

The job search process can feel overwhelming, so it's helpful to break it into manageable steps. The good news is you don't have to do every step in order. For example, you can start working on your resume before you identify what you want to do. Just start checking off as many of these activities as you can, and you'll find yourself on the way to a great opportunity.

You can receive assistance for every one of these steps through the Luther College Career Center. And you don't have to do it all during business hours – start by checking our web site <http://career.luther.edu> for lots of links and helpful information.

Step 1: Know yourself.

- I have identified my personal strengths, skills, interests, and values.
- I have made a list of possible job titles/fields of interest.
- I can name two or three careers/jobs I plan to pursue.

Step 2: Know where you want to work.

- I have researched organizations or companies that might hire someone with my skills, interests, and background.
- I have researched potential career fields: typical entry-level jobs, typical salaries, best geographic location for jobs, etc.
- I have identified the top three geographic areas where I'd like to live and work.
- I have identified 10 potential employers for the type of work I'm seeking.

Step 3: Get ready for the search.

- I have had my resume and cover letter(s) reviewed by a professional in the field or a staff member in the Career Center.
- I have prepared a portfolio or work samples to highlight my experiences, skills, and talent.
- I have developed my "30-second speech" for short encounters with employers.
- I have analyzed my education and developed my "liberal arts story" for employers.
- I have identified three individuals who will serve as references.
- I have developed my interview skills.
- I have prepared for interviews by practicing my responses to typical questions and/or doing a mock interview.
- I have an interview suit that is appropriate for the field in which I plan to work.
- I have a professional-sounding answering machine/voice mail message in case an employer calls.
- I have a neutral/professional e-mail address to give to employers.

Step 4: Start searching.

- I regularly check CareerConnections (<http://career.luther.edu/cc>) for career opportunities in my field.
- I read and check the appropriate job-search web sites and resources for my field(s) of interest.
- I have a system for keeping track of my applications, contacts, interviews, and other job-search activities.
- I follow-up on every interesting job lead immediately.
- I have developed a list of potential networking contacts and keep in touch with them.
- I follow-up each application with a phone call or e-mail to the employer requesting an interview.
- I send thank you letters or e-mails to every person who interviews me.

Adapted with permission from Liberal Arts Career Services/University of Texas-Austin.