

Job Search Strategies: For Internships and Full-time Positions

- 1. Focus your search. Identify what you want to do (area of interest), for whom you want to work (type of organization) and/or where you want to live (geographical preferences)**
 - If you consider yourself a generalist, assess your skill set and determine where you can best use those skills
 - If you have significant experience in a particular policy area (either through work or graduate school), identify the kinds of organizations whose work focuses on those areas. This may include government, non-profits, or the private sector
 - If you plan to work for a non-profit organization, think about the specifics of the organization for which you hope to work: size, budget, served populations, and location
 - Identify professional associations for the fields in which you are interested and bookmark their sites. Most have free job boards that you may want to check regularly
 - If you have strong geographical preferences, this simplifies the identification of professional areas and organizations to those that operate in your chosen locale, but it does narrow your opportunities
 - Select your four or five most promising policy areas and target your search accordingly. For example, your career objective may be to work at the local level in management or planning, but you also realize your skills are suited to policy analysis. You may decide that a career in policy analysis is acceptable, but only at the municipal or county level
- 2. Make contacts**
 - Identify La Follette School alumni and other key people in professional fields, organizations, and locations that you identified above
 - Schedule informational interviews or make another form of contact to meet alumni and other key people. You can use [LinkedIn](#), [Badger Bridge](#), and also contact the Career Services Coordinator
- 3. Be prepared**
 - Make sure your [resume and reference list](#) are current and in top form
 - Have ready access to your unofficial UW transcript (you can get it in your Student Center) and any other transcripts from previous institutions. You don't want to discover the perfect job only to find that the deadline for applying is day after tomorrow, and it requires transcripts not in your possession
 - Gather the standard application information that any employer application will require (such as previous employers, dates worked, etc)
- 4. Search**
 - Bookmark websites that have relevant job listings, including the organizations you selected above. Determine which of these you will check weekly or more often
 - View (and possibly subscribe to) the online version of the newspaper in the area(s) where you hope to intern or work to better get to know the community in which you hope to live
 - Join the [Career Facebook Group](#)
 - If you are an alum, join the jobs4alumni listserv by emailing a request to careerdev@lafollette.wisc.edu. Otherwise just watch your email for the bi-weekly posts from the job and internship boards and those in the daily digest. Current students are

automatically added to the jobs4alumni list unless they request not to be on the exit survey

- Identify positions that look interesting and for which you think you are *reasonably* qualified. You do not have to possess every qualification listed in the job posting to be a viable candidate for the position (if it requires 5 years and you have 2.5-3 go for it!)
- Identify internships that will provide you with the best experience to complement your graduate studies. Most organizations to which you apply do not expect you to be experienced or accomplished – that’s why it’s an internship!

5. Apply for Positions

- It is unlikely that you will find a position that matches your qualifications precisely, so be able to articulate the relevance and transferability of your skills and experience. The Career Services Coordinator can help. Remember, writing good bullet points is as much art as science
- Include in the applications that you submit to prospective employers only those materials that have been requested—no more, no less
- Proofread your resume and cover letter and any supplemental materials. Have at least one other person (ideally the Career Services Coordinator) review these materials with you, as well
- Make sure that your application reaches its destination on or before the closing date. In many cases, the deadline may be in the future, but the employer begins to review applications as received. Think early bird whenever possible!

6. Track your employment search

- Document the positions for which you apply and indicate the closing date for the application process. A spreadsheet that includes all the relevant information about each position works well
- Make copies of all materials you submit for each job application, including the cover letter and the formal application, and store them in a file on your computer AND the cloud (just in case)
- Document the outcome of each application process
- If you are called for an interview, prepare carefully. After the interview assess your performance (see other materials on [this page](#))

7. Please keep the [Career Services Coordinator](#) apprised of your efforts for encouragement and assistance