



Stepping Stones to Success For Graduating Students

You have arrived at a very exciting crossroad in your life as you transition from a student to someone entering the workforce and pursuing a career. You should be congratulated for successfully completing the first phase of your journey and now, as a recent graduate, a whole new adventure begins.

Transitioning between graduation and full-time employment can be overwhelming. As new graduates, you may be faced with deciding which career direction to pursue. You may lack experience searching for jobs, writing resumes and covering letters, networking or preparing for interviews.

The [Next Steps Canada 10-Steps Job Search Checklist](#) for recent Graduates has been developed to provide a practical framework to gain focus and direction in your job search.

Step 1. Establish Your Career Goals

- Set conceptual goals - goals that deal with your ambitions, interests, preferences, values and aptitudes.
- Set operational goals - specific jobs and tasks you set to achieve your conceptual goals (*Stepping Stones*).
- Set realistic career goals that are based on an understanding of your strengths and weaknesses and an understanding of the current and potential market place.

Step 2. Building Your Personal Value Proposition (PVP)

- Your PVP is why an employer should hire you or promote you over someone else.
- Set a clear target as to the type of role you are looking for
- Identify your strengths.
- Tie your strengths to your target position.
- Provide evidence and success stories to convince a potential employer.

Step 3. Get Organized

- Job search should be treated as a full-time job.
- Get up in the morning and have a routine - organize your job search time and your leisure time.
- Set goals for each week. For example: target 10 new companies, send out 20 resumes and network with 5 new individuals
- Maintain excellent records for follow up.

Step 4. Resume Preparation

- A resume is a personal marketing document that communicates your potential value to a hiring company.
- Do I really need to tailor my resume for each job: YES, you really do. Employers receive many resumes. Take the time to make your resume fit their needs .
- Have a good cover note and a thank you note that can be adapted to a specific position and customized as needed.

**Step 5.
Target Your Efforts**

- Target sectors, industries, functions, locations and employers.
- Continually add to your "targetted" list as you learn more about potential employers and opportunities.
- Eliminate those organizations when you have learned there are no potential opportunities in the short term.

**Step 6.
Networking**

- Think of anyone who could be a contact. Don't limit yourself.
- Be prepared. Why do you want to talk to them? Make sure you know before you pick up the phone or meet with someone.
- Create a 20-second verbal business card to introduce yourself.

**Step 7.
Responding to Job Postings**

- Job postings usually describe the firm's ideal candidate.
- Respond to ads that come close to matching your skills and interests and avoid ads you are not qualified for - don't waste your time and respect other people's time.
- Do some research on the company before you submit.
- Respond to each posting with a personalized letter and a copy of your resume.
- Respond as soon as possible to an online job posting -- speed may matter.

**Step 8.
Interview Preparation**

- Do your background research!
- Know who is interviewing you?
- Distinguish yourself in some positive way from other candidates.
- Be extremely familiar with the job descriptions and how your skills, background, experience match up with their needs.
- Convey a high level of energy and a sense of urgency.

**Step 9.
Review/Revise/ Persevere**

- For most job seekers, the search process for your first job is more like a marathon than a sprint -- be prepared for ups and downs.
- On a regular basis, review your progress, activity level and results -- decide if you need to adjust your strategy or tactics and increase your activity level.
- Maintain your overall health and well-being. Reach out for assistance from friends, family and professional advisors.

**Step 10.
Stay Organized**

- Keep track of all activity and all contacts.
- Follow up with those in your network or those who have been a part of your search regularly.
- Remember to be generous and appreciative.

Contact Us to Learn More ...

Tel: 416 479-8208

www.nextstepscanada.com