

UNIVERSITY OF DALLAS

Office of Personal Career Development

Checklists for Job Seekers

Daily

- Review job seeker websites for new job openings (Handshake, LinkedIn, Indeed, Glassdoor). Update your preferences in Handshake so that you can receive personalized updates.
- Complete and submit applications for interesting positions as soon as you learn of them, tailoring your resume and cover letter to each position. (Title the resume with YourName_Company_JobTitle).
- Update a spreadsheet with details of your completed applications.
- Save a copy of the resume and cover letter you submitted for each job posting and a copy of the job description.

Weekly

- Follow up on resumes and applications sent during the past week via email or telephone (if permissible – please check listing for rules regarding contact).
- Send thank you notes or emails to interviewers you spoke with during the past week.
- Send thank you notes or emails to people in your network who referred you to job leads during the past week.
- Identify 1-3 specific companies where you would like to work; research openings and submit applications each week.
- Email professional references a list of the jobs to which you applied, keeping them informed in the event they are called for a reference check.

Monthly

- Contact a member of the OPCD team to share details of your progress and to ask for input and assistance.
- Ensure that your resume is current and is ready for immediate submission to an employer or trusted contact.
- Make contact with key people in your professional network and conduct informational interviews.
- Participate in professional networking activities, volunteer work, and career fairs.
- Work on improving skills that will improve your employability.
- Expand your online professional network via LinkedIn by communicating with current connections about your job search, adding others, and becoming active in relevant groups.

Research Strategies for a Job Search

Job Search Facts

According to a [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Yale University report](#), 70% of all jobs are found through networking rather than job boards.

- Additionally, 98% of U.S. employers have fewer than 100 employees. That means these organizations often do not recruit from college campuses. To find these “hidden” employers, you need to have a strategy.
- Using multiple job search methods will help you find a position faster than people who use only one or two, as data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics suggests. Visit www.bls.gov for more information.

The Bottom Line

- The internet should not be your only means of searching for jobs.
- Talking to people, asking questions, and being able to quickly and easily describe who you are (your interests, skills, experience) and what you’re looking for may be your best job search method. Don’t be afraid to network!
- Take advantage of UD resources like career events, job fairs, lunch & learns, company presentations, and other opportunities to meet and discover potential employers.

Developing Your Strategy

As you develop your search strategy, you should:

- Create a list of 5-10 organizations with whom you are most interested in working. These organizations should get most of your attention. Actively work to meet people in the organizations and learn more about their goals.
- Create a second list of organizations you have some interest in. When you have time, do some basic research to refine the level of your interest and find possible networking or career openings.
- Keep a log of research and activities, so you know who you’ve called, when, and next steps.

Define What You’re Looking For

What are your search criteria? Be honest with yourself and the people you talk with about your search (whether it’s your Career Advisor or professional contacts you’ve made). Common search criteria are:

- Geographic location
- Connection to interest/passion
- Application of skill set
- Fit with work values

Field-Specific Research

Research can make all the difference in your search. You need to look more like a great potential colleague than a desperate job seeker. It’s your job to do the research needed to understand your top employers’ needs and place yourself in situations where you can demonstrate your abilities. Where do you find the people you want to work with?

- **Professional organizations.** Nearly every profession you can think of has a professional organization. Simply do a Google search to find them. Association websites have info on current trends, salary surveys, job listings, directories of accredited graduate/professional programs and more. Check to see if they offer a discounted rate for student members and join while you’re still in school.
- **Trade publications & journals.** What do people in your field read to stay current on industry trends and news? If you don’t know, do some research and ask the professionals you connect with what they read. Some sample trade publications and journals include: The Wall Street Journal, Ad Age, The Chronicle of Philanthropy, The Chronicle of Higher Education, Variety, Publishers Weekly, and PR Week.
 - Subscriptions to many of these publications can be costly, so make use of copies or electronic subscriptions available through your academic department or the UD Library.
- **Job listing & professional resource sites.** There are online communities dedicated to particular fields where you can often find things such as job seeker resources, career guides, discussion forums, job listings, and more. Conduct additional research to find more sites that fit your interests. Some of our favorite sites:
 - [UD Handshake](#)
 - [Glassdoor](#)
 - [LinkedIn](#)
 - [USA Jobs](#)
 - [Indeed](#)
- **Social media.** Yes, social media can be a part of your research and job search. See more in Networking.

Employer-Specific Research

If you have particular geographic areas in mind, or are geographically limited, there are resources that can help you to uncover employers by location.

- Use [UD Handshake](#) to find employers and job openings in a wide range of industries.
- Identify local resources such as online newspapers, networking groups, chambers of commerce, regional alumni clubs, etc., in your area of interest. They are a great way to find people who are doing work you find interesting.

Research your list of specific employers. Sources include:

- Company website and social media
- Media articles and coverage (check out press releases on their website, too)
- Employee review websites like Glassdoor and even Handshake (recently implemented reviews)
- Annual reports
- Recruiting materials/packets

Networking

What are you doing right now to create or establish those important professional relationships? Meeting people gives you an opportunity to learn from them. If you are not sure what career path you would like to pursue, talk with many different professionals as they can help you narrow your areas of interest.

Networking is usually an informal discussion with people you already know or have just met. In fact, most students use networking all the time without even realizing it. When scheduling classes, have you ever asked a friend or classmate about their experiences, or to recommend a good class or professor? When making a relatively large purchase such as a new cell phone, athletic shoes, computer, or even a car, have you asked people you know what they've liked or disliked about theirs? Have you posted questions or answers to online boards like Handshake or Glassdoor discussing these kinds of topics? Guess what—that's networking!

Networking takes place whenever you:

- Meet with faculty or staff — especially a Career Advisor
- Attend an employer info session or career event (UD job fairs, for example)
- Meet guest speakers or engage with your peers in class or through a student organization
- Talk with family, friends, and other acquaintances about their work
- Post content on Facebook, LinkedIn, or other websites
- Volunteer for a community service event

Because networking can happen anywhere, be prepared to introduce yourself and deliver your pitch about who you are and what you want to do. "You're a student at UD? What are you studying? What do you want to do after graduation?" You never know when that conversation can lead to a new contact or even an invitation to pass along your resume.

Using Social Media for Networking

Here is a quick overview of several social media web tools you may want to consider using.

- [LinkedIn](#). 300+ million professionals use LinkedIn to exchange information, ideas, and opportunities. Also, LinkedIn pays Google to be the top search result when names are searched in Google. Learn how to effectively build your profile, connect with contacts, and find opportunities.
- [Twitter](#). Stay updated with professionals or employers and keep others up to date with this instant information tool. Some organizations have Twitter accounts dedicated to job postings.

Bridging the Gap & Boosting Your Skills

- [EdX classes](#): free online courses from various academic institutions from MIT to Harvard.
- [Microsoft training and tutorials](#).
- [Alison](#): free comprehensive classes on financial literacy, personal and soft skills, digital skills, entrepreneurship.

Playing Fair: Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Job Seeker

by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, Principles for Professional Practice Committee

Choosing and attaining meaningful post-graduation employment is an important challenge for college students. To aid this process, your career center and employers develop connections and programs, such as on-campus recruiting, resume referral services, and job fairs, in which you and your fellow students are active participants. In order for this process to be successful, everyone involved must work together. NACE's Principles for Professional Practice provides guidelines for that process in order to guarantee:

- that students can openly, freely, and objectively select employment opportunities, making these choices based on their assessment of the best use of their abilities, their personal goals, and other pertinent facts;
- a recruitment process that is fair and equitable to students and employers alike;
- support for informed and responsible decision making by students.

What's Your Part in This?

1. Provide accurate information about your academic work and records, including courses taken, grades, positions held, and duties performed.

You can, however, refuse to provide an employer with specific information about any job offers you may have received from other employers. You do not have to name the organizations that have made you offers, nor do you have to provide specific information about what salaries you've discussed with those organizations. Instead, you can give broad responses to such questions, naming types of employers—"I've interviewed with employers in the retail industry"—and offering salary ranges rather than specific dollar amounts—"The salary offers I've received have been in the \$25,000 to \$30,000 range." Incidentally, it's in your best interest to research salaries and to let employers know that you have done so.

2. Be honest.

Conduct your job search with honesty and integrity. Do not lie or stretch the truth on your resume, applications, or during any part of the interview process.

3. Interview genuinely.

Interview only with employers you're sincerely interested in working for and whose eligibility requirements you meet. "Practice" interviewing is misleading to employers—wasting both their time and money—and prevents sincerely interested candidates from using those interview slots.

4. Adhere to schedules.

Appear for all interviews, on campus and elsewhere, unless unforeseeable events prevent you from doing so. And, if you can't make the interview because of an unforeseeable event, notify your career center or the employer at the earliest possible moment.

5. Don't keep employers hanging.

Communicate your acceptance or refusal of a job offer to employers as promptly as possible, so they can notify other candidates that they are still being considered or that the position is filled.

6. Accept a job offer in good faith.

When you accept an offer, you should have every intention of honoring that commitment. Accepting an offer only as a precautionary measure is misleading to the employer and may restrict opportunities for others who are genuinely interested in that employer.

7. Withdraw from recruiting when your job search is completed.

If you accept an offer or decide that full-time graduate or professional studies are for you, notify your career center and withdraw from the on-campus recruiting process immediately. And, let employers that are actively considering you for a job know that you are now out of the running. By informing everyone that you've got a job or are headed to graduate school, you not only get the chance to brag but also to help your friends who are trying to get on interview schedules or who are being considered for positions.

8. Claim fair reimbursement.

If an employer has agreed to reimburse you for expenses you incur in its recruitment process, your request should be only for reasonable and legitimate expenses.

9. Obtain the career information you need to make an informed choice about your future.

It's up to you to acquire the information about career opportunities, organizations, and any other information that might influence your decisions about an employing organization.

University of Dallas Office of Financial Aid
Financial Literacy Guide Regarding Employment

Glossary

Exempt employee: an employee who is exempt from the overtime provisions under the Fair Labor Standards Act; these employees will not earn overtime pay.

Non-exempt employee: an employee who is not exempt from the overtime provisions under the Fair Labor Standards Act; these employees are eligible for overtime pay.

Overtime pay: a minimum pay rate (generally 1.5 times the normal wage), paid to hourly wage employees when they work over 40 hours per week.

Cafeteria plan: an employee benefit plan that allows the worker to choose from a variety of benefits to fit their needs.

Defined benefit plan: a retirement plan that pays a monthly income to a retiree for life based on a pre-determined formula; sometimes called a pension.

Defined contribution plan: a savings plan that provides an employee with a lump sum at retirement, the dollar value of which is based on contributions plus investment earnings or minus investment losses

Tuition reimbursement: (Also known as tuition assistance) is an employee benefit through which an employer pays for a pre-determined amount of continuing education credits or college coursework to be applied toward a degree.

Co-pay or co-insurance: the worker's share of each healthcare cost.

Deductible: the amount a worker pays out of pocket before an insurer begins to cover costs.

Unemployment insurance/compensation: provides benefits (payments) to eligible workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own, and who meet certain other eligibility requirements.

Workers' compensation: provides wage replacement (disability pay) and medical care benefits to employees who are injured on the job, in exchange for the employee agreeing not to sue the employer.

Employment & Benefits FAQs

What is base pay and why is it so important?

Base pay is your salary, not including bonuses or overtime pay. It's important because additional or extra pay, like bonuses and benefits, is often calculated as a percentage of your base pay.

What is an advantage of being a non-exempt employee?

Non-exempt employees will be paid overtime if they are required or asked to work more than 40 hours in one week. On the other hand, exempt employees are usually expected to put in as many hours as it takes to get the job done without extra pay.

Does an employer have to pay higher wages to those who work weekends or night shifts?

This is called a pay differential, and it's optional for employers. They may choose to pay a higher wage to employees working weekends, holidays, or nights.

How does tuition reimbursement work?

Tuition reimbursement policies can vary from company to company, but most companies require you pay for the tuition up front and then they reimburse you after course credits are completed or a degree is earned. Companies that offer this benefit will either have a set amount or percentage they will pay for your education per year. Tuition reimbursement is taxable income.

Can an employer fire me if I don't do anything wrong?

Most workers are employed "at will." This means that, except for discrimination, an employer may terminate (fire, lay off, or let go) any worker at any time.

What is a 401(k) plan?

A 401(k) plan is a voluntary, pre-tax savings retirement program. Under current plan provisions, eligible employees can elect to have a specific deferral amount of their pay deposited into the 401(k) plan, up to a current maximum of \$19,500 and a catch-up contribution for employees aged 50 or over of \$6,500 additional per year. The income earned on the 401(k) account is not taxed until you withdraw it.

What is an "employment probation period?"

Also referred to as a new hire probationary period, these are short-term periods employers use to try out job candidates before rewarding them with full-time status. Typically, a job trial period runs for about 60 to 90 days—though some can run for up to a year.

What happens to my retirement plan money if I leave my employer?*

It depends. An employee who has a defined contribution plan may:

- Leave the funds with an old employer's plan (under certain conditions).
- Move the account balance to a new employer's plan.
- Roll over the funds to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA).
- Withdraw the funds. Note that there could be tax implications in doing this.

* It may be wise to talk to a financial advisor about the tax effects of each of these options.

Financial Planning & Employment Resources*

1. [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#): Career information including education requirements, pay, and more.
2. [Compare the cost of living](#) in different cities.
3. [Employee benefits](#) overview.
4. U.S. Department of Labor resources:
 - a. [Employment resources](#)
 - b. [Wages and the Fair Labor Standards Act](#)
 - c. [Overtime rules](#)
 - d. [Retirement plans](#)
 - e. [Labor FAQs](#)
5. [Negotiating your salary](#).
6. Saving and investing basics:
 - a. [US Securities and Exchange Commission](#)
 - b. [Additional info from the US government](#)

*References or links to third-party websites are provided for convenience only. The University of Dallas does not endorse or support products or services provided by a third party and cannot attest to the accuracy of the information provided by third parties.