





Job & Internship Search Guide:

Search Strategies for Entry-level Job and Internship Opportunities

A Resource Provided by USCB Career Services

Strategy	Notes
<p style="text-align: center;">Strategy #1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Do Your Research & Know Yourself</p>	<p>Before you apply to any type of job opportunity, you need to research job descriptions and access your strengths, skills, and interests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review 5-10 positions in the type of job that you want to land. A good place to start is with a job search engine such as USCB's Handshake. There is no need to limit your geographic location for this phase of the preparation. Finding descriptions is the important goal at this stage. Review the positions and make note of the soft skills, hard or technical skills, and keywords used in each of these and create a spreadsheet to find common job duties and desired skills between each of them. If you have more than one type of job or internship that interests you, for example if you are interested in marketing and public relations or insurance and financial planning, you need to make separate searches for all of your interests. <p>When you have done this research and created your spreadsheet, assess your strengths (the skills you have) and your weaknesses (the skills you need to develop). If there is a program or professional resource you need to know, then ask career services or a professor how you could go about learning or developing this knowledge.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Strategy #2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Create Your Documents & Develop Your Brand</p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start; gap: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div> <p>Use the USCB Resume Guide to start creating a strong resume and have Career Services review it for tips and advice.</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start; gap: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div> <p>Develop an engaging baseline cover letter with help from the USCB Cover Letter Guide. You will use this when inquiring about and applying for positions. Career Services can help you develop this document.</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start; gap: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div> <p>Create a positive online brand by making a Handshake and LinkedIn profile. Clean up your social media accounts. There is a USCB LinkedIn Guide to help you get started. Career Services can review your profile and offer tips for using it to your job search advantage. Career Services can also help with your Handshake profile.</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start; gap: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div> <p>Create a document that has all of your experiences, paid and unpaid, in reverse chronological order that includes the dates you were serving and the supervisor's contact information. This is not a resume. It is a document that will make completing applications easier because all this "always asked for information" will be readily available to complete applications.</p> </div> </div>
<p style="text-align: center;">Strategy #3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Set Up a Timeline & Stay Positive</p>	<p>It typically takes 10 – 20 hours a week to search for job opportunities, maybe more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to manage your time between school and other commitments when you are actively in the search mode. You may have to say "No" to some activities during this time so that you can focus on this important process. You should even consider whether taking that extra course is worth the time drain during the semester you will be searching. You could be better off taking 15 hours instead of 18 hours if that means your grades and time management will be better. <p>This process cannot be successfully completed at the last minute.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You should start searching for a job several weeks before you need it. For example, starting your search in the beginning of the spring semester for a summer position is the recommended time frame. In fact, starting during your first year at college is the suggested time to begin thinking about your interests and developing a baseline plan for career success. Career Services can help you with a multi-year plan, freshman through senior years or sophomore through senior years. <p>Mentally, searching for a job is taxing on your energy. You need to prepare put serious effort into this process and stay upbeat even when you are rejected, because rejection is part of the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give yourself time to reflect on your efforts, take mental health breaks, exercise, and maintain a healthy diet to ensure that you can keep up with all you will need to do.
<p style="text-align: center;">Strategy #4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Identify Companies & Network</p>	<p>Identifying companies in your geographic preference is a good place to start applying for positions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use LinkedIn to research and follow companies where you would like to work. Use Facebook to follow smaller, local companies that may not be on LinkedIn. Be active on the sites by connecting with people who work at these organizations. Use Google to search by industries in a geographic location. For example, a Google search for healthcare companies in the Bluffton area code of 29909 provides a list of twenty organizations that you can research. Some may be dropped from your list, but those that you keep should be checked for job postings regularly and followed on LinkedIn/Facebook. You can even apply for jobs through LinkedIn and Facebook. <p>Online networking should take up only about 20% of your job search time. The rest of your time should be devoted to in-person networking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can make a list of friends and family who may know of someone or some company that is hiring. Friends and family can introduce you to their friends and family. Always follow a lead and thank the person giving it. USCB Career Services can help you plan this networking strategy. You can contact people who work for these companies or to whom you are introduced for an informational interview. Informational interviews are not job interviews, they are ways for you to learn more about careers and to meet people. USCB Career Services can help you prepare for informational interviews. <p>Volunteering with local non-profits is also a way to expand your network and volunteer opportunities provide you the ability to apply the skills you are learning in the classroom. Helping a local charity with its social media marketing, for example, is resume worthy experience!</p>

Informational Interviews

A Great Way to Learn about Careers and Find a Job Opportunity!

According to Career One Stop, "an informational interview is a meeting to learn about the real-life experience of someone working in a field or company that interests you." This is not a job interview; it is a way to build your network and networking is the best way to find job opportunities.

It's important to start with your immediate contacts. Think about everyone you know, friends, family, faculty, USCB alumni, co-workers, organization members, and neighbors. Some of these will be professional contacts such as faculty, co-workers, or supervisors. Others will be personal contacts, such as family, close friends of the family, friends, or close co-workers. Students often discount their family and friend contacts. Remember each person has a network, too. It is their network you want to tap. Ask if they know someone who works in the field you want to or for a company you like.

Take the time to make a list of everyone you know. Use a spreadsheet to keep track of these people. Commit to contacting each one and use a spreadsheet to keep track of the conversations you have. A spreadsheet might have the following content:

Name	How I Know this Person (Personal or Professional)	Contacts Email	Contacts Phone Number	Where Contact Works or What They Do	Most Recent Conversation	Lead for a New Contact	Notes about New Contact
Sandra Shark	U1010 Professor	SShark@uscb.edu	843-208-1234	USCB, Student Housing Resident Assistant Coordinator	Discussed how to make my RA experience stand out on a resume	Suggested I reach out to Mrs. Reynolds in USCB Career Services	Mrs. Reynolds gave me names of the following alumni to email: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Betty Beach (bb@work.com) Wally Whale (wally@club.com) Sally Seashell (seash@market.com)

Resources Consulted: CareerOneStop.org and WorkSource Douglas

Using the spreadsheet example above, the next people on the list should be the contacts given by Career Services. Of course, your initial list will have many people on it. Organize who you want to contact, first to last, and schedule time on your calendar to make the calls.

You may call or email to make the contact. The following introduction is an example you could use:

"Ms. Smith, Finnegan McShark suggested I reach out to you. My name is Terry Tiger Shark. I am a rising junior at USCB and I am interested in learning more about careers in marketing. Mr. McShark felt that your guidance and advice would be valuable for a student like myself. Do you have time in the next two weeks for about 20 minutes? I would really like to learn more about your experiences in marketing and the company where you work. I could call you or come by your office, whichever works best for you. Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to your reply."

When you set up the meeting be sure to research this person on LinkedIn and the company she works for. Make a list of questions you would like to ask. Take a notebook with you and a copy of your resume in case the contact asks for it. Take a padfolio to make notes during the meeting and add the notes to your spreadsheet or make another contact document to save notes about the conversation. Make business cards with your name, USCB major, and contact information to give when you meet the person.

Sample Informational Interview Questions

- What is your background and how did you get started in this career?
- What is a typical day like in your job?
- What do you like most/least about this career?
- Are there related fields I might want to look into?
- What makes a resume impressive in your field?
- What are employers looking for in this career (skills, education, experience)?
- What would you recommend I do at this point to get into this field?
- How do you suggest I go about finding job opportunities in this field?
- What organizations, companies, or groups do you suggest I follow on LinkedIn to learn more about this field?
- Is there anyone else you would recommend I talk to?

Be sure to follow up the meeting with a thank you email. Stay in touch with this person and share things that this person might be interested in such as articles about this person's hobby. Connect with this person on LinkedIn and congratulate them when a promotion is announced. Give a recommendation for this person on LinkedIn.

Informational Interviews help you build your network. Networking isn't about asking for a job, but your network contacts may recommend you for a position at some time in the future. Demonstrate that you have professional interest in the person by checking in with your contacts on a regular basis. Make a good impression so they will remember you when the right opportunity presents itself!

Use Your Strengths to Develop Your Job Search/Networking Strategy

The job search strategy that works well for your best friend may not work so well for you. Think about your Clifton Strengths when crafting your job search strategy.

- For example, if one of your strengths is Woo, then you probably know a lot of people and have no trouble contacting them to have a conversation about your job search. However, the challenge for you may be culling the best possible people on your list.
- If you are a Relator, then you value close relationships with others and as a result you may have a smaller group of people in your network. However, you can reach out to them and use leads they help you generate to expand the number of people with which you can have a meaningful career conversation.
- If you are an Achiever or Activator, you will rise to the challenge of using and expanding your network to find the hidden jobs (those that are not advertised). You will probably work well by setting concrete daily goals to keep you on track.

No matter what your strengths are, think about how you can use them to your advantage to get the job you want. Career Services can help you develop an individual plan that will feel comfortable to you and work to your advantage.

What to Wear to an Informational Interview

Most of the time it is safest to dress in business formal attire. The example of someone not wearing a tie is not business formal, but it is an acceptable business casual or gender neutral option.



Need something to wear to an interview, but your budget is tight?

Use the USCB Career Closet!

Contact Career Services to find out more by emailing AR60@uscb.edu.

Photo from California State University, Fullerton Career Center