



**VITERBO**  
UNIVERSITY

# CAREER SERVICES

## Your Job Search Guide

### Table of Contents

- [Building Your Network](#)
- [Informational Interviewing](#)
- [Building Your Brand Via Social Media](#)
- [Internet Job Searching](#)
- [Career Fairs](#)
- [Employment Agencies](#)

### Developing Resiliency During COVID-19

Job searching poses a new level of uncertainty as today's grads face an economy affected by layoffs, hiring freezes, and limited contact due to social distancing.

To weather these challenging times, we recommend using a comprehensive strategy that involves using multiple resources, building your professional network, and adopting a professional and positive mindset.



### Tips for Your Search

1. **Define your career goals and objectives.** What type of employment are you seeking? How do your job search goals fit with your interests and qualifications?
2. **Visit with a career counselor** in Career Services for help exploring your interests and abilities, as well as opportunities in your field.
3. **Review the [Career Services website](#)** for information on self-assessments, job search sites, resume and cover letter writing, and interviewing resources.
4. **Expand your network** by developing a professional online profile and social media presence. Keep in touch with your network via phone and video chats.
5. **Access job search sites** in your field to explore opportunities.
6. **Prepare your resume** with the help of a Career Services staff member. A strong resume can help you identify your accomplishments, qualifications and strengths, as well as areas for future professional development.
7. **Practice interview skills** via Interview Stream, mock interview events, or through a one-on-one appointment with a Career Services staff member.
8. **Be persistence and patient.** Remember that setbacks are a natural part of the job search process. Your willingness to work steadily toward your goals is key to your success.

**Visit us virtually!**

Murphy Center 374 | Monday-Friday | 9am-4pm | 608.796.3828 | [www.viterbo.edu/career-services](http://www.viterbo.edu/career-services)

## Building Your Network

**According to a study by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Yale University, 70% of jobs are found through networking (Harden, 2016).** Now that social distancing is the norm, virtual networking has become more essential than ever. This task may seem daunting, but you can improve your chances of success by developing a strategy for keeping your network up-to-date.

### Identify your “warm” contacts

Start by creating a list of personal contacts and letting them know you’re looking for a position in a particular field. These “warm” contacts may include former colleagues, friends, former classmates, former supervisors, relatives, professors. They may be able to give you advice, leads, or introduce you to other connections.

You may also consider talking to people you see occasionally. Reintroduce yourself to these individuals and bring them up to speed on your current job search goals. Keep the conversation brief and professional. Be sure to thank them for their time.

### Research “cold” contacts

“Cold” contacts include those you don’t know and to whom you have not been referred. These may include potential employers or employees of companies that interest you, LinkedIn members, etc. Conducting informational interviews with cold contacts can be a good way to expand your network. When contacting a “cold” contact, write a professional letter or email introducing yourself and your goals for the meeting. See page 3 for a sample letter and a list of questions you can ask during informational interviews.

Don’t get discouraged if you don’t hear back from contacts or if they decline your request to meet. Always thank them for their response, and continue to look for ways to extend your network.

## Potential Contacts

- Relatives
- Friends/classmates
- Friends of your parents
- Neighbors
- High school teachers
- Former internship/employment supervisors
- Current and former coworkers
- College professors
- College alumni
- Leaders/members of religious organizations
- Friends you served with in the military
- Professional service providers (hairdressers, dentists, accountants, etc.)
- Volunteer affiliations
- Members of professional associations (such as the Chamber of Commerce)
- People you meet at conventions/workshops
- LinkedIn members



*Photo courtesy of Christina@wochintechchat.com via unsplash.com*

## Informational Interviewing

Informational interviewing is a strategy you can use to gain information about careers from professionals in your field. You can interview warm or cold contacts about their work. Reach out with a phone call, email, or LinkedIn message to introduce yourself and your career goals. Let the person know you are seeking information about your particular career field, not looking for a job. Politely inquire about the time frame they'd have available to speak with you (keeping the conversation to 30 minutes or less.) Keep the conversation focused and professional.

### Common questions include:

1. How did you become interested in your field?
2. What type of training/education/licenses/credentials are required for your position?
3. What do you like best about your line of work?
4. What challenges exist in your position?
5. What are the typical hours/workload in your position?
6. How does your company contribute to its employees' professional development?
7. What's your opinion on (a recent development in the industry)?
8. What experiences does your company look for in new hires?
9. What is the employment outlook in your field?
10. What skills would make a person successful in this field?
11. What do you wish you'd known before you started in your field?
12. What professional organizations would you recommend?
13. What job search advice would you give to someone seeking a career in this field?
14. Who else can I talk to for additional questions? (LiveCareer Staff Writer, n.d.)

## Sample Informational Interview Request

*Abigail Accountant  
Schneehan, Skemp, and Walsh  
4000 Justice Drive  
Minneapolis, MN 55407*

*Dear Abigail Accountant:*

*My name is Frannie Forensic, and I am a junior accounting major at Viterbo University. I am considering a career in forensic accounting and am interested in speaking with professionals who work in this specialty. I recently spoke with \_\_\_\_, who recommended I reach out to you for an informational interview. I see from your LinkedIn profile that you work in litigation support, an area that has peaked my interest while pursuing the criminal justice minor. I would be very interested in talking with you about your pathway into this field, as well as any advice you have for accounting students. Would you be available for a short meeting? I would be glad to meet over the phone or video chat. Please feel free to contact me at 555-555-5555 or accounting major@viterbo.edu at your convenience.*

*Sincerely,*

*Frannie Forensic*

## Building Your Brand Via Social Media

Creating a [LinkedIn](#) profile can be an opportunity to build your professional brand, connect with employers, enhance your online presence, and highlight your professionalism.

### Follow these tips when building your profile:

1. Include a thorough and well-written “About” section with a professional headshot (no selfies!)
2. Ask for recommendations from people who can speak to your skills and abilities. References can submit a recommendation through an online form or vouch for you in the “Skills” section.
3. The “Features” section is a great place to upload examples of work, including class projects, presentations, reports, etc. Use this section to create compelling visuals that illustrate examples of your work products.
4. Keep your content fresh by sharing articles in your field, commenting on other’s work, or joining discussion groups. Use a content calendar to remind yourself to update your profile on a regular basis (Sanborn, 2019).
5. Let recruiters know you’re “open” on your profile.



Photo courtesy of Carsten Peters on unsplash.com

**Helpful Hint:** Many hiring managers “Google” potential employees. Rather than leaving these search results to chance, manage your “digital footprint.” By investing time in your profile and managing your overall social media presence, you can help ensure that a Google search for your name yields positive, professional results.



## Networking Tips

**Practice.** If you’re shy or somewhat reserved, practice a phone call or meeting with someone you know so you can get feedback.

**Don’t wait for people to call you.** Join community groups and professional associations where you can increase your connections.

**Build high-quality, long-term relationships.** Even though you may have short-term goals in mind (i.e., getting a job right away), developing your network will serve you over your lifetime. Think of ways you can help others at the same time (such as through sharing your own leads or volunteering). **If you agree to help someone, be sure to follow through.**

**Go to meetings prepared.** Know what questions you want to ask and take notes.

**Ask your contacts if they know of anyone else you should meet.** Ask for permission to use their name when contacting referrals.

**Keep track of contacts.** Maintain a record of meeting outcomes and important information.

## Internet Job Searching

The internet is a useful resource for job searching, even if you're not planning to relocate. You can use the web to research companies, learn about professional associations, and find job leads. In addition to websites devoted to job search activities, most businesses and organizations post employment opportunities on their websites. Be sure to check the websites of organizations that interest you.

General
<b>Career Builder:</b> <a href="http://www.careerbuilder.com/">http://www.careerbuilder.com/</a>
<b>Career One Stop:</b> <a href="http://www.jobbankinfo.org/">http://www.jobbankinfo.org/</a>
<b>Handshake</b> <a href="https://app.joinhandshake.com/login">https://app.joinhandshake.com/login</a>
<b>Help Wanted:</b> <a href="http://www.helpwanted.com/">http://www.helpwanted.com/</a>
<b>Indeed:</b> <a href="http://www.indeed.com/">http://www.indeed.com/</a>
<b>Link Up:</b> <a href="http://www.linkup.com/">http://www.linkup.com/</a>
<b>Monster:</b> <a href="http://www.monster.com/">http://www.monster.com/</a>

Regional
<b>Federal Government jobs:</b> <a href="https://www.usajobs.gov/">https://www.usajobs.gov/</a>
<b>Milwaukee Jobs:</b> <a href="http://www.milwaukeejobs.com/">http://www.milwaukeejobs.com/</a>
<b>Minneapolis Jobs:</b> <a href="http://www.jobsinminneapolis.com/">http://www.jobsinminneapolis.com/</a>
<b>Minnesota State Government Jobs:</b> <a href="https://mn.gov/mmb/careers/search-for-jobs/">https://mn.gov/mmb/careers/search-for-jobs/</a>
<b>WisconsinJobs.com:</b> <a href="http://wisconsin.jobing.com/">http://wisconsin.jobing.com/</a>
<b>Wisconsin Job Center:</b> <a href="https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/">https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/</a>
<b>Wisconsin JobNet:</b> <a href="http://www.wisconsinjobnetwork.com/">http://www.wisconsinjobnetwork.com/</a>
<b>Wisconsin State Government Jobs:</b> <a href="http://wisc.jobs/public/index.asp">http://wisc.jobs/public/index.asp</a>

Field-Specific
<b>Dietician and nutrition-related:</b> <a href="https://www.ihirenutrition.com/">https://www.ihirenutrition.com/</a> <a href="https://www.dietitiancentral.com/">https://www.dietitiancentral.com/</a>
<b>Education:</b> <a href="https://www.k12jobspot.com/">https://www.k12jobspot.com/</a> <a href="https://aaee.org/">https://aaee.org/</a>
<b>Iowa:</b> <a href="http://www.iareap.net">www.iareap.net</a> <a href="http://teachiowa.gov/">http://teachiowa.gov/</a>
<b>Minnesota:</b> <a href="https://jobsitemnasa.org/">https://jobsitemnasa.org/</a> <a href="https://edpost.stcloudstate.edu/edpost/">https://edpost.stcloudstate.edu/edpost/</a>
<b>Wisconsin:</b> <a href="https://wecan.education.wisc.edu/#/">https://wecan.education.wisc.edu/#/</a>
<b>Environmentally-friendly:</b> <a href="http://www.greenjobs.net/">http://www.greenjobs.net/</a>
<b>Human Resources:</b> <a href="https://www.shrm.org/Pages/default.aspx">https://www.shrm.org/Pages/default.aspx</a>
<b>Marketing, communication, and graphic design:</b> <a href="http://www.bigshoesnetwork.com/">http://www.bigshoesnetwork.com/</a>
<b>Ministry:</b> <a href="http://www.youthpastor.com/">http://www.youthpastor.com/</a>
<b>Theatre:</b> <a href="http://www.playbill.com/">http://www.playbill.com/</a>

To view additional sites, visit the [Job Search](#) page on the Career Services website.

## Career Fairs

Attending a Career Fair is a great way to meet a significant number of possible employers in a short period of time. Career Services offers an annual career fair, affording you the opportunity to meet with recruiters from a variety of business and organizations. You will have the opportunity to ask questions about potential careers, share your resume, and make a lasting first impression. For more information on upcoming events, check out our [Events](#) page. **Watch for more information on upcoming career fairs!**

## Employment Agencies

Some businesses elect to use employment agencies to fill their staffing needs. Such agencies can be a useful tool for individuals conducting a job search, but the job searchers needs to do their homework to be fully informed about the nature of the relationship with the agency.

- Know who pays the recruiter; many times businesses pay for the service with no charge to the job seeker.
- Find out if the contract is exclusive, or if it's okay to pursue other job leads and organizations.
- Select an individual/organization with whom you feel comfortable.
- Ask Career Services for a referral.

## Internships

Internships aren't just for students-post-graduates do internships, fellowships, and research, too. Search for these opportunities as you would a job. For more information, visit the [Career Services Internship page](#).



**Helpful Hint:** Using a variety of job search strategies will yield the best results. As the saying goes, "Don't put all of your eggs in one basket!"

**Need help? Make a virtual appointment with a Career Services staff member on:**



## References

Harden, P. (2016, May 23). *How to Land a Job by Networking*. The Washington Post.

<https://jobs.washingtonpost.com/article/how-to-land-a-job-by-networking/>

LiveCareer Staff Writer (n.d). *200 Informational Interviewing Questions to Ask*. Live Career.

<https://www.livecareer.com/resources/interviews/questions/informational-interview-questions>

Sanborn, A. (2019, June 3). *Are you wasting your LinkedIn account?* Work It Daily.

<https://www.workitdaily.com/how-to-win-linkedin-career/what-you-need-to-know-about-linkedin>