

The New Graduate Job Search Guide

Essential tips for landing a job after college



CONGRATS!

You're officially a college graduate (or will be soon). Those years of studying, taking tests and pulling all-nighters writing papers are **OVER**. Now it's time for the working world— and it's offering a wealth of opportunities, potential for serious professional growth, and most importantly... getting **PAID!**

Finding your first job doesn't have to be a long, complicated process. There are tons of tools and resources available to new grads to help them discover job opportunities. Many companies are interested in taking on young professionals each year who are energetic and eager to work and learn.

This New Graduate Job Search Guide will give you the best chances of finding and landing your first job out of college!





Part 1 | Before You Begin the Job Hunt

Organizing Your Job Search

To get the most out of your job search, it's essential to be organized so you can effectively manage the sometimes chaotic process.



Define your ideal job

List attributes and descriptors of your ideal job, such as a focus on social media, a job located in Chicago, a job at Disney or to have the title "Network Test Engineer." These can become keywords once you begin searching.



Keep a calendar & schedule

Keep track of your daily plans, upcoming interviews, follow-ups with employers and other appointments with the help of a calendar.



Manage contacts

Track who you meet during your job search, note their contact information, company, and what they've done to help in your search. You'll want this information for "thank you" notes later.



File management

If you create different resumes and cover letters you'll find yourself with multiple versions on your computer. Be sure to organize your application materials into separate folders and make sure your naming strategy makes sense.



Use email folders to track progress

Once you start applying for jobs, you'll want to keep your email communications neatly organized as well. To stay on top of your game, create folders for your emails that follow the flow of your job search process.

A little organization can go a long, long way when it comes to keeping track of your job search.





Part 2 | The Job Search and Application Process

Compiling Your Resume

New graduates tend to find themselves in a catch-22: you need experience to get a job, but you need a job to get experience. You might have more experience than you think. Look back on anything you've done that relates to the positions you're interested in— coursework, volunteer opportunities and even summer jobs. Then, showcase this past experience on your resume.

While there are a number of different types of resumes, the chronological resume is preferred today. If you don't have a ton of relevant experience place education at the top of your resume. However, once you have work experience move it to the top of the resume and move education to the end.



Mary Whitticker
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Education
San Jose State College, San Jose, CA
B.S. Business, GPA 3.9

Experience
Retail Development Intern, Macy's 05/2010 - 09/2010

- Developed social media marketing plan
- Analyzed business to determine cost-saving opportunities
- Coordinated office space and events for department

Retail Associate, Nordstrom 07/2009 - 08/2009

- Highest commission earner in Men's clothing department
- Worked with tailors and seamstresses for fittings
- Scheduled private shopping appointments

Purchasing Intern, Orchard Supply Hardware 06/2008 - 09/2008

- Assisted in supply/demand planning and distribution
- Assisted with day-to-day vendor contact and follow up

Additional Skills

- Proficient with Microsoft Office
- Some HTML and CSS experience



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Writing High-Impact Resumes and Cover Letters

A resume is a marketing brochure for the most valuable product on the planet ... *you!* Your cover letter is a chance to explain why you are the best candidate for the position. Customize the letter to each employer's individual needs and convince them that you're qualified.

Focus on accomplishments

Show what you specifically accomplished. For example, rather than "Performed fundraising for a children's charity," say "Raised \$30,000 for epilepsy research by establishing a new fundraising auction that drew over 5,000 people."

Personalize

Address the cover letter to the person who is doing the hiring. You can find their name on LinkedIn or by calling the company.

Keep it short

HR professionals and recruiters can receive hundreds of resumes for a single opening. So limit your cover letter to just two or three high-impact paragraphs and your resume to one page.

Proofread! Proofread! Proofread!

For a fresh perspective your resume and cover letter should not include a single typo, misspelling or grammatical error. Send them to your friends and family to help you proofread.

Follow directions

If you're asked to include your cover letter in the body of an email, send it in the body of the email. If you're asked to answer a few questions in the cover letter, answer them.

Proffread
Proofred
Proofread



Tailoring Resumes and Cover Letters

Don't overlook tailoring your resume and cover letter. Carefully study the job description. Since employers list the exact requirements of the role here, your cover letter and resume should highlight how you are the perfect match.

Here's how:

Language

Read the job description thoroughly and modify your resume and cover letter to match the language used in the job listing. Recruiters often look for specific keywords and phrases in the resumes and cover letters they receive.

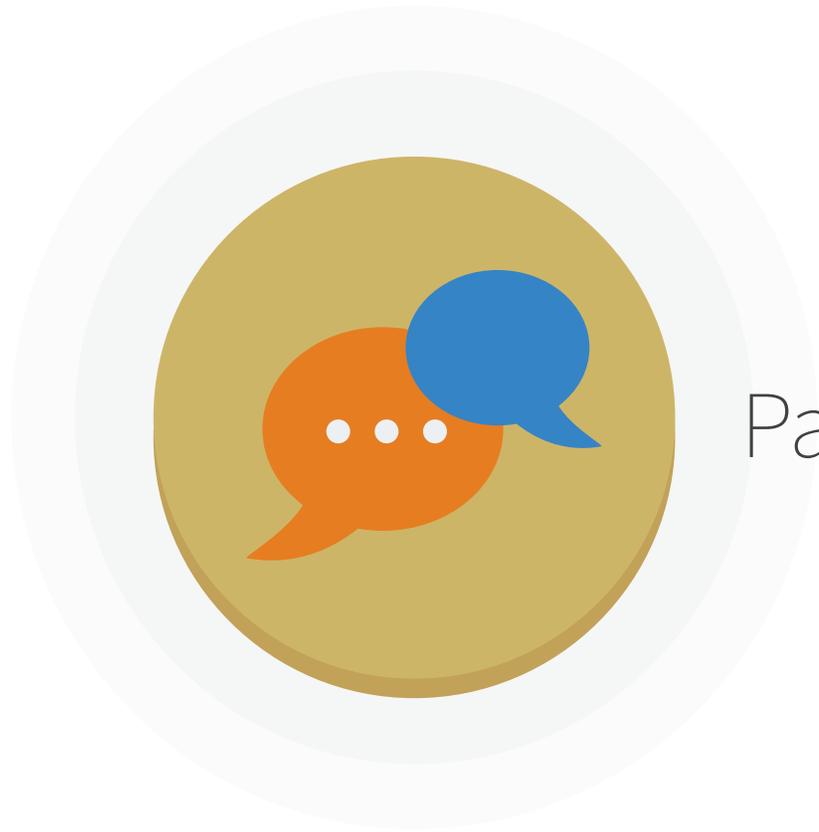
Qualifications

Emphasize your qualifications by specifically calling out how you fit the requirements of the position.

Ordering

Employers will put the most important requirements at the beginning of the job description, so rearrange your skills to have those requirements highlighted first.





Part 3 | Acing the Job Interview

Acing Phone Interviews

Employers often use phone interviews as a way to screen candidates for in-person interviews. These tips will help you ace the phone interview and lead the way to an in-person interview.

Before a potential phone interview make sure to:

- Keep a resume on hand
- Have a pen and paper handy to take down notes, etc.
- Practice answering some typical phone interview questions



During the call, make sure you treat it like a real interview!

- Find a quiet place to take the call that is free of distractions
- Speak as if the person is right in front of you
- Don't chew gum, eat or smoke while on the call



Questions to Ask the Interviewer

A successful interview should be a two-way conversation where the interviewer learns more about your qualifications, and you learn if the position and the company are a good fit for you.

Some basic guidelines on asking questions in an interview:

- Come prepared with questions to ask
- Ask open-ended questions to learn about how things work at the company
- Ask questions that show you researched the company
- Let the interviewer initiate discussions around salary and benefits

Some sample questions to get you started:

- What would be my first project?
- What advancements are available for this position?
- Can you tell me about the company culture?
- When will a hiring decision be made?
- How would you define “success” in this role?

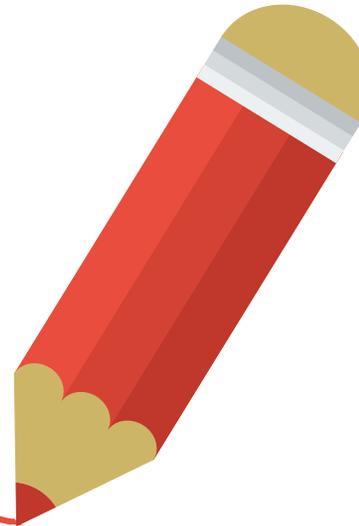


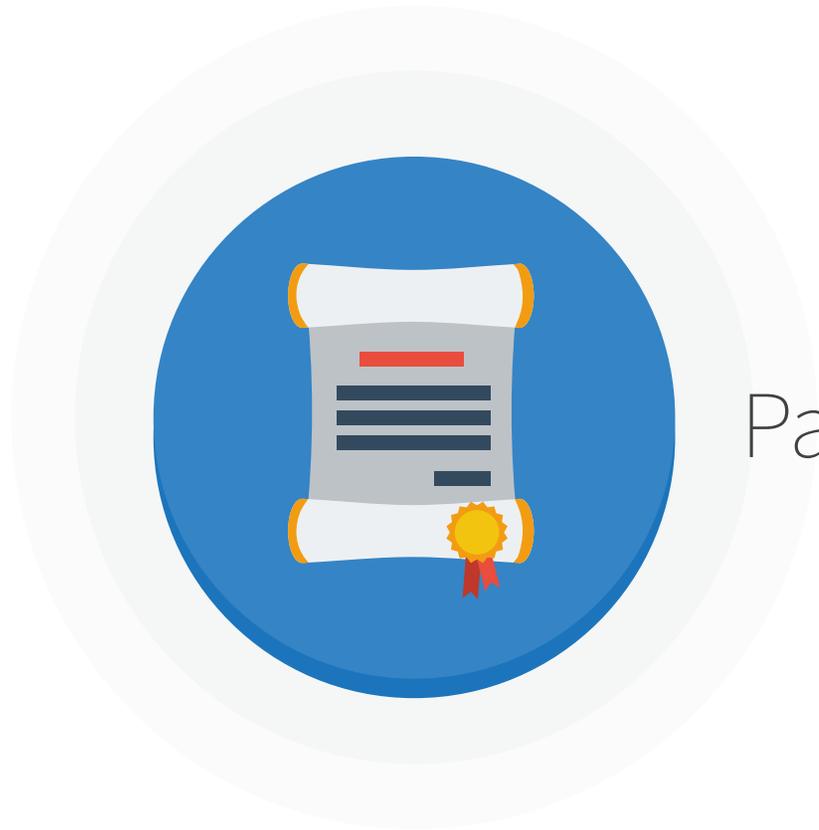
Following Up After the Interview

After an interview, your follow-up can make or break your chances of getting the job. This extra step doesn't take much time, but it can be a great way to stand out from other applicants. Some hiring managers won't even hire a candidate that didn't write a thank you note.

Here are some interview follow-up tips:

- During the interview ask for the interviewer's business card so you have their contact information.
- Send a personal email within 24 hours thanking each person for taking the time to speak with you.
- Highlight your qualifications and reiterate your interest in the job.
- Ask any questions you forgot to raise during the interview.
- Keep it short.
- Proofread!





Part 4 | The Offer and First Days

A Guide to Reference Checks

Reference checks are a common part of the hiring process and serve two main purposes:



Verifying your previous employment



Qualifying your work performance

Employers want to make fully educated decisions about whether a candidate is right for the job before they offer them a position.

- Ask potential references for their permission in advance, and make sure you have their correct contact information.
- Give each reference a list of talking points describing the position and giving insight into the kinds of questions they may be asked.
- Keep your references updated on your progress. Tell them which companies might contact them.
- Thank your references for their support throughout your search.



Follow these guidelines and you'll receive much more impressive recommendations from your references.



Evaluating and Accepting the Offer

After many hours of applying for jobs, attending networking events, preparing for interviews and talking to potential employers, you might be ready to start celebrating in the wake of any job offer you receive. Here are a few steps that you still need to take before accepting the offer.

Once you receive an offer, it's important to ask the following three questions:

1

When do you need an answer by?

Most companies will usually give you at least 24 hours or a few days to get back to them.

2

Can you send me a copy of the offer and benefits package?

Have the employer send you the entire package for your review to make sure you and the employer are on the same page.

3

Who should I speak with if I have questions about the benefits package?

It might make more sense to speak with someone in HR if you have a question about the healthcare plan, for instance.



Things to Consider:



Job Responsibilities, Title

Are you willing to perform the requirements for the job, does the job have a suitable amount of responsibility for your experience?



Compensation

Is the pay what you were expecting? Will you be able to pay your bills? Is the salary in the typical range for someone with your experience in your field and location?



Benefits Package

Does the company provide the medical insurance that you would like—or perhaps need?



Company Culture

Does the company provide a workplace setting and company culture where you will be happy and successful? Are the company's values compatible with your own? If not, you might consider continuing your search to find a company that is a better fit.



Make a Great First Impression at Your First Job

It can be tough to find a job as a new grad, so congratulations on finding your first job out of college! If in the first few weeks you feel overwhelmed in your new position—don't stress!

Here are tips for making a great first impression at your first job.

Don't be late!

Plan to arrive at your new place of work on time or even a little early on your first day.

Dress appropriately

Dress professionally at first (think interview attire), and by the end of the first week you'll know whether or not more casual attire is accepted.

Ask questions and take notes

Until you know the ins and outs of your new position, ask plenty of questions and take notes!

Take initiative

Ask what you can do to help the team—and volunteer to complete or contribute to projects. Go above and beyond your initial position's requirements to stand out and take initiative.

Don't be late!
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Starting a new job can be overwhelming and even a little intimidating.
But with these tips you'll be ready for your new position on day one.
Start your job search on Simply Hired today!

www.simplyhired.com

Good luck!