

Academic and Career Advising

Job Search Guide



Academic and Career Advising

For an appointment, call or email us at:
(630) 466-2368
careerdevelopment@waubonsee.edu

Additional resources available 24/7 at:
www.waubonsee.edu/careerdevelopment

For résumé writing assistance, see the 5 Steps to Résumé Success at
www.waubonsee.edu/careerdevelopment

Getting Started

This guide will give you resources and tips to...

- ✓ **Discover Yourself** so you can more quickly identify whether an employer and position will be a good match for you
- ✓ **Explore Options** through networking and targeted searches to save you time and make your search more productive and efficient
- ✓ **Make Choices** in your job search by setting goals using the leads you identified in earlier steps
- ✓ **Take Action** while maintaining motivation



Waubonsee’s Academic and Career Advisors are here to help as you read this guide and fill in the blanks with your research results. Make using your support systems a top priority during your job search: contact us when you have questions about how to put these suggestions into action.

But First... The Employer’s Perspective

During your job search, keeping the employer’s perspective in mind will help you avoid feeling discouraged and better interact with potential employers.

1. **Employers hire because they have a need.** They need a new employee in order to successfully function or reach goals. What problem does an employer have and how can you fix it? Keep this in mind in your application materials and conversations.
2. **Employers are looking for a co-worker**—someone they will enjoy working with. Try to learn all you can about the company culture up front. You may be perfect for the *job*, but not a good fit for that particular *team*.
3. **Employers are analyzing candidates for risk.** In applications and interviews, employers are looking for red flags signaling they may need to do the costly hiring process again shortly if they hire you. For example, are there unexplained gaps or frequent job changes on your résumé? Do you talk poorly about former supervisors and coworkers? Think about what may make you a perceived risk and how you can minimize that perception.
 - Referrals may be less of a risk because more is known about them

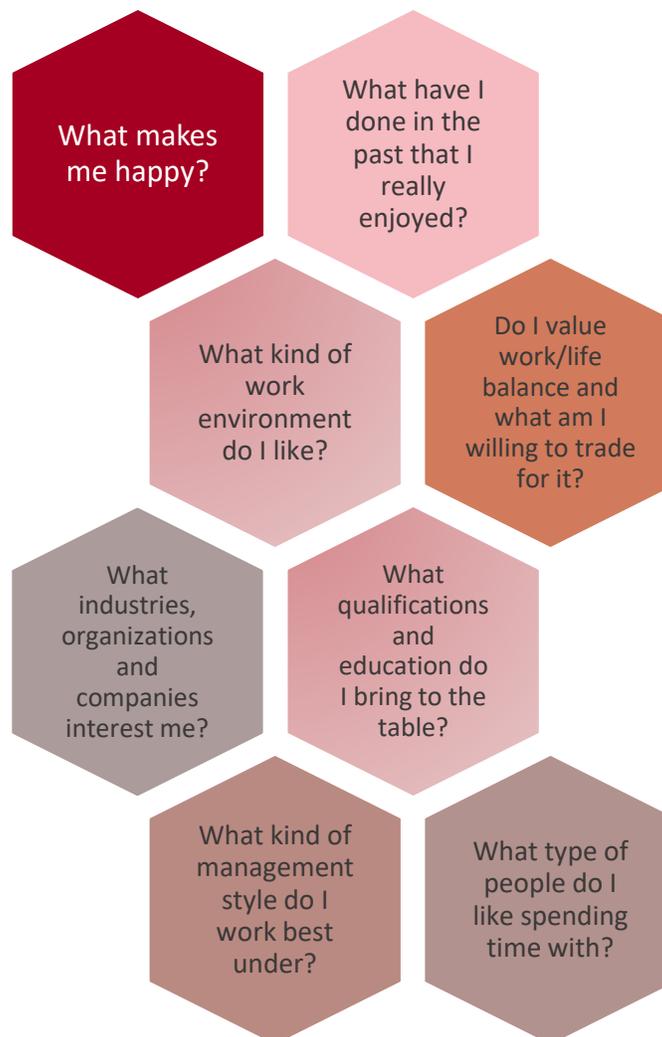
Discover Yourself

SELF-ASSESSMENT IS THE FIRST STEP in an effective job search. Understanding early on who you are and what is important to you in a job makes finding a good fit easier and results in greater job satisfaction. Use your answers to the questions in this section to evaluate positions and companies during the researching, application, and interview processes.

As you think about **positions**, **industries** (e.g. manufacturing, higher education, service, technology), **and organizations** you plan to target in your job search, consider them in the context of how you respond to the questions below. For example:

- Are they a good fit given my skills, abilities, and interests?
- Will I find the work interesting and challenging?
- Will they provide me with the things that are most important to me (and on which I cannot compromise)?

DETERMINE WHICH CAREERS BEST FIT YOUR SKILLS, INTERESTS, AND ABILITIES



➤ Take the O*NET Interest Profiler at <https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip>. Your results will rank your interests in the following areas: **Realistic**, **Investigative**, **Artistic**, **Social**, **Enterprising**, and **Conventional**. On <https://www.onetonline.org/>, select Interests from the drop-down menu under Advanced Search. You can then discover job titles in the RIASEC categories that match your interests.

○ My RIASEC scores are:

R = ____ **I** = ____ **A** = ____
S = ____ **E** = ____ **C** = ____

○ My 3 letter code is _____



➤ Schedule an in-person or virtual meeting for career counseling with an Academic and Career Advisor:
(630) 466-2368 or careerdevelopment@waubonsee.edu

○ My appointment date/time is _____

IDENTIFY INDUSTRIES, COMPANIES, AND JOB TITLES to mention while you are networking or when you are searching for open positions online. Fill in the blanks below with industries, companies, and job titles you have identified as potential good matches for you. The next time someone asks what you are looking for, you will have a set of answers ready.

Industries

Companies

Job Titles

Explore Options

Did you know that employers are more likely to hire a referral—or “known” candidate—than a non-referral? Researching job openings should not end, or even always begin, with a search engine. While networking is often viewed as talking to someone in order to pass on your résumé or giving your card to someone, **in reality, it’s about building and maintaining professional relationships.** As a result of networking, you will have a strong base of contacts who can be a resource when you are job searching. These individuals can share job-hunting advice or tips, inside information about job openings and hiring processes, give you the names of hiring managers at companies where you are applying, or even provide recommendations—and you can do the same for your network.

Are you concerned that networking seems insincere or only for extroverts? Don’t be! Networking is making genuine connections with the people you interact with during your academic journey, including professors and peers. Networking is also a 2-way street: review your set of strengths and skills to **see what you can offer to others.**

Your Existing Network	Expanding Your Network	Using Your Network
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family • Friends & Neighbors • High school and college classmates • Place of worship • Supervisors & coworkers • Customers & colleagues • Hobbies & sports • Trade & professional organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer • Become involved in student or community groups • Attend career events • Join professional organizations • Arrange an informational interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone in your network may be able to connect you with someone in theirs—or may hear about an opportunity and pass it along to you. This is why it’s important to tell your network what you are looking for. Use your list from page 4 of this guide.

NETWORKING WITH LINKEDIN

LinkedIn.com is a **professional social network.**

- Profiles are robust and interactive with résumé content such as past and current work and volunteer experiences, and a summary describing what you have to offer
- Search for job openings and connect with people currently working for companies you are interested in
- Join and contribute to groups with others who share your professional interests
- Learn how to use LinkedIn at www.gcflearnfree.org and <https://university.linkedin.com/linkedin-for-students> and with our [LinkedIn checklist](#)

CONNECTIONS ON LINKEDIN CAN:

- Visibly endorse your skills and write recommendations on your profile
 - One of the best ways to gain endorsements is to endorse others
- Introduce you to someone they are connected with
- Provide industry insights and job leads

INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Do you wish you knew someone who already has your goal career so you could ask them how they got there? You can! One way to build your network is by conducting informational interviews. Informational interviews are brief meetings with people established in a particular career field where you can ask their perspective on their job, the company, the future of the field and how they got to where they are today. You may also consider speaking to those who are only a few years into their current position at a company where you want to work. Could you see yourself in their position?

To set up an informational interview, contact the person you would like to meet with and explain that you are interested in learning about their job and how they became interested in it and ready for it. Most people are happy to talk about their journey and help others with similar interests.

Learn more about informational interviews by watching Candid Career videos! Find them on www.candidcareer.com/waubonsee

Things to Remember:

- They are doing you a favor so work around what is convenient for their schedule and remember to remain respectful of their time.
- The informational interview is about getting information about your career industry, not about getting a job. Do your research on the industry before the interview and set an agenda.
- Be polite and courteous and **remember to send a thank you** email 24-48 hours after the informational interview.

After you successfully set up a meeting, have an agenda with specific questions you want to ask. For example:

- How did you get started at this company or in this field?
- What experiences and/or skills are necessary in order to be successful?
- What education is necessary in order to be successful?
- What advice do you have for making the most of my time at Waubonsee?
- Is there anyone else that you recommend I should meet with to gain more perspective?

My Network

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

**Who will you speak with?
&
What will you ask them to do?**

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- *I am going to set up an informational interview with* _____

SWITCHING CAREERS?

CAREER COACH is a free tool to get career suggestions based on your interests, and learn more about academic programs that can prepare you. Go to www.waubonsee.edu/student-experience/career-exploration to take a Career Assessment, Browse Careers, Browse Programs, Browse Work Opportunities, and Build a Résumé.

WHERE TO SEARCH FOR JOBS ONLINE

www.joinhandshake.com.com

- Handshake lists job and internship postings specifically targeting college students at two and four-year colleges and universities. Anyone with a “.edu” email address can create an account for free and search for career launching or building opportunities.

www.linkedin.com

- Use the Jobs tab and remember to check and see if you have any 1st or 2nd degree connections at a company, or in a position, that interests you.

www.illinoisworknet.com

- This search tool displays high-quality Indeed job posting results.
- To find the tool, click **Menu → Job Openings & Recruiting → Illinois workNet JobFinder**

Make Choices

Once you have explored options, set some targeted goals. Targets/goals should be S.M.A.R.T.:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Time-Bound



Figure 1- Targets should reflect a match between the realities of the organization, the marketplace, and your skills and aspirations.

EVALUATING GOALS

- How will you know whether or not you are on the right track?
- Can you break the goal down into a series of sub-goals to monitor to assure you are moving in the desired direction?

EVALUATING ATTAINABILITY

- Is this a logical next step from your present position and salary grade?
- How does my experience compare to the required and preferred qualifications?

EVALUATING RELEVANCE

- Is the goal coordinated with my recent position, skills, and abilities?
- Is the goal a step in the right direction?

Targets

Target Date

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

- _____
- _____
- _____

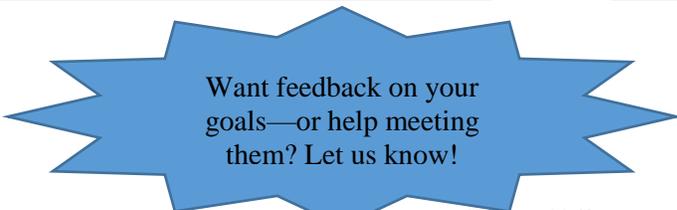
For your top two targets, what actions do you need to take, and by when, in order to meet your target? What new skills and education might you need to acquire?

Actions (Sub-Steps to Meet Your Target)

Target Date

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

- _____
- _____
- _____



Take Action

Congratulations, you are now ready to begin applying for the jobs you have identified! Follow these tips to a successful application:

TAILOR YOUR RÉSUMÉ & COVER LETTER. Review and revise your application materials for each position to ensure you are addressing the requirements and showing how your unique experiences make you a good fit. Get help by visiting www.waubonsee.edu/careerdevelopment.

AVOID THE RÉSUMÉ BLACK HOLE BY LEARNING ABOUT APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS. When applying for jobs online, your résumé often is not visible to hiring managers until it has been screened by an applicant tracking system—and many résumés don't make it past the screening. Learn more by making an appointment with an Academic and Career Advisor and by reading these resources:

- <https://www.jobscan.co/blog/8-things-you-need-to-know-about-applicant-tracking-systems/>
- <https://www.waubonsee.edu/downloads/ATS%20presentation.pdf>

RECORD YOUR JOB SEARCH. Create a spreadsheet to track your applications and progress. For each application, write down the date you applied, who (if anyone) you spoke with during the process, who you sent thank-you emails or cards to, and if/when you heard back or followed up.

PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS. Read our Interview Preparation Guide on www.waubonsee.edu/careerdevelopment, get tips on www.CandidCareer.com, and even schedule a mock interview with an Academic and Career Advisor.

BE PERSISTENT. On average, a job seeker has 20-25 interviews or other conversations with hiring managers before receiving a job offer. You may hear nothing back from most of the jobs you apply to, and when you do, it may be to say they filled the position, but eventually you will get an interview. Continue to apply and interview until you have one or more job offers that are a good fit. In the meantime, reward yourself for your effort and take a break from the job boards and résumé edits when you are feeling drained.

Resources

- www.waubonsee.edu/careerdevelopment
- www.joinhandshake.com
- <https://www.onetonline.org/>
- <https://university.linkedin.com/linkedin-for-students>
- www.qclearnfree.org
- www.illinoisworknet.com
- www.linkedin.com