

career
development manitoba



A GUIDE TO
**CONDUCTING
AN EFFECTIVE
JOB SEARCH**

YOUR **FUTURE** YOUR **WAY**

Manitoba 

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Introduction	3
About This Guide.....	3
1. Preparing For Your Job Search	4
Understanding the Cycle of Job Loss.....	5
The Importance of Optimism	5
Keep Your Eyes Open.....	5
Job Seeker’s Checklist.....	7
Recording Your Job Search	8
2. Networking	9
Networking Effectively.....	11
Networking Etiquette	12
Social Networking Sites.....	13
Elevator Statements.....	14
3. Researching the Job Market	17
Finding Employers	17
Informational Interviews	19
Advertised Job Search Resources	21
Tips for Searching Online	21
The Hidden Job Market.....	22
Contacting Employers Regarding Unadvertised Jobs	23
Can’t Find Your Dream Job? Consider Creating It!.....	24
4. Gaining Relevant Work Experience	25
Volunteering	25
Job Shadowing	25
Work Internship.....	26
How to Get Started	26
5. Job Search Tips	27
Summary	28
Appendix A: Informational Interview Questions	29
Appendix B: Potential Employer Contact Sheet	32
Appendix C: Recording Your Job Search Worksheet	33
Appendix D: Guide Links	34

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Introduction

About This Guide

This guide will help support you through the job search process. You will learn how to prepare for a job search, research jobs, network and negotiate offers. Several symbols are used in this guide to help highlight key points, suggestions, cautions, tips and examples.

 EXAMPLE	indicates an example
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 REMEMBER	outlines items to remember
--	----------------------------

 ACTIVITY	introduces an activity to complete
---	------------------------------------

 AVOID	indicates things to avoid
--	---------------------------

1

Preparing For Your Job Search

Job search can be a continuous process for people today, for many different reasons:

- looking for change and new opportunities
- wanting to develop your skills beyond where they are now
- looking ahead to potential lay offs
- moving to a new town, city or country
- changing occupations
- dealing with a job loss

You may be looking for work because you're ready for new challenges or you may currently be unemployed. Whatever circumstances lead you to this point, it's important to take charge of your job search. Even though it's your responsibility to find new work, there are lots of resources to support you. This guide is one of them.



REMEMBER

Your local Employment Manitoba office has staff and resources to help you with your job search. To find the office nearest you call 1-866-332-5077 or go to: www.gov.mb.ca/employment/emp_centre_locations.html. (Appendix B)



REMEMBER

Visit Manitoba's Career Development Gateway: Your single window to career development information on programs, services and resources.
www.manitoba.ca/careerdevelopment

Understanding the Cycle of Job Loss

If you've lost your job, it's important to know that people feel many different emotions when they are out of work. Feelings may include:

- shock
- relief
- sadness
- excitement
- frustration
- lack of energy
- hopelessness
- determination

Feelings may be very different from one person to another. Your own feelings may depend on:

- How you lost your job.
- How long you've been out of work.
- Whether you can provide for your family or others who depend on you.

Many people who lose their jobs couldn't have done anything differently. It's not their fault! People lose jobs because businesses close, the economy shifts, or technology changes how work is done. If you were a good worker and lost your job, you may be very frustrated. However, it's important to stay optimistic and keep your eyes open for new opportunities.

The Importance of Optimism¹

Optimism involves staying positive and being confident that things will work out. It is a factor in both career success and job satisfaction and an important quality to maintain during a job search. If you feel discouraged, try these tips for staying positive:

- Practice positive self-talk.
 - Tell yourself "I will find a job."
- Believe in yourself.
- Ask others for positive feedback on skills and qualifications.
 - Ask "what am I good at?"
- Focus on the positive contributions you will bring to an organization.
- Look for work in a growing industry.
- Be flexible and open to new opportunities.
- Get assistance from a job finding club or Employment Manitoba - www.manitoba.ca/employment/emp_centre_locations.html

Keep Your Eyes Open

You might be hoping to get a very specific job. However, when you're looking for work, it's important to be flexible and open to all possibilities. Lots of people seem to end up in jobs by chance or because of a lucky break. However, if you look deeper you'll usually find that the person was actively in the right place at the right time. People who are open to possibilities tend to be connected to other people. In turn, those connections introduce work or learning opportunities, or lead to new interests or passions.

¹ www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/19/64/cb.pdf, p. 117 - 124

To increase your chances for a lucky break, take part in activities that get you around different people. Consider:

- taking a class
- travelling
- coaching a sports team
- participating in community activities
- taking time to talk to the people around you

Be curious about new experiences and actively try to increase chance encounters. You might find interesting work that you'd never thought of doing!

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started."

~ Mark Twain²

¹ http://thinkexist.com/quotation/the_secret_of_getting_ahead_is_getting_started/216812.html

Job Seeker's Checklist

Before you begin your job search, make sure you have everything you need. This will help you to avoid setbacks or missed opportunities when you do get a good lead.



ACTIVITY

Use the following checklist to get organized before beginning your job search. Check the box for each item you've prepared.

Do you have...

A social insurance number?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – Contact Service Canada at 1-800-622-6232 (www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sc/sin/index.shtml)
A work permit if you are a non-Canadian?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – Contact Service Canada at 1-800-622-6232 (www.cic.gc.ca/)
A permanent residents card?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – Contact Citizenship and Immigration Canada at 1-888-242-2100 (www.cic.gc.ca/)
A permit from the Employment Standards Branch, if you are younger than 16?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – Contact Employment Standards at 1-800-821-4307 (www.gov.mb.ca/labour/standards/forms.html)
A cover letter?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – See A Guide to Writing Cover Letters
A resume?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – See A Guide to Writing Resumes
Access to newspapers, computer, Internet?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – Visit your local library or Employment Manitoba Office
A network of contacts for job leads?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – See the Networking section of this guide
List of informed work references?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No - See A Guide to Outstanding Interviews
A job search focus?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – See the Researching the Job Market section of this guide
A reliable way to be contacted (phone or email)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – See A Guide to Writing Resumes
A polite greeting on your voice mail/ answering machine?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – See A Guide to Completing Applications
A safe place to store your resume electronically and on paper?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – See A Guide to Writing Resumes

² http://thinkexist.com/quotation/the_secret_of_getting_ahead_is_getting_started/216812.html

You may want to consider developing a portfolio for your job search. It can help you prepare for interviews and assist with targeting your resume and cover letter. See the Portfolio Guide for more information.

Recording Your Job Search



ACTIVITY

You'll likely apply to several different positions over a short period of time. Use the Recording Your Job Search worksheet to track the positions you apply to. Use the "Follow Up Notes" section to record:

- Follow-up phone calls or emails.
- Meetings with employers.

An extra worksheet has been included in **Appendix C**.

Date	Position	Contact Information	Follow Up Notes

2

Networking

A Network is a group of people, from all parts of your life, who can help you with job search and career planning. Networks are important; everybody has one. About 80 per cent of jobs come from networking.



EXAMPLE

People in your network may include:³

- teachers
- neighbours
- family friends
- current or previous employers and co-workers
- team members
- professionals (ex: doctors, dentists, employment counsellors)
- community leaders

Developing your network is a lifelong activity; it began long before you started your job search. You have several groups of people in your life which make up your own personal network. To expand and strengthen your network:⁴

- keep in regular contact with people
- help people when they need it or ask for it
- attend events to meet new people
- join a club or professional association
- volunteer
- contact people when you know something that may interest or benefit them
- connect on special occasions (ex: sending out an annual "Happy New Year" email or newsletter)

To add to your network at face-to-face events:⁵

- speak to everyone you know
- approach small groups and introduce yourself
- hand out business cards
- ask others for their business cards

³ www.emploisetc.gc.ca/eng/categories.jsp?category_id=370&crumb=107

⁴ www.emploisetc.gc.ca/eng/categories.jsp?category_id=370&crumb=107

⁵ <http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=1321>



ACTIVITY

People in your network can help you discover job leads. Use the table provided to list people in your network and their contact information. Let these people know that you're looking for work.

Name	Contact Information

Networking Effectively

Many contacts in your network know you well and can speak about your skills and abilities. To ensure they are helpful, keep people up-to-date with your job search goals and activities. Also, stay current with your network contacts' needs and goals so that you can be helpful in return.

To get the most out of your network, be specific with your requests. Let them know that you're looking for work, what type of work you're looking for, and what you hope they can do to help (ex: introduce you to a contact in a company that interests you). Don't expect people to respond to your requests immediately. However, if you don't hear back after a few days, it's fine to follow up with a polite reminder phone call or email.



EXAMPLE

Jennifer Meyer:

Jennifer recently graduated with a Computer Systems Technology diploma. She has developed an extensive network including instructors, family, friends, fellow students, her practicum supervisor and co-workers. Jennifer is currently looking for job leads and is interested in working for a good organization. She decided that the best way to find job leads is to email people in her network. Jennifer wrote: "I'm looking for a Junior Assistant Network Administrator position at Charge University; do you know who the best person is to contact?"

Use contacts in your network to:

- Get connected with other people who can help you.
- Personally introduce you to hiring managers or employers.
- Learn more about a specific occupation or industry.
- Act as references and referrals.



EXAMPLE

Here are some sample scripts to help you prepare for contacting members of your network.

By phone:

Hi. It's _____ [your name]. How are you? I'm looking for a new job as a _____ [insert name of occupation] and wondered if you know of anyone who might be hiring?"

Or

I'm looking for a new job as a _____ [insert name of occupation] and wondered if you can suggest anyone I should talk to about job vacancies in this field.

By email:

Hi _____ [insert contact name]:

How are you? I was wondering if you had some time to get together and talk? I'm looking for a new job as a _____ [insert name of job here] and was hoping I could talk to you about possible places to apply. If you have any job leads or know of anyone who I should talk to, I'd really appreciate your help.

Thanks,

_____ [your name]

After getting help from contacts in your network, always be sure to follow up with your thanks.

Networking Etiquette

When networking (ex: at events, on the phone or online, or just meeting someone for a coffee) always be professional. A rule of thumb is to behave just as you would at a job interview. Always:

- be on time
- be confident
- respect cultural differences
- be polite and respectful to everyone
- keep conversations and small talk appropriate and professional

For in-person networking, also:

- dress appropriately
- avoid using perfume or cologne
- keep your breath fresh
- refrain from alcohol
- avoid smoking



REMEMBER

Effective networking is not a one-sided relationship. Make sure that you help others in your network and don't just rely on them when you need something.

Social Networking Sites

Online networking, through sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, is another popular networking option. However, there are special guidelines for e-networking:



REMEMBER

- Create a new professional account for job seeking.
- Use an updated and professional photo.
- Be cautious of security settings; limit who can post to your profile.
- Keep your network engaged by updating your status, uploading pictures from your portfolio, or posting links to samples of your work.
- Keep contact information up-to-date.
- The "Info" or "About Me" sections should include information about the kind of job(s) you are looking for.



AVOID

- Providing too much information (ex: if you work from home, you may not want your home address available to the public)
- Posting inappropriate content (ex: personal photos, unprofessional comments, non-job related content)
- Accepting "friend requests" or requests to be connected from people you don't know

It's also a good idea to occasionally search for your own name online (ex: using Google) to see what your online presence says about you.



EXAMPLE

Some examples of popular online networking sites include:

- Facebook www.facebook.com/
- LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/
- Twitter <http://twitter.com/>
- MySpace <http://ca.myspace.com/>

Elevator Statements

An elevator statement is a quick way of sharing information about you with other people. Your statement should talk about your career goals, accomplishments and qualifications. Be brief - 30 seconds or less.

Why an elevator statement? Because if you got into an elevator with someone who asked you what you do or what you want to do, your statement would clearly answer the question before you left the elevator. An elevator statement can be used anywhere, any time (not just in elevators); if used well, it could open the door to more conversation.

Having an elevator statement is good insurance. You will be ready to talk to anyone at any time about who you are and what you are looking for. There's nothing worse than walking away from an opportunity wishing you'd presented yourself better! With a good elevator statement, you won't miss opportunities to let people know about your skills and the type of work you're interested in.



EXAMPLE

Gabriela Tomagan:

Gabriela moved to Canada with her husband last year so that he could begin a new job in Winnipeg. Since she arrived here, Gabriela's been upgrading her English skills and is now looking for a job. To help with her job search, she has been attending networking events.

Gabriela will be attending the Canadian Chemistry Conference next week. Gabriela's networking plan for the conference is to say hello and introduce herself to as many people as possible. Gabriela knows she will have limited time for each conversation, so she has developed an elevator statement to make what she does say memorable.

"Hi, I'm Gabriela Tomagan. I just moved here from the Philippines where I worked as a lead researcher for a pharmaceutical company. I'm looking for a research position in Canada. My passion is science and I have a PhD in chemistry. Right now, I'm working on developing my Canadian network and searching for a full-time position. I'm interested in learning about any local pharmaceutical or cosmetic companies that may be hiring. Do you happen to know of any? Also, here is my business card; I've written what I'm looking for on the back. If you think of any opportunities after the conference, please do contact me."

Darel McDonald:

Darel recently lost his job as a general labourer. He's the main earner in his family and is anxious to get back to work. Darel prepared an elevator statement to make sure he's ready for any opportunity. He'll use it when he drops off resumes or chats with people at social events; he also hopes to use it in an interview.

"Hi, I'm Darel McDonald. Right now I'm looking for a full-time position where I can apply my skills and experience. I have over 20 years experience as a general labourer but was recently laid off. I'm fluent in Cree, which has been a real asset in my previous jobs. If you know of anyone who's hiring, or might be, I'd love to know."



ACTIVITY

To create your own elevator statement, answer the following questions:

1. What type of work are you looking for? What is your career goal?

2. What have you accomplished so far to meet that goal? (ex: education, awards)

3. What else do you need to attain that goal? What are your next steps?

3

Researching the Job Market

Finding Employers

There are countless places that may have work for you. Attempting to find work without a clear focus can result in frustration and wasted time. If you don't have a clear focus yet, use **A Guide to Planning Your Career** to discover jobs that will use your knowledge, skills and abilities and set you on your preferred career path.

Once you have a job focus, create a list of potential employers. To get started, you'll find some great sources of information using the following:

- Manitoba Companies Directory
 - Search Manitoba companies by name or sector
 - <http://db.itm.gov.mb.ca/MBIS/MCD.NSF/if?readform&ID=CompaniesHome>
- Labour Market Information
 - Search for employers by occupation and then geographic location
<http://workingincanada.gc.ca>
- Yellow pages
 - Use the index to locate headings for specific businesses
 - Ex: If you are looking for a health care aide position, look for headings like hospitals, personal care homes, health care services
- Want ads
- Signs on the highway
- Signs in shop windows
- People that you know



ACTIVITY

To help you focus your job search further, create a list that prioritizes your search. Use the space provided to create a “top ten” list of places that you want to work. You may find it easier to cluster your choices (see the left column subheadings – you may have three-to-four options listed for each category; for example, your “Top Three” listed jobs may all be in the “first choice” category.

Where I most want to work (first choice)	1.
	2.
	3.
Where I wouldn't mind working (second choice)	4.
	5.
	6.
	7.
Where I'd consider working if the first and second choices don't work out (third choice)	8.
	9.
	10.
	11.

Informational Interviews

Informational interviews are a good way to research jobs and employers. The focus is to gather information, not to try to get hired. An informational interview is very different from a job interview in that you arrange the meeting, ask the questions, and make the decision about how to proceed. Try to interview someone who's an industry expert or who works in the position you're interested in.

Informational interviews usually last 15 – 30 minutes. They can take place in person or over the phone. Although you likely have lots of questions, you'll probably only have time to ask 10 – 15 of them. If some of the answers are long, you may not have time to ask all the questions you prepared, so make sure that you ask the ones that are most important to you first.

Use your network to get leads on good people to interview. When you follow up with these leads, be sure to connect yourself to the contact in your network that recommended them (ex: “I play softball with Jack Jameson and he suggested I contact you”). Ask the person you're interviewing what time of day is most convenient and try to work with his or her schedule. Be sure to prepare yourself for the interview, knowing in advance which questions you plan to ask.



REMEMBER

For a list of informational interview questions, see **Appendix A**.



EXAMPLE

Frank Peters:

Frank was injured in a workplace accident about six months ago and can't meet the physical demands of his former job. He was a heavy equipment mechanic for 22 years and now needs to change occupations. Frank has scheduled an informational interview with an HR Trainer. He's already done research on the employment outlook for this type of job and knows the average salary and the type of training and education required. In his informational interview, Frank wants to learn more about the day-to-day aspects of the job. Frank expects the interview to last about 20 minutes and has prepared the following 10 questions to ask.

1. What does someone in your occupation do on a day-to-day or weekly basis?
2. Does a typical worker have a set schedule or are the hours flexible?
3. What do you like most/least about it (values satisfied, barriers to satisfaction)?
4. What are the greatest pressures and strains in your work?
5. What do you consider to be the major rewards of this job?
6. Do you work a lot of overtime?
7. What is your level of freedom to solve problems and take action?
8. What steps, besides meeting educational requirements, are necessary to "break into" this occupation? For example, could I join an association, volunteer, or work part-time?
9. What advice would you give to someone considering this occupation or field?
10. Can you think of any other people who would be good to talk to?

Advertised Job Search Resources

Employers may advertise jobs when they want to attract a broad audience or fill a specialized position. Jobs could be advertised:

- in the newspaper
- in a trade publication (ex: industry journal)
- in a community newsletter
- online
- in store windows
- in Employment Centre
- in community employment assistance centres

The following table provides an alphabetized list of recommended resources to use in your search for advertised jobs.

Career Jet	www.careerjet.ca/
Spectrum Job Search	http://www.spectrumjobsearch.com/manitoba.htm
Job Bank	http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/
Government of Canada	http://jobs-emplois.gc.ca/index-eng.htm
Manitoba Career Development Gateway	www.manitoba.ca/careerdevelopment
Manitoba Government Job Opportunities	http://jobsearch.gov.mb.ca/jow/
Manitoba Job Site	www.manitobajobsite.com/
Monster	http://monster.ca/
Tip Top Jobs – Jobs in Manitoba	www.tiptopjob.com/search/jobs_by_location/r/100287_manitoba
Workopolis	www.workopolis.com/work.aspx?action=Transfer&View=Content/Common/WorkLoginView&lang=EN
Other Resources	Classified section of newspapers Employment Centres Journal or trade magazines Signage (ex: Help wanted signs)

Tips for Searching Online

There's a lot of information available on the Internet. You can focus your search by entering key words or phrases into search engines. Here are some tips:

- Use all lower case letters (ex: assistant network administrator)
 - Using capitals may only result in items where the key words are capitalized
- Capitalize the word "AND" between items to search for more than one thing (ex: assistant network administrator AND full-time)
- Capitalize the word "OR" between both items to search for more than one thing at a time, with results on either item (e.g. assistant network administrator OR database manager)
- Use quotation marks to search for a phrase rather than single words (ex: "full-time assistant network administrator")

The Hidden Job Market

Many people believe if a job isn't advertised, it doesn't exist. However, there are different types of hidden jobs. The first type is finding out about unadvertised openings while researching jobs, conducting informational interviews or through your network. The second type is what people working for a company may know about (ex: an employee knows that his or her co-worker is leaving in March for maternity leave). Some positions are created to suit a particular applicant (ex: if an employer is convinced that hiring you will bring in significantly more money than you will cost, or if you are eligible for a wage subsidy if an employer creates a new position).

***It is estimated that only about 10 – 25 per cent of jobs are advertised.
This means about 75 – 90 per cent of jobs aren't posted.***

There are lots of ways to uncover the hidden job market:

- word of mouth
- your network
- contacts made during informational interviews
- cold-calling (ex: phoning the HR department of a company to find out about any possible openings)
- warm-calling (ex: making in-person contact with employers to find out if they have any job opportunities or anticipate any in the future).

There is usually much less competition for unadvertised jobs, so it's worth searching for them.

Contacting Employers Regarding Unadvertised Jobs



ACTIVITY

Before contacting an employer to introduce yourself or follow up on a potential job lead it's important to know what you're going to say. Fill in the blank spaces to prepare yourself before phoning or meeting an employer in person.

Hi my name is _____. I got your contact information from _____ [fill in the name of an appropriate reference].

I am calling to discuss _____ [fill in the name of the position you are phoning about].

I am interested in this position

because _____

Do you have a moment to discuss this with me?⁶

Sometimes the employer or hiring manager may not be able to speak to you. Be sure to let him or her know that you aren't looking for much time – only a few minutes. Ask if there's a more convenient time that you could call.

If contacts tell you they're not hiring, ask them for any leads, ideas, or referrals for similar positions.

If someone asks you to send a resume, offer to deliver it in person if you can. If this is not possible, fax or email the resume and follow up with a phone call to discuss it.⁷

If you phone and are put straight through to voicemail be sure to:

- Leave your name, contact information and reason for calling
- Say that you will call back; there is no need to return your call⁸

⁶ <http://jobstar.org/hidden/asher1.php#scripts>

⁷ <http://jobstar.org/hidden/asher1.php#scripts>

⁸ <http://jobstar.org/hidden/asher1.php#scripts>

Can't Find Your Dream Job? Consider Creating It!

If you can't find work that you really want to do, even with all of your hard work tracking down job advertisements, consider creating your own job. To get started:

- Think about exactly what you'd like to do.
- Decide if you are looking for a contract position or prefer to be self-employed.
- Identify a need.
 - Is there a product or service that you could provide?
 - Is there an organization or employer who could use your skills?
 - Is there a problem that needs solving?
- Develop an employment proposal⁹ that outlines:
 - Who will benefit and how.
 - A summary of your experience.
 - A plan for follow-up (ex: meeting or phone call).

Job search requires some creativity. Try to think as broadly as possible about where you might find opportunities.



REMEMBER

For more information on self-employment, visit:
<http://www.gov.mb.ca/ctt/busdev/smbus/index.html>

***"Every job that exists today
started as someone's idea!"***

~Denise Bissonnette¹⁰

⁹ Bissonnette, D. (1994). Beyond Traditional Job Development: The Art of Creating Opportunity.

¹⁰ Bissonnette, D. (1994). Beyond Traditional Job Development: The Art of Creating Opportunity.

4

Gaining Relevant Work Experience

After reviewing job postings, receiving feedback from your network, and conducting some informational interviews, you may realize that you need more work experience. Perhaps volunteering, job shadowing, or completing a work internship would be helpful.

Volunteering

Volunteering involves working without pay. Treat volunteer experiences just as you would paid employment; be professional, arrive on time, build important relationships and set goals. Benefits of volunteering include:

- showing your skills and abilities to employers
- developing skills and knowledge
- exploring and learning more about potential careers
- helping out in your community

To make the most of your volunteer experience, look for opportunities with organizations in your community that match your interests and values.



REMEMBER

For information about available volunteer opportunities check out:
Volunteer Manitoba: www.volunteermanitoba.ca. and
Manitoba Youth Volunteer Opportunities: <http://www.myvop.ca/>

Job Shadowing

To job shadow is to observe someone at work, for a few hours or a few days. Some job shadowing is informal; you can watch people in public jobs (ex: restaurant server, bus driver, teacher) without making an appointment. However, arranging a formal job shadow opportunity may give you a richer experience. You may be able to see behind the scenes in an organization that interests you and have time to ask specific questions.

To get the most out of a job shadow experience:

- ask questions
- offer to assist with tasks
- offer input on challenges
- demonstrate your skills and knowledge
- ask for feedback¹¹

After completing a formal job shadow experience, be sure to follow-up. Send a thank you card or letter to each person that helped you (ex: receptionist, manager, the person you shadowed). Be sure to mention your appreciation and what you learned while shadowing.

Work Internship

An internship offers practical, hands-on experience in a job. Internships are usually unpaid experiences; they may last from a few hours to several months. Interns may be given the duties and responsibilities of an employee with work monitored by a supervisor. Some internships are completed as a requirement for an educational program, in which learning goals are set and formal evaluations are completed. Internships can be completed outside of educational programs to explore careers and gain experience.

Similar to job shadowing, be sure to follow up with a thank you card or letter to anyone involved in the internship experience (ex: a professor, host employer, intern supervisor, co-workers).

How to Get Started

To get started in a volunteer, job shadow or intern position try:

- Finding opportunities on company websites.
- Visiting Volunteer Manitoba at: www.volunteermanitoba.ca/newsite/be_a_volunteer.htm
- Visiting www.ornh.mb.ca/programs/jobshadow.html for job shadowing experiences in health care in Manitoba.
- Connecting with referrals provided at informational interviews.
- Asking your network for leads.
- Adjusting your cover letter to state interest in volunteering, job shadowing, or interning.
- Checking out the classified section of your newspaper for volunteer opportunities.
- Inquiring at employment centres or post-secondary career service centres.

"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door."

~Milton Berle¹²

¹² http://thinkexist.com/quotation/if_opportunity_doesn-t_knock-build_a_door/214986.html

5

Job Search Tips

We've created a list of some basic "Tips" to help get you focused and ready for your job search.



REMEMBER

- Expect to spend a considerable amount of time at the job search stage.
- Create a job search plan.
- Use your network and provide them with updates on how your job search is going.
- Tailor your resume and cover letter.
- Organize and track your efforts.
- Be wary of job posting scams.
- Get assistance if needed.
- Use all sources to job search (networks, newspapers, online...).
- Treat your job search like a full-time job.
- Stay Optimistic.

Summary

This guide has provided tips, examples and activities to help with your job search. Here are some key points to remember:

- Be optimistic about your job search and believe in yourself.
- Keep your eyes open for new opportunities.
- Take the time to develop your network.
- Prepare an elevator statement to tell people who you are and what you are looking for.
- Figure out what's most important to you in a job.
- Conduct informational interviews to get more information about a job.
- Remember that only 10-25 per cent of jobs are advertised.
- Be open to volunteering, job shadowing, and work internships as ways to gain work experience.
- Keep track of your job search activities.

This is one of several guides in a series to support your career planning and job search. For more information, visit www.manitoba.ca/careerdevelopment.

Appendix A: Informational Interview Questions

These questions are intended to get you thinking about what to ask in an informational interview and you may also have questions of your own to add. As most informational interviews only last 15 – 30 minutes, you will probably only be able to ask 10 – 15 questions. Use informational interviews to build on research that you've already done; don't ask questions that you could easily find answers for on the company website or in a brochure. Plan to ask your most important questions first, in case you run out of time.

Job/Industry Questions

1. What does someone in your occupation do on a day-to-day or weekly basis?
2. Please describe what you find to be a typical work day/week including routine work flow and major work tasks that need to be accomplished.
3. What are the most frequently recurring problems?
4. What exactly does your company do?
5. Who are your customers/target groups?
6. Do you have any social interactions as part of your job?
7. Who is your immediate supervisor? What is her/his title?
8. What is the level above this one? What is the top job you can have in this career?
9. Does a typical worker have a set schedule or are the hours flexible?
10. Do you work a lot of overtime?
11. What are the ideal qualifications for someone in this type of work?
12. What skills or personal qualities are necessary for success in this occupation?
13. What do you like most/least about it (values satisfied, barriers to satisfaction)?
14. What are the greatest pressures and strains in your work?
15. What do you perceive to be the major rewards of this job?
16. What are major frustrations in this job?
17. What are the most interesting aspects/liabilities of your job? What part of your work do you consider repetitious?
18. What percentage of your time is devoted to this?
19. What is your level of freedom to solve problems and take action on the job?
20. Tell me your working conditions (ex: physical, environmental, sensory, stress).
21. What is the occupational outlook for people in this field?
22. How often are there actually openings in this occupation?
23. Do you see this field growing over the next five years?
24. What is the salary range? Are there benefit packages? Unions?

Related Occupation Questions

1. Are there any other jobs that are similar to yours but with different job titles?
2. Are there any entry level jobs?

Career Development and Advancement Opportunity Questions

1. Where does this job lead and who does it bring you in contact with?
2. If you had a crystal ball, what predictions would you make about the future of this occupation (company), not only in terms of employment demand, but involvement with new technology, new target groups, or perhaps new products?
3. What are the opportunities for advancement?
4. What steps, besides meeting educational requirements, are necessary to “break into” this occupation? For example, could I join a union, volunteer, or work part-time at first?
5. What related occupations might I consider if I lack some of the necessary skills for this job?
6. How long does it usually take to move from one step to the next in this career path?
7. Are there other areas of this field to transfer to? What are they?

Training and Education Questions

1. Did you have to take any special training or education to enter this field?
2. Does the job require previous experience?
3. What types of training do companies give to people entering this field?
4. Are there any specific courses one might take that would be particularly beneficial in this field?

Request for Advice or Mentoring

1. What advice would you give to someone considering this occupation or field?
2. If you could do it all over again from high school days, what would you do differently?
3. What advice do you have for a graduate to get a job in this field?
4. Can you offer any tips for getting ahead in this field?
5. What journals or magazines would you recommend I read in this field?

Questions About Interviewee’s Career Development and Job Search Process

1. Please share some of your own career experiences, how and why you first became involved in your present position, where you were prior to your present position, and in general, how your career has developed over the years, including what first motivated you to consider your initial career choice?
2. How did your previous work experience assist you in attaining this position? Which ones helped the most in getting the job you have now?
3. How did you get started in this field?
4. How did you find out about the job you have now?
5. How did you get the job on this project (strategies, timing, decisions)?
6. How long have you worked in this job?
7. How long have you worked for this organization?
8. What made you think you’d like this kind of work and be good at it?
9. What was it that made you think you could do it (be outstanding at it, “succeed”)?
10. Were there any contacts or mentors that helped you?
11. Can you think of a major turning point in your career?
12. If you were going to change direction now, where would you go? How would you do it?

Application/Interview Process Questions

1. Can you describe to me, step by step, the hiring procedure for this position?
2. Will I be asked to take any tests?
3. Do you currently have anyone specific in mind for the next opening here?
4. Who makes the hiring decisions in this company?
5. How long does it usually take after the first interview to make a hiring decision?
6. What type of questions did they ask you in the interview?
7. Do you have any advice on how to answer them?

Requests for Further Leads

1. Can you think of any other people it would be good to talk to?
2. Would you provide me with the names and phone numbers of people you know who hold company positions similar to your own and would be willing to share some time with me for a field interview?
3. Would it be okay if I said that you recommended her/him as a contact?

Questions to Ask Yourself After the Informational Interview

Take some time after the informational interview to reflect on the information you gathered. Consider the following questions to help evaluate what you learned and determine if the position and employer are the right fit for you:

1. Can you picture yourself performing the duties?
2. Do you feel that you could handle the job or jobs that you learned about in this interview? Why?
3. What else did you learn about the job (or jobs) or about the employer and his or her organization?
4. Do you feel comfortable with the work setting?
5. What is the entry level salary rate -can you live on this?
6. Do you feel that this organization might consider hiring you if they have a job opening?

Appendix C: Recording Your Job Search Worksheet

Date	Position	Contact Information	Follow Up Notes

Appendix D: Guide Links

External Weblinks

- Career Jet www.careerjet.ca/
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada www.cic.gc.ca/
- Employment Manitoba www.manitoba.ca/employment/emp_centre_locations.html
- Employment Standards www.gov.mb.ca/labour/standards/forms.html
- Working in Canada Tool: <http://workingincanada.gc.ca>
- For more information about career planning, tips for success in the workplace, and other related topics, please visit www.manitoba.ca/careerdevelopment
- Government of Canada <http://jobs-emploi.gc.ca/index-eng.htm>
- Job Shadowing Experiences www.ornh.mb.ca/programs/jobshadow.html
- Manitoba Companies Directory -
<http://db.itm.gov.mb.ca/MBIS/MCD.NSF/if?readform&ID=CompaniesHome>
- Manitoba Civil Service Commission www.gov.mb.ca/csc/index.html
- Manitoba Job Site www.manitobajobsite.com/
- Manitoba Youth Volunteer Opportunities: <http://www.myvop.ca/>
- Monster <http://monster.ca/>
- Online Networking Sites
- Facebook www.facebook.com/
- LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/
- Twitter <http://twitter.com/>
- MySpace <http://ca.myspace.com/>
- Self Employment: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/ctt/busdev/smbus/index.html>
- Service Canada www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sc/sin/index.shtml
- Spectrum Job Search - <http://www.spectrumjobsearch.com/manitoba.htm>
- Tip Top Jobs – Jobs in Manitoba www.tiptopjob.com/search/jobs_by_location/r/100287_manitoba
- Volunteer Manitoba www.volunteermanitoba.ca/newsite/be_a_volunteer.htm
- Workopolis www.workopolis.com/work.aspx?action=Transfer&View=Content/Common/WorkLoginView&lang=EN

Links in This Guide

- **Appendix A**
- **Appendix B**
- **Appendix C**
- **Networking**
- **Researching the Job Market**
- **Informational Interviews**

Links to Other Guides

- A Guide to Completing Applications
- A Guide to Planning Your Career
- A Guide to Writing Resumes
- A Guide to Writing Cover Letters
- A Guide to Outstanding Interviews
- A Guide to Building a Career Portfolio
- A Guide to Success in the Workplace
- A Guide to Recognizing Prior Learning