

JOB-SEARCH STRATEGIES GUIDE



UC 225 | careerservices.nku.edu | 859-572-5680

GETTING STARTED

Looking for meaningful employment is often time-consuming and takes a good deal of commitment. Locating a position that matches your interests, needs, abilities, and goals may not be easy, but it is time well spent as you go about launching your career.

The process need not be frustrating. In fact, if you follow the strategies outlined in this guide and take full advantage of the resources available to you, your job search can actually be very rewarding.

Before jumping into specific job-search strategies, take time to consider these points:

- Even in the toughest economic times, thousands of positions become available and are filled every month.
- The most qualified candidate does not always get the position. The best jobs often go to the candidates who know the most about how to get the job.
- Your academic discipline does not mandate the type of position you will enter. By properly presenting your skills and abilities, you can qualify for a broad range of opportunities.
- Your initial decision is not necessarily where you will spend your entire career. The average graduate this year will have seven or eight positions in three or more different career fields in his/her lifetime. Nonetheless, your first job may have an impact on the types of jobs for which you will be able to compete successfully in the future.
- The more targeted you are in your search, the more you can concentrate on the opportunities in the field of your choice, and the more effective you will be in your job-search campaign. Lack of focus is not a virtue in the job search.

JOB-SEARCHING PRELIMINARIES

The job search, in its simplest terms, is a marketing campaign. The candidate represents the product and the world of work represents the market. In order to properly market yourself, you need to take time to discover what your product (you) can do for your market. This research is called self-assessment and involves the examination of what you can offer a potential employer.

Each candidate has numerous skills and abilities that, when put in the realm of the workplace, can assist an organization in meeting its objectives. Successful job seekers will take time to identify their specific skills, interests, and goals, and focus their job search in the area(s) where they see a potential match between themselves and the positions available.

Although this guide is focused on the job search and not on self-assessment, it is important to know yourself and what you have to offer an employer. As you go about making contacts, writing letters and resumes, and going through the interviewing process, the top candidates will be the ones who set themselves apart with a solid understanding of how they can make a positive contribution to potential employers.

Most individuals benefit from seeking assistance with the self-assessment process. This assistance is readily available, in various forms, through Career Services in UC 225.

Once you have identified where your interests lie and where you may be of greatest assistance to employers, it is time to research your market (the world of work). There are literally thousands of opportunities available to you, but to be effective in your search you need to narrow down the scope of your job campaign to those positions most in sync with your interests and abilities. Job-market research will help you to understand your future employer(s) and gain a firmer understanding of the job(s) you are seeking.

Print Resources

Countless articles, books, journals, and directories containing career information on various occupations are available through libraries, both on and off campus, as well as in the Career Services Library. Such resources include descriptions of specific jobs, qualifications required, salary information, and much more. Newspapers and magazines often feature articles about certain industries, occupations, and fields of work.

Almost all professions have newsletters, magazines, or journals that are published on a regular basis. These publications contain information pertaining to new products and technologies, industry developments and changes, current trends, emerging occupations, and personnel developments in the field. These sources of information can give you a wealth of insight into your chosen career field(s) that will serve as an important—if not essential—foundation for your actual job-search campaign. For help navigating through the print resources, visit Career Services.

Electronic Resources

Surfing the Internet for relevant and high-quality information can be overwhelming. Career Services has constructed two places for you to begin your search.

First, NKU offers an online database, HireNKU. Think of it as a job board designed expressly for NKU students. This is the site where employers looking specifically for NKU students post internships/co-ops and full-time positions. Access the website at: <http://careerservices.nku.edu/students/HireNKU.html>. Log in with your NKU username and password. You can then complete your profile; upload your resume; apply for co-op/internship and full-time positions; sign up for select on-campus interviews; search for workshops, employer information sessions, and career fairs; and identify employer contacts. HireNKU should be the first online resource you explore!

Second, you should investigate a special Internet resources webpage we developed that links to numerous career and job-search resources. Click on “Job-Search Resources”

from the student tab of the careerservices.nku.edu website. Then click on “Internet Resources for Career and Job Research.” The sites are listed by topic and field. NOTE: remember to check both the general sites as well as the field-specific sites.

Some highlighted websites to consider:

<http://careerservices.nku.edu/students/HireNKU.html> (NKU's HireNKU)

www.indeed.com (General)

www.simplyhired.com (General)

www.wetfeet.com (General - Internships)

www.usajobs.gov (Government)

www.jobs-nky.com (N. KY Jobs)

www.onetonline.org (Occupational Information)

There are many, many other sites as well. Check our website and visit the Career Library for more recommendations. Although we review websites before linking to them, we are not responsible for the content of the sites. Always read the fine print before providing personal information or paying a fee.

Informational Interviews

The best way to get a feel for a certain position or industry is to talk with people currently employed in your target area. These conversations are called “informational interviews” or “informational meetings,” and if done properly, can give you an edge over your competition.

Begin the informational interview process by contacting people within your personal network. This may include your family, friends, roommates, past employers and professors. Ask these contacts for names of people within occupations or organizations that interest you. If this does not bring the desired results, you can obtain contact names by consulting corporate websites, professional and trade associations, Chamber of Commerce directories, NKU alumni on LinkedIn, and the Career Services database, HireNKU.

Before beginning the process of informational interviews, it is critical that you thoroughly research your career field. This preparation will allow you to present yourself as knowledgeable, interested and mature. You

will not make a favorable impression by asking questions that could be easily answered in the organization's website or through other readily available resources.

Your questions should demonstrate that you have researched the field and that you have a genuine interest in learning more about the career area you have chosen. Appropriate questions include inquiries about day-to-day responsibilities, skills needed to succeed in the position, typical career tracks, and current issues in the field. You will find sample questions that will help you begin the development of your own list of questions in Appendix A.

The most effective means of making contact with potential sources of information begins with a letter or email. The letter will act as a means of introduction and allow you to inquire about the possibility of an appointment. In this letter, be very specific about your request for career information, not your desire for a job. The letter should be brief and business-like both in content and format. A sample letter is provided in Appendix B. You should indicate that you will follow up with a phone call to arrange a mutually convenient time for an appointment. During the follow-up phone call, be prepared to ask the questions you have developed in case the contact person does not have time to see you in person. Sample phone scripts are located in Appendix C.

If you are granted an appointment, make certain that you are dressed appropriately (business casual or business professional – depending on the organization), arrive early, have your questions ready, and bring a notebook for taking notes. Be polite and considerate by being prepared and organized, and by spending only the agreed upon time with your contact person. Typically, these people will also want to know more about your career plans and preparation.

Offer to show them your resume to acquaint them with your qualifications. You might want to request specific advice about your resume and job search. Be careful here: you do not want to appear to be asking for a job!

Before you close the meeting, be sure to request a business card to begin your file of future job-search contacts. You might want to ask your contact to suggest any articles, books, or Internet resources for you to read about their organization or field. A good concluding question would be to inquire about other people in the profession with whom you could speak to gain more information about your chosen field. This will give you additional contact people from whom to seek information. If approached correctly, many people are happy, if not flattered, to share their expertise with someone genuinely interested in their line of work. However, if you experience some rejection during this process, be cordial, and do not become discouraged.

Follow up with a thank-you letter whether you conducted the informational interview in person or on the phone. This follow-up contact is very important because it shows sincere appreciation and also demonstrates your professionalism. A sample letter can be found in Appendix D. Also, take a few minutes to reflect on what you've learned. What are your positive and negative impressions? How do your skills and interests match the occupation? Would you enjoy performing the duties described by your contact?

Note that it is not uncommon for people to re-evaluate and modify their goals or job choice during any part of this exploration stage. Although this stage of the job-search process need not be unnecessarily lengthy, it does take time. However, it is better to commit time to exploring your job choice and confirming your goals at this point rather than continue with a possibly misguided job search.

THE ACTUAL JOB SEARCH

By this point, you have identified where you feel you can make the best contribution to prospective employers and have researched the field thoroughly enough to know how you can best present your background and qualifications. Before going on, let us discuss the attributes that are needed for a successful job search.

- **Persistence.** Rejection is a very real—and natural—part of the job search. It is an incredibly unique individual who can complete a job search without being rejected by some employers along the way. The successful job seeker is the person who learns to accept the fact that rejection is a natural part of the process but who continues to contact other potential employers until an appropriate position is found. Remember that every “no” gets you that much closer to the “yes” you seek.
- **Organization.** Any task becomes more difficult, time consuming, and cumbersome if you go about it in a disorganized manner. With each contact being a possible job lead, it is imperative that you stay organized and keep track of all correspondence and communication with employers.
- **Confidence.** A positive mental attitude toward yourself and your ability to locate, secure, and succeed in the position of your choice is essential. A success-oriented attitude will allow you to overcome the inevitable obstacles in your employment search.

JOB-SEARCH STRATEGIES

Basically, students obtain employment in five ways: on-campus interviewing (includes career fairs and HireNKU); direct contact with employers; responding to job postings; personal “networking”; and employment agencies. The successful job search combines each strategy as it pertains to the individual job-seeker's goals. For instance, a search for a heavily recruited position, such as sales, accounting or computer science, will put more emphasis on on-campus interviewing, whereas a search for a not-so-heavily recruited position, such as communications or human resources, will emphasize networking and direct contact. Each individual's job search will be different, and you need to plan a strategy that utilizes a combination of these tactics.

On-Campus Interviewing and HireNKU

Career Services offers employers the option to interview students on campus throughout the fall and spring semesters. In order to take advantage of possible interview opportunities, you should complete your HireNKU profile and upload your resume. Then you should review HireNKU and apply for jobs directly and/or sign up for on-campus interviews for which you are qualified. Don't delay; some employers only recruit on campus during the fall semester. Also be sure to **attend career fairs** offered at NKU. The employers are here seeking NKU students!

Direct Contact

If you are seeking employment with specific organizations or with organizations in a specific geographic area or industry, an effective strategy is to contact employers directly. This method is frequently misunderstood to mean mailing or emailing one resume to dozens of employers and waiting for a response. This is not only ineffective, but can be very time consuming and frustrating.

The proper direct-contact approach begins by using print and/or online employer directories. The Career Services Library has the annual *Cincinnati Business Courier Book of Lists* and a handful of other printed directories. The Career Services website provides an access point to a variety of online job-search tools. Click the “Students” link on the Career Services website to view “Job-search Resources.” From there, click “Internet Resources” to find websites listed by topic and field, many of which list employers by field or location. You can also utilize the HireNKU job-search database to review prospective employers and find contact information. There are currently over 3,500 organizations and even more contacts listed in this database. This database is open only to NKU students and alumni.

However you locate the information, your task is to identify those organizations that most closely match your occupational goals. Research the organizations by reviewing their websites and utilizing other company research sites. Choose a manageable number of these organizations (no more than 50) and make a list of names and addresses of key contact

people within these organizations. Some directories list contact names and others do not, but even if you do obtain a name, it is best to call the organization to make sure you have the right name and to make sure the person is currently in the position listed in the database. If there is not a specific person listed as a contact, a phone call is imperative. Try to determine the person who most likely will have the authority to hire you. For instance, in sales it may be the district sales manager, for public relations it may be the director of public relations or the director of corporate communications, and so on. In smaller organizations, it may be a vice-president or even the president. When you call, be certain to get the proper spelling of the person's name and his/her complete title. In any case, avoid sending "Dear Sir" or "To Whom it May Concern" letters. If you cannot find a contact person, you may need to address your letter "Dear Hiring Manager:" or "Dear Director of Development:" but these generic salutations should be avoided when possible.

When you have developed this list, your next step is to write a customized cover letter and mail or email it along with a copy of your resume. Be extremely cautious about using existing published samples and simply substituting your particular information. Cover letter and resume guides are available in our office and via our website. (NOTE: when available, you should also apply online through the employer's website. However, this should not be done in lieu of mailing your cover letter and resume directly to the appropriate contact person.)

After sending this correspondence and waiting an appropriate amount of time for the letter to be received and read (7-10 business days), it is time for you to follow up with a phone call. The follow-up call should be made to inquire if your letter was received, offer any additional information needed, and ask about the possibility of an interview.

Persistence and professionalism are essential at this stage of the process. If the response to your request for an interview is denied, ask whether there would be a convenient time in the future for you to again contact the employer in case a position should become available at a later date. If everything goes well, this phone call will result in setting a mutually convenient time for your interview. This call should then be followed up by a letter thanking the employer for the opportunity to interview and confirming the date, time, and place of the interview.

On the day of the interview, you will want to arrive early, be courteous and friendly, and demonstrate you have researched the position, organization, and industry. Information on interviewing skills is presented in the *Interviewing Guide* available in our office and on our website. After your interview, you will want to follow up once again with a formal thank-you note expressing your gratitude for the employer's time and consideration, your interest in the position, and possibly a major point brought out in the interview.

Because of the number of resumes received by employers, it is essential that you distinguish yourself from other candidates. Accomplishing this will take effective paperwork and persistent follow-through on each contact. Depending on the success of your first set of inquiries, it may be necessary to add newly selected employers to your list of prospects. As you do so, keep in mind the importance of follow-up.

Answering Job Postings

Many employers use online job boards, social networking sites, newspapers and other publications (both print and online) to advertise their job openings. To overlook this employment avenue is to overlook an abundance of immediate openings in a specific geographic location or a specific occupation. Although depending solely on this one method can be a major error, ignoring it, as a part of your comprehensive job-search strategy will also be a mistake.

The majority of organizations also post their open positions on their website. You should visit your target organizations' websites weekly, at a minimum, to see if new positions have been posted. You will probably be asked to create a profile and submit your resume. The site may also allow you to create "Job Agents" which will notify you if new positions are posted that match your search criteria.

Take the time to determine where employers in your desired field or industry advertise their job openings. Professional associations often include job openings in their journals. Also consider newspapers within your desired geographic location. Do not overlook job sites such as Monster and CareerBuilder. Some social media sites also have a job posting component, such as LinkedIn. And finally, do not forget our online system, HireNKU.

Be careful using keywords to search job boards and in HireNKU. For example, some keyword searches will exclude jobs that discuss "management" if you have entered "manager" as the keyword. Adapt your search to see which keywords generate the most relevant results.

Networking

Without a doubt, one of the most effective, and most underutilized, methods of obtaining employment is through personal networking. The reality of the job market is that many positions, some say as high as 70-80 percent, are filled without ever being advertised. This creates what is called the "hidden job market," and the most effective way to break into this market is through your personal network.

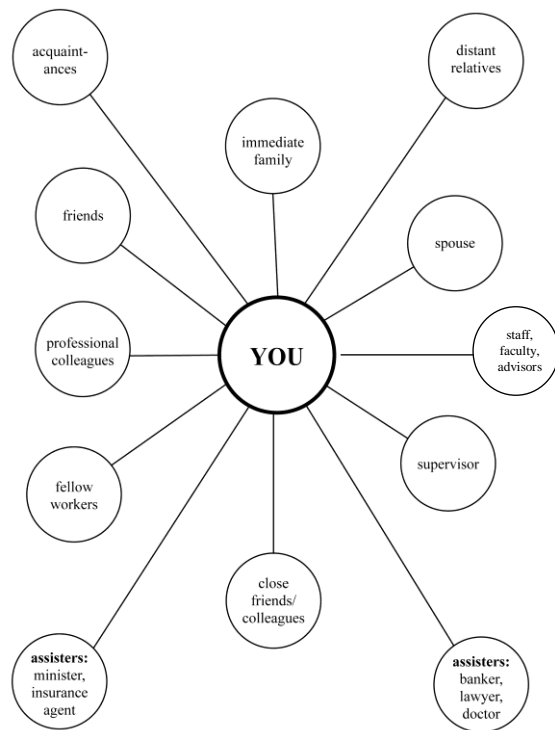
Your network is a group of people who know the type(s) of position(s) you are seeking, such as friends, family, and faculty, who are willing to keep you abreast of current job openings and introduce you to appropriate people with the authority to make hiring decisions. In fact, once you have developed your network, these contact people may be able to provide valuable information about their industry or organization, and expand your network by giving you the names of other people in the field.

These people do not take over the responsibility of your job search, but they can be of invaluable assistance to you.

One key to a successful network goes back to self-assessment and your ability to articulate the type of position you are seeking. It is also imperative that you constantly attempt to expand your network and keep your contact people informed on the progress of your search. Giving each contact person, or member of your network, a copy of your resume will allow them to gain a clear understanding of your background and abilities.

Here is an example that illustrates how one goes about developing a personal network.

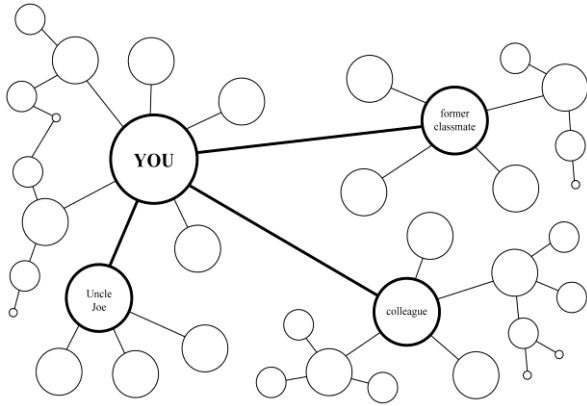
Developing Your Network



Begin with people you know, such as faculty members, friends, family and acquaintances. By expanding your network to include their friends and acquaintances, you will be amazed at the depth of your personal contact list. Don't forget that you can also greatly expand your network by conducting informational interviews.

Social media, such as LinkedIn, can also be a helpful tool for expanding your network. Be sure to review our *Online Social Networking* handout for more information.

Expanding Your Network



Keep in mind that people will be more willing to assist you if their good will is not abused. No one likes to be taken advantage of. Be very conscious of the use of peoples' time and express appropriate gratitude for their assistance.

Employment Agencies

There are numerous private employment agencies in the business of obtaining employment for their clients. Although you may want to investigate the possible use of these services, employment agencies tend not to be of much assistance to the entry-level job seeker. If you decide to seek the service of a private employment agency, first check their credibility through the Better Business Bureau (www.bbb.org) and previous clients. Before signing any agreement or contract, be certain you know exactly what type of agreement you are signing. Be especially conscious of the payment clause. Many agencies will expect a sizable fee for their service. In general, commercial employment agencies are not very effective for new college graduates. However, some temporary staffing agencies (or temp-to-hire) may be useful for finding co-op/internship positions that are often temporary in nature, anyway.

You also may find some useful job leads by checking with state employment service offices.

These state-funded "One Stop Centers" provide free services, though many of the jobs available do not require a college degree. In the past few years, these offices have joined together to form the American Job Search Network. The network includes a website where you can find job postings listed both nationally and by state. The website for the network is www.CareerOneStop.org

JOB-SEARCH PRESENTATION

To be successful in your job search, you must combine your knowledge of job-search strategies with effective forms of presentation. In the written form, (e.g., resumes, cover letters, thank-you letters, etc.) you must learn to write in a style that clearly presents your individual skills and potential. Attention-to-detail is extremely important. In interviews, you must present yourself as mature, interested, and confident. Developing proper presentation skills can make the difference between success and failure in your job search.

Resume Preparation

Your resume is a one-page document that outlines your skills, qualifications, interests, and accomplishments while providing a clear, concise description of your background. Your resume is your advertisement and often provides the all-important first impression for your potential employer. With this in mind, the importance of a well-organized, grammatically correct, and visually appealing resume is self-evident. See our *Resume Preparation Guide* for more details and examples.

Correspondence

As you go through the job-search process, there are a variety of letters you will need to develop: cover letters, follow-up letters, thank-you letters, etc. It is essential that each letter be individually tailored and written to make you stand out from your competition. This correspondence will reflect your communication skills, attention to detail, and professionalism. Many students benefit from assistance in developing their resume and job-search correspondence. There are a variety of resources available to you through Career Services. As you begin to develop your

“paperwork” and you desire individual help, our career advisors are available during scheduled walk-in hours and by appointment to answer your questions and provide instruction. Review our *Cover Letters and Other Job Search Correspondence Guide* for more information.

INTERVIEWING

Effective interviewing skills are essential to a successful job-search campaign. Proper execution of the strategies outlined above will lead you to the point of face-to-face interaction with your potential employer. In some cases, the first step is a 25-30 minute screening interview that gives you and the employer a chance to evaluate a possible “match” of interests. These interviews may be conducted on-campus, by phone, or via Skype. Before going into the interview, you must prepare by knowing yourself and learning about the organization with which you will be interviewing. This is a critical step that too many candidates overlook to their own detriment. Take time to re-examine your skills, abilities, interests, and career goals and determine how you, as a candidate, meet the employer's needs.

During the interview be positive and enthusiastic. Demonstrate to the interviewer your interest in the organization and in the position for which you are interviewing. Answer questions honestly and allow your personality to come out. Also, be certain to demonstrate your knowledge of the organization and prepare questions that will allow you to more thoroughly examine the organization and its opportunities.

After the interview, jot down for reference some major points brought out in the interview. This will help jog your memory during the next phase of interviews with the organization. Also, be certain to write a formal thank-you letter after each interview.

A successful screening interview will lead to subsequent follow-up interviews typically done at the place of employment. Some employers host multiple phases of interviews on site, with one or multiple people in each interview. This allows you to meet various people in the organization and involves an in-depth

evaluation on the part of both you and the employer. Depending on the employer, there may be anywhere from two to five interview stages until the point where a job offer is given. The process may also include testing or a day at the facility or in the field with someone in the position for which you are applying. No two interviewing processes are the same, but the goal in all interviews is to determine mutual interest. Thus, both you and the employer will be evaluating the “match” during each stage.

Like any other skill, proper interviewing techniques develop with time and practice. Read the *Interviewing Guide*, which is available in Career Services and on our website. This guide outlines specific interviewing strategies and contains a list of typical interview questions. After you read this booklet, you will want to practice answering some sample questions with a friend. For more in-depth instruction, take advantage of a mock interview that allows you to practice interviewing with a Career Services staff member. This mock interview can be digitally taped to allow you and the staff member to evaluate your performance and discuss tips for improvement. You can also practice online 24/7 by using InterviewStream software. With a webcam, you can answer and then view yourself answering sample questions anytime. Access InterviewStream on HireNKU.

Phone and Skype Interviews

Many employers use the phone and/or video-conferencing software to conduct screening interviews. Succeeding with these interviews takes the same careful preparation as in-person interviews. Read the *Interviewing Techniques Guide* for more details.

EVALUATING THE OFFER

After the interview process, if the employer determines an appropriate fit exists between you and the organization, a job offer will be extended. The job offer is normally made over the phone and is followed by a letter outlining the details of the offer. At this point, a time frame is usually set for your decision. Time frames vary, but a week to a month is typical. You should not be expected to make a decision on site. If you are not prepared to make a

decision in the specified time period, some negotiation and extensions are common. Just as you expect the employer to be sensitive to your situation, you should also be sensitive to the employer's need to properly project hires.

If you should receive multiple offers, you need to examine each one very closely in terms of what is important to you in a job (e.g., advancement, challenge, work environment, salary and benefits, security, etc.) It is a good idea also to take heed of your "gut" reaction. As you go through the many contacts you have with each employer, you will develop a feel for whether or not you will be comfortable in a given work environment. Trust your instincts, but don't be hesitant to seek guidance in evaluating various offers you may receive. There are two rating forms provided in Appendix E that can be used in evaluating and comparing job offers. Depending upon your career objective, you may want to add to or change the criteria on the checklists. The different formats of these two rating systems will provide different perspectives on your job choice.

It is best to accept an offer with a phone call and follow it up with a letter of confirmation. This letter should include the specifics of your offer and once again express your eagerness to begin your career with your future employer. As a courtesy, you should also write to the other employers you are currently in contact with to let them know that you have accepted an offer. Also, be certain to inform your network of contacts and your references that you have secured a position and thank them for their help.

SOME FINAL TIPS ON CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL JOB SEARCH

We hope this guide has answered some of your fundamental questions concerning the job search. However, at the same time, we hope it will encourage you to more fully explore various job-search strategies and the wealth of assistance available to you as you map out your plans. The final tips that follow may be particularly useful to you:

- Make an appointment with a career advisor to discuss a workable plan of action and timetable for your particular job search.
- Familiarize yourself with the services provided and the materials available in Career Services.
- Review our website and the multiple career and job-search websites that are linked to this site.
- Be sure to pay proper attention to the quality of your job-search paperwork. More than one job search has been scuttled because of a poorly constructed resume or improper correspondence.
- Remember the importance of follow-up. It is the single most important ingredient in a successful job campaign.
- Carefully review employer websites for vacancies and online application opportunities.
- Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Use a variety of job-search strategies concurrently.
- Take the time to develop appropriate career goals and focus your efforts on realistic job targets.

Finally, keep in mind the importance of maintaining a positive attitude as you go about the process. This will set the tone for a successful job-search campaign and assure that you present yourself in the best possible light. GOOD LUCK!

WEBSITE

For additional information, please refer to our website at: <http://careerservices.nku.edu>

For assistance in using the website, check with Career Services UC 225, 859-572-5680 or email careerservices@nku.edu.

Appendix A
INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS
Sample Questions

How did you get into this field?

Which majors are most successful in securing employment in this field?

How would you describe a typical day/week on the job?

What are the most satisfying aspects of your job?

What frustrations or drawbacks do you experience in this position?

How would you describe the work environment (work pressure, deadlines, routines, new activities, etc.)?

How often do you travel and for how long?

What percentage of your time is spent interacting with people? Writing reports? Reading job-related publications?

How much contact do you have with people outside of your organization? What is your relationship to these people?

How does your career affect your lifestyle (the amount of work required, your material needs, and time for leisure, travel, outside interests, and family)?

What are the latest developments and primary issues in this field today?

How do you see the jobs in the field changing over the next five to ten years?

What educational degrees, licenses, or other credentials are required for entry and advancement in your kind of work? Are there any that are preferred or helpful, although not required?

What are the trade/professional groups to which you belong and which do you find most beneficial to your work? Do any of them assist college students interested in internships or entry-level positions in your field?

Which other career areas do you see as being related to your work?

What personal characteristics, personality traits, values, interests, etc., do you believe are necessary or helpful for success and satisfaction in this occupation (or organization)?

How do people usually learn about job openings in your field?

What do you wish you had known about this career field before you entered it? What about this employer? How is the organization structured? What kinds of entry-level jobs are available within organizations like this?

Do you have a formal training program? Could you please describe it to me? What percentage of training occurs in the classroom? On the job?

What are the typical career paths within your organization?

Are there any books, periodicals, or websites that you would recommend?

What advice would you give to a young person entering your field?

Appendix B
INTRODUCTION LETTER

814 S. Main Street, #5
Highland Heights, KY 41076
November 10, 20XX

Ms. Janet Smith
Vice President, Marketing
XYZ Corporation
8500 Martingale Road
Ourtown, OH 45999

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am currently a sophomore at Northern Kentucky University and am seeking information about a variety of occupational fields that interest me. A career advisor at NKU's Career Services recommended that I conduct some informational interviews to learn more about employment opportunities in these fields.

More than other disciplines, the field of marketing appeals to me because it seems to be an occupation at the forefront of our society. I have been researching various positions and tasks involved in this occupation and now would like to talk with someone who is actually working in this field.

Ms. Smith, getting firsthand information from accomplished people such as you would help me make a wise and knowledgeable decision about my career choice. I would certainly appreciate any information and insights you could provide.

I will call you next week in hopes of arranging a meeting at your convenience. I look forward to the possibility of meeting with you to discuss career options in marketing.

Sincerely,

[NOTE: if printed, leave 3 blank lines and sign your name under "Sincerely"]

Victor E. Viking

Appendix C
TELEPHONE SCRIPT

TUESDAY MORNING, 8:30 a.m.
Ring, Ring, Ring

Secretary: "XYZ Corporation, Mrs. Jackson speaking, may I help you?"

Victor: "Yes, Mrs. Jackson. This is Victor Viking. I am a student at Northern Kentucky University. May I speak with Ms. Smith please?"

(Typical Block)

Secretary: "Ms. Smith is in a meeting now, may I take a message?"

Victor: "Can you tell me when she might be available?"

Secretary: "She should be available this afternoon. May I take your phone number and ask her to call you when she is free?"

Victor: "Since my schedule is somewhat hectic today, I will call back later this afternoon. Thank you."

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, 2:00 p.m.
Ring, Ring, Ring

Secretary: "XYZ Corporation, Mrs. Jackson speaking, may I help you?"

Victor: "Mrs. Jackson, this is Victor Viking, from Northern Kentucky University. We spoke this morning. Is Ms. Smith available now?"

(Blocking Efforts)

Secretary: "Just one moment, please. . . Ms. Smith is out for the rest of the day. May I take a message, Victor?"

Victor: "Thank you, Mrs. Jackson. I am currently researching the marketing field as a possible career choice, and would like to meet with Ms. Smith to ask a few questions about her experiences in this field. Could you tell me when would be a good time to contact her?"

Secretary: "Ms. Smith will be in her office Thursday morning around 9:00. If you will give me your number, I will leave her a message to call you."

Victor: "Thank you, could you please let her know that I phoned again and that I will call her back Thursday morning? I appreciate your helpfulness."

TELEPHONE SCRIPT, CONTINUED

THURSDAY MORNING, 9:00 a.m.

Ring, Ring, Ring

Secretary: "XYZ Corporation, Mrs. Jackson speaking, may I help you?"

Victor: "Hello Mrs. Jackson, this is Victor Viking again. I spoke with you Tuesday about meeting with Ms. Smith. Would it be possible to speak with her now?"

Secretary: "Just one moment please, I will put your call through."

Ms. Smith: "Hello, Janet Smith speaking."

Victor: "Ms. Smith, my name is Victor Viking, and I am a student at Northern Kentucky University. I recently sent you a letter highlighting my interest in your career field. I am currently researching marketing as a career choice, and would like to gather more information from someone in the field. If possible, I would like to speak with you for a half-hour or so about your position in the field of marketing."

Ms. Smith: "Well, we are not hiring right now."

Victor: "That's okay. At this point I am not looking for a job, just some firsthand information about the marketing field. The meeting should last no more than 30 minutes."

Ms. Smith: "In that case, I might be able to fit you in next week sometime. . . . How about next Thursday at 11:00?"

Victor: "Next Thursday at 11:00 will be fine. Thank you very much. I am looking forward to meeting you and discussing your experiences in the field of marketing."

Appendix D
THANK-YOU LETTER

814 S. Main Street, #5
Highland Heights, KY 41076
November 28, 201X

Ms. Janet Smith
Vice President, Marketing
XYZ Corporation
8500 Martingale Road
Ourtown, OH 45999

Dear Ms. Smith:

I would like to thank you once again for the information you provided on Thursday. Your insights on the field of marketing were extremely helpful in clarifying my career goals.

As you suggested, I made an appointment with Mark Lowry at Marketing, Inc., to discuss his career in marketing research. I appreciate this referral and am sure it will be very beneficial. Also, thank you for recommending *Sales and Marketing Management* magazine to me. I'm looking forward to reading it.

Again, thank you for your information and time.

Sincerely,

[NOTE: if printed, leave 3 blank lines and sign your name under "Sincerely"]

Victor E. Viking

Appendix E

JOB OFFER CHECKLIST

Directions: Using the following list of questions as a guide, reflect on the suitability of your various job offers. Use the chart at the right to compare and contrast your two most viable job alternatives. Check the appropriate response for each job offer, add your totals, and indicate them at the bottom. Draw upon this information as you weigh your decision.

	Offer #1		Offer #2	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. <i>Will the job use the skills you want to use in your work?</i>				
2. <i>Will the environment be conducive to your productivity?</i>				
3. <i>Will you be able to establish compatible working relationships with your colleagues?</i>				
4. <i>Will the job offer sufficient variety and stimulation?</i>				
5. <i>Will you have the opportunity to continue to learn and grow professionally?</i>				
6. <i>Will the formal and informal lines of communication be open for feedback and suggestions?</i>				
7. <i>Will the purposes of the organization be compatible with your values and priorities?</i>				
8. <i>Will the salary meet your basic needs?</i>				
9. <i>Will the opportunity for upward mobility exist within the organization?</i>				
10. <i>Will you "feel good" about your job?</i>				
11. <i>Other criteria:</i> _____ _____				
TOTALS				

Appendix E (continued)
RATING YOUR JOB OFFERS

Directions: Rate each job factor listed below by circling one of the scores (1 = Poor, 2 = Average, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent). At the bottom of the grid, subtotal your scores in each column and add your subtotals for the total score.

Job Factor	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
Use of Your Skills	4	3	2	1
Responsibility Level	4	3	2	1
On-the-Job Training	4	3	2	1
Coworkers	4	3	2	1
Supervisors	4	3	2	1
Working Conditions	4	3	2	1
Evaluation/Feedback on Your Work	4	3	2	1
Commuting Distance	4	3	2	1
Advancement Possibilities	4	3	2	1
Reputation of Organization	4	3	2	1
Location of Job	4	3	2	1
Subtotals	+	+	+	

TOTAL

*Scoring**

- 44 – 41 Excellent Job Offer (the kind most people dream of)
- 40 – 34 Good Job Offer (better than most people can hope for)
- 33 – 28 Average Job Offer (most job offers fall here)
- 27 – 20 Poor Job Offer (accept only if nothing else comes along)
- 19 – 0 Dismal Job Offer (forget it)

*Some job factors are more important (or have higher priority) than others. For some people, for instance, the “Use of Your Skills” may be more important than “Location of Job.” In this rating sheet each job factor was weighted equally. When evaluating your score you may also want to weigh these factors in terms of their importance to you.

(Both evaluations in Appendix E excerpted from For Your Action by W. Wallace, C. Wagner, & N. Siska)