



A job search may seem daunting.

Questions arise: Where do I start? What should I avoid and watch out for?

The Weston Career Center is committed to providing you with resources and advice over the course of your career. Use these Olin alumni job search tips to get started. Pursue your search with focus and persistence to land your next job and continue your career progression.

Prepare Yourself

A job transition can be a roller-coaster ride. Prepare ahead. Stay positive and don't panic. Life is changing but not ending. Focus on the new beginning. Prepare to tell others that you are doing a job search. Avoid criticizing your former company, boss or colleagues. Have a plan, focus on managing your job search and stay engaged.

Survey the Marketplace

Know what is impacting your profession and industry, including key trends shaping the future. What specific skills and competencies does the marketplace want in roles and responsibilities that align with your experience and skill sets?

 **Key:** Exclusive online resource for Olin alumni

Research company and professional organization postings and job boards such as Monster.com and Careerbuilder.com to get a feel for what the marketplace is seeking. Review 12 to 15 jobs of interest. Highlight the themes. What key skills sought in the marketplace do you have and enjoy using? Draw on these skills, experiences and attributes to build your résumé.

Career self-assessment

Developed by two psychologists from Harvard Business School and used by over 400 leading business schools and corporations worldwide, CareerLeader® is a Web-based comprehensive career assessment tool based on over 20 years of scientific research. Use CareerLeader to assess your business interests, abilities and motivators and how these qualities dovetail with various corporate cultures. The results help you refine your professional goals and direction. Go to www.olin.wustl.edu/alumni/careerservices to get the special alumni rate of \$75.

Articulate Your Professional Goals

With what you learned from your market research, develop a personal script to clearly and concisely convey the kind of work you are seeking. Create and practice a 60-second self-introduction that summarizes your profession, expertise, work environments (large, small, finance, government, etc.) and unique strengths.

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Craft Résumé

Your résumé is YOU on paper. It reflects you to a prospective employer. Keep the information accurate, honest and concise. Customize your résumé so it is relevant for each specific job. Keywords are vital to getting noticed. Consider designating a special e-mail address just for your job search. Do not list references or personal information.

Limit your résumé to two pages. Position your most important information (contact information, career summary, skill set and recent accomplishments) near the top. Use headings and formatting to draw readers past the half-page point. Proofread carefully for 100 percent spelling and grammar accuracy.



Résumé templates

Use Optimal Resume <https://olin-wustl.optimalresume.com/> to easily configure your résumé in a variety of formats. Optimal Resume walks you through the résumé creation process and generates a résumé that is downloadable in a variety of formats. Simply create a profile, which will be validated by a Weston Career Center staff member. Upon validation, log in and use the template tool to create your résumé.

Write Cover Letters and Thank-You Notes

Cover letters remain important in the job search. They can showcase your differentiators and communication skills and generate interest in inviting you for an interview. Customize each cover letter, writing for a specific position or target company. In the first paragraph, show you've done your homework by writing about "them." Share the research nuggets you've uncovered that interest you in the company and/or position. In the second paragraph, dovetail your skills and background to the company's needs and convey how you would be an asset and contributor to the role and organization. Last, thank the individual and state what you will do to follow up.

Send a thank-you note within 24 hours after the interview. Be specific. Express thanks and interest, and highlight a strong point that demonstrates you are a good fit.

Optional resources for résumés and cover letters:

Pongo Resume — www.pongoresume.com/

Quintessential Careers —
www.quintcareers.com/job-hunting_free_samples.html

\$100k+ Jobs: TheLadders — <http://resume.theladders.com/>



Research Industries and Companies

Establish criteria for the industries and companies that appeal to you. Consider geographic location, type, size based on revenue/number of employees, products, services, mission, values, financial solvency, issues, work/life balance, culture, etc. Research and dig for "nuggets" that provide deeper insight and knowledge so that you can relate your career assets to company needs.



Olin Business School maintains subscriptions to online databases.

See www.olin.wustl.edu/alumni/careerservices for access.

Optional resources for industry and company research:

American City Business Journals (including Book of Lists) —
www.bizjournals.com/

U.S. Small Business Administration — www.sba.gov/

Public libraries offer many business and industry research resources.

Get Your Message Out

Statistics show that close to 75 percent of jobs are found through networking. Now more than ever, it's important to get connected. Maintaining a vibrant network of professional contacts creates a resource you'll rely on even after your job search is successfully completed.



You're already part of a worldwide network of 16,000-plus business professionals – Olin alumni.

- Tap into the Washington University network in the Alumni Association Directory, a database containing information on more than 110,000 alumni who have volunteered to give advice about their career fields. <https://www.wustlconnections.com/>
- Join the Olin alumni groups on LinkedIn — www.linkedin.com/groupInvitation?gid=1090 — and Facebook — www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=33909940134



Keep in mind that employers and recruiters surf the Internet too, so don't forget to keep your social life separate from your professional identity. Check your privacy settings in social networking sites.

The informational interview is an important networking tool. It involves talking with people working in your field of interest to gain a better understanding of that industry or occupation.

Remember, networking is a give-and-take endeavor. Sharing your experiences and qualifications gives you access to information about hiring managers, companies and industries. And your knowledge and contacts are equally valuable to other professionals.

Optional resources:

- Quintessential Careers — www.quintcareers.com/informational_interviewing.html
- ExecuNet — www.execunet.com/
- Directory of Executive and Professional Recruiters, available at libraries and bookstores

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Interview, Cultivate Offers and Negotiate

Preparation and professionalism are paramount to effective and successful interviews. Research the company or role you are seeking. One of the best ways to prepare is to speak with people who have interviewed with, or work for, the company in which you're seeking employment. Contact alumni, recruiters and others to learn as much as possible about the organization and the kinds of questions you should expect. Understand how you'd fit in and what you could contribute.

Optional resources:

- www.quintcareers.com/intvres.html
- www.salary.com
- www.salaryexpert.com

What to Avoid...

- **Coming in cold.** Do your homework by researching the company, industry and people. It shows your initiative and preparation and will get noticed.
- **Hiding out.** Be intentional about creating a job search plan. Work the plan each day and choose to be engaged by networking.
- **Falling into black holes.** Relying on job boards for your next job yields little. Rely on your network. Be selective and target desirable companies, even if they don't have jobs posted.
- **Making someone else responsible for finding your job.** You are the expert on you—your talents, interests and career assets. You are the pilot, not the passenger, in your job or career transition.
- **Hoping you get a second chance to make a good first impression.** Whether you're networking or interviewing, pay attention to the details: business attire and grooming, a positive phone demeanor, nonverbal messages and cues. Show professionalism before, during and after each interaction.



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Note: Suggested optional resources are offered for your convenience. Olin does not supply or monitor content or officially endorse these Web sites.

www.olin.wustl.edu/alumni/careerservices

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 **Washington**
University in St. Louis

OLIN BUSINESS SCHOOL

Creating knowledge...Inspiring individuals...Transforming business.

Olin Business School
Weston Career Center
Campus Box 1157
Washington University in St. Louis
One Brookings Drive
St. Louis, MO 63130-4899

Phone: 314-935-5950
Fax: 314-935-4027
www.olin.wustl.edu/alumni/careerservices
wcc@olin.wustl.edu