple events)**
  A consortium of 9 selective liberal arts colleges host a few virtual interview days and an in-person career fair every year. Apply in advance and interview in all different industries!
  - **Virtual Interview Days**
    Apply in advance and interview virtually from the Carleton Career Center.
  - **Winter Recruiting Day in Washington, DC (January)**
    Apply in advance and, if selected, fly to Washington DC to interview and attend an in-person career fair.

- **Virtual Job & Internship Fair (October)**
  Connect with over 20 employers in a ‘chat-room’ type platform from the comfort of your own room.

- **Government & Non-Profit Fair (October)**
  This fair is open to students from all of the Minnesota colleges and universities and hosts over 85 organizations each year.

- **More!...**
  Check the Career Center events page for additional fairs to meet with employers face-to-face.

Social Media
Many organizations have their own LinkedIn and Twitter accounts to promote their organization and upcoming opportunities. Follow your targeted organization on these sites, connect with recruiters and other professionals personally on LinkedIn and engage through comments as it makes sense.

Networking
**80% of jobs are found through networking, or personal contacts.** Because of the importance of networking, the Career Center has created an in-depth guide to help identify contacts and build meaningful, professional connections. Get your networking started (or increased) by reviewing our Networking Guide.

Identifying Contacts
Networking can occur through existing or newly developed relationships. If your network feels small, remember that most Carleton Alumni enjoy helping fellow Carls, so don’t be afraid to reach out.

Use the following resources to connect with alumni and other contacts:

- **Carleton Career Guides and Alumni Profiles**
  These are alums who have stepped forward to provide guidance to students interested in particular career fields. Full list is available on the Career Center website.

- **Career Fairs and Employer Information Sessions**
  These are a great chance to meet recruiters and hiring managers face to face and make that professional connection.

- **30 Minutes & other alumni events on campus**
  Meet the many alumni coming to campus to talk about their career track and take the time to make a personal connection when possible.

- **Referrals**
  Many faculty and staff members have great connections through their own networks and former students. Don’t be afraid to ask for recommendations and referrals.

- **LinkedIn**
  This can be a great resource to (A) identify new contacts and (B) stay connected with people you have recently met. Meet with a career counselor to learn how to make the most of this resource.

**TIP**
Face to face contact produces the greatest impact in your job search!
Prospecting

It is not uncommon to find new and interesting organizations while searching for a job or internship. If there are specific organizations you are interested in pursuing but they do not have any opportunities posted, send them a prospecting email with your resume and a note about why you’re interested and what you could offer them.

Organizations know that the best employees are the ones who have a passion for the work that they do and are excited to hear that people share their passion. While not everyone will respond, it is worth a try (as long as you don’t bombard them with emails).

Sample Email:

Dear Organization Representative:

I am writing to inquire about existing or anticipated openings with XYZ Organization. In researching a number of environmentally focused organizations, I was especially impressed with what I have read about your mission statement and current strategic initiatives. With my interest in the environment and sustainability, combined with my major in sociology and anthropology, I could make a valuable contribution to your organization.

In June, I will be completing my senior year at Carleton College where I have been involved in X internship/volunteer opportunities. [Add sentence about related experience you’ve gained.]

[Add sentence or two that briefly describes your interest in the field and/or the organization.]

I would appreciate the opportunity to further discuss opportunities available at XYZ Organization. Attached is my resume for your reference. Feel free to contact me directly at name@carleton.edu or (507) 222-5555.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

How to be a Competitive Candidate

Online Presence

Based on a survey done in 2015 by the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE), 92% of employers utilized LinkedIn and 73% utilized Facebook to research candidates applying to their open positions. Google yourself to ensure that you are putting out a positive, professional image online.

- LinkedIn
  If you do not yet have an account, we encourage you to create one. Add as much relevant information as you can and write a good summary to describe your interests and experience. Keep your profile up to date and connect with recruiters and other contacts you meet along the way.

- Facebook
  This is not typically a professional resource but don’t let a status update keep you from your dream job. Set privacy settings to keep it as personal as possible.

- Twitter (and others)
  This can be a great way to engage with employers, but be aware of who can view your comments and/or keep it professional.

- Personal Website
  Primarily for students pursuing tech, advertising or other creative fields where they would need to showcase their work.

Professionalism

Non-verbals make a BIG difference in the job search. People want to hire candidates they like and can see themselves working alongside. Before you introduce yourself to networking contacts, recruiters and other hiring managers, ask people closest to you how you can improve the image you are portraying.

Things to consider: smile, eye contact, active listening, handshake, posture, hygiene, professional attire, manners, etc.
Etiquette/Netiquette

- Use a professional manner in calls, emails, and on your voicemail message.
- Respond to everyone in a timely manner (no more than 48 hours).
- Call during business hours only. Speak clearly when talking to employers.
- Do not text. Phone calls and emails are the most professional forms of communication. It is usually best to follow the employer’s cue in communication and respond in their preferred method.

Prepare a Pitch

Review your strengths, qualities and experiences to identify the things that make you a unique candidate (hint: everybody has something!). Do your best to communicate to employers a summary version of how you stand out from the crowd. Use these notes to begin preparing for your interviews - this is not something you want to begin thinking about the day you receive an interview.

Professional Experience/Internships

While your college education is invaluable, it is becoming more and more important to have relevant, career-related experience prior to graduation. While internships are the most straightforward, leadership involvement on campus is also valuable and can show the employer your commitment and ability to be a leader in their organization. To stand out from the crowd, speak with a career counselor on how you can make your resume as competitive as possible.

Let us help!

Feeling overwhelmed and/or behind? We can help! Make a career counseling appointment at the Career Center. We look forward to meeting with you soon.

Career Counselor Walk-ins
15 minute drop-in conversation with a staff member
- Monday–Thursday, 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Friday, 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Student Career Advisor Walk-ins
Drop-in time to work with our Student Career Assistants (SCAs)
- Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sunday–Thursday, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., Lower Sayles

Career Counselor Appointments
45 minute appointment with a staff member
- To make an appointment, please call the Career Center at: (507) 222-4293 or stop by the Career Center
- Note that phone and Skype appointments are also available for those not on campus.