Just getting started can be the hardest part about finding an internship or job.

Here are 10 initial steps to take during your internship or job search:

1. Determine your targets
   The first step is to figure out the fields of interest and types of positions you will pursue. It is usually wise to think in terms of Plan A/Plan B or variations on a theme.

2. Set your geographic range
   For most fields, you need to be where you search. You can do early steps from Northfield (or your home/summer address), but unless you're looking at this region, you'll need to be in your search area before employers will take you seriously.

3. Know your search tools and techniques
   There are various ways through which you can learn about and pursue job or internship openings. Your best bets are the alumni network, personal contacts, and references from friends about openings in their organization. Use as many of these techniques as applicable—don't rely on only one.

4. Start the paperwork
   You will need a resume, cover letters, references, and maybe some writing samples or a presentation portfolio. These are each important, but don't get bogged down on building them. Notice we said “start” them—you'll want to move on to more active steps in the search process. The paperwork should always be considered works in progress, changing throughout your professional lives.

5. Create a contact list
   This is not as difficult as many think. It's fairly straightforward to put together a list of organization names, contact people, and telephone numbers/e-mail addresses which you will use for networking and opportunity-seeking. Include all possible employers, but understand that you'll need to determine who has position openings at any given point in time.

6. Do your homework
   Before you can persuade a prospective employer that you fit their needs, you need to know what their needs are. That means you'll need to learn as much as you can about what they do and how they do it. Consult various sources: the internet, organization brochures, contacts who work in the same organization or field, even newspaper or magazine articles.

7. Get organized
   You'll need to set up a system for tracking contacts you make and receive during a search. Without one, you may be unprepared to respond to a prospective employer's interest in you.

8. Fine tune your interviewing skills
   Everyone needs to prepare for interviews. Even if you've been successful in interviewing for college admission, fellowships, and summer work/service, this is a different type of interview. Practice, practice, practice!

9. Initiate contact
   Begin the cyclical process of writing, e-mailing, telephoning, and visiting your contacts. You don't have to contact everyone on your list at first—develop a strategy for initiating “waves” of contacts.

10. Follow-up...then follow-up some more
    Always write “thank you” notes after a contact is made, especially personal visits and telephone contacts with valuable dialogue. You can also reaffirm your interest, check your status, and generally keep your “application” in the eye, ear, and mind of employers.
starting to research your area of interest

What should you do?

**Explore and investigate possible areas of interest**
- Start looking through the Internship Database for types of jobs/internships that match your interest area.
- Talk to your professors – they could recommend programs, organizations, or internships (and it’s doubly beneficial for you – they could suggest a program AND write you a recommendation for it).

**Learn about the organizations that you’re interested in:**
- Research their programming, what your position could/would entail.
- Look to the Alumni Database – perhaps there is an alum that works at one of these organizations and could answer your questions on what the business/org works on, how they operate, why the alum’s major/field of study led them to work there, etc.
- Put together your résumé, if you have not done so yet, or UPDATE it.

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**Spotlight on Careers:** While on campus, visit [http://www.spotlightoncareers.org](http://www.spotlightoncareers.org). If off-campus, use username lacn and password liberalarts2011. There is also a link on the Career Center homepage in the **Quick Links** box.

**Going Global:** Click on the Going Global link in the **Quick Links** box on the Career Center homepage and use your Carleton NetID to access this resource.

**Job/Internship Database:** Click on the Tunnel link in the **Quick Links** box on the Career Center homepage and use your Carleton NetID to log in. From the Tunnel, there is a “Jump to” option that will take you to the Liberal Arts Career Network (LACN).

**Alumni Directory:** Click on the Alumni Directory link in the **Quick Links** box on the Career Center homepage and log in with your Carleton Net ID or from the college website, click on “Alumni” under **Resources for...** Then go to the Alumni Directory link and log in to access the database. You can search by name, year, major, employer, job type, etc.

**Career Bulletin:** Go to the Career Center website and click on the link for the Career Center News Blog on the left-hand side.