



Young Professional Job Hunting Checklist



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As a recent college graduate you may find yourself unemployed for some time, but that doesn't mean you don't have a job! Job seeking alone can be a full-time career. Fortunately, there are steps that you can take now to increase your likelihood of finding rewarding employment and embarking on a meaningful career quickly!

Establish Your Professional Brand

Distinguish yourself as a credible and trustworthy candidate

Fine-Tune Your Resume

There are a variety of ways to present your work experience, and several websites that offer free resume templates. Tailor your resume with keywords and skills that align to the jobs for which you are applying. Include all work experience, internships, volunteer work and scholastic and employment achievements. Finally, ask a trusted professional or two to review and provide feedback.

Leverage LinkedIn Daily

As an extension of your resume, use LinkedIn to highlight your work and volunteer experience, skills and education. Include a professional photo and an insightful bio that defines who you are and what you are looking for in your next job. Use LinkedIn's many features to find relevant job openings, follow companies of interest, expand your professional network, discover shared-interest groups and even connect with former coworkers and classmates. You never know who might have a connection to the hiring manager for your dream job!

Clean Up Your Social Media Accounts

There is a high probability that your future employer is doing a quick search of you on the internet and social media accounts. It's smart to take a moment to scrub your online presence to ensure you are portraying yourself in a positive light. Consider placing your other social media accounts, like TikTok or Instagram, on private and delete any old accounts, as well as any content that might not paint you in the best light.

Put Yourself Out There

Expand your network, skill set and horizons

Volunteer or intern

While most volunteer and internship opportunities are unpaid, both can be instrumental in helping you expand your skill set and your network. Seek out positions that will boost your knowledge, get your foot in the door of a new industry, and help you to make professional connections. In many industries, internships can lead to being hired as a full-time employee!

Cast a wide net

While you may have your sights set on a specific position, industry or location, consider broadening your search and criteria. The fact that many companies are now hiring remote workers can greatly expand your options as well. Remember—job hunting can also be a numbers game. The more positions you apply for, the better your chances of getting interviews and landing a job. Focus on getting your foot in the door and then creating an exciting career path.

Work your network

When it comes to job seeking, the phrase “It’s not what you know, but who you know” rings true. While you definitely want to nurture your current connections, now is the time to reach out to your college alumni association, attend professional networking events and career fairs and join groups geared towards your career goals and interests. Remember that all of these relationships should be mutually beneficial. Respect and trust are two way streets, and gratitude always leaves a positive impression.

Find a mentor

A mentor is someone who has the relevant experience, knowledge or skills that you want to acquire. This can be someone that you know or a complete stranger. Identify someone who you’d want to “become” professionally, research their background, then respectfully reach out and explain why you’d like to learn from them.

Keep Your Mind on Your Money

Responsible spending and savings habits before (and after) the first paycheck

Know your expenses and create a budget

Most of us, employed or not, struggle with budgeting. But this lifelong habit can help you to take control over your finances and reduce stress during uncertain times. Create a tracker of all your anticipated monthly expenses, then balance that against any cash reserves or other income to determine your maximum monthly spend. Then stick to that budget! And avoid using credit cards at all costs—now is the time to go cash only and avoid having to spend your future paychecks on interest!

Eliminate Unnecessary Expenses

Look for areas where you can reduce, or even eliminate, unnecessary expenses. Streaming services, dining out, entertainment or online shopping habits may need to all go on pause for a bit. Consider cheaper alternatives for services, groceries and transportation. Just for fun, keep a picture of your first big “want” purchase that you’ll make with your first paycheck near your desk for inspiration!

Prioritize Debt Repayments

If you have student loans, or any other types of debt, make sure to allocate a portion of your monthly budget for debt repayment. If necessary, explore options for deferment or repayment plans with your lenders.

Helpful Websites & Resources:

www.LinkedIn.com

employment-focused social media platform

www.Canva.com

professional-looking resume templates

www.Indeed.com

free site for job seekers

www.MyNextMove.org

interactive tool for job seekers to learn more about career options

See next page for a sample monthly budget worksheet.

Sample Monthly Budget Worksheet

I. Income	
Monthly earnings	
Minus taxes	
Adjusted income	
Other income	
Total	
II. Expenses	
Rent or mortgage	
Combined utilities	
Groceries	
Auto expenses	
Student loan(s)	
Credit card Insurance	
Medical expenses	
Miscellaneous	
Total	
III. Discretionary Allowance	
Total monthly income	
(minus)	
Total monthly expenses	
Total	