



Career Search Checklist

Whether your plan is to find a career or head to graduate school, the search can feel overwhelming. The key is to break it down into manageable steps and this checklist will help you get started. Always keep in mind that you can receive assistance for every one of these steps through the office of Career Services and Employer Relations (CSER).

Keep in mind that in addition to coming in and talking with us, we offer tremendous assistance online through our website: <http://www.framingham.edu/careerservices>.

Step 1: Self Assessment

- I have identified my personal skills, interests, values, strengths and personality type (*Focus* online is an excellent resource)
- I have made a list of potential career titles, industries, and employers and/or graduate school degrees
- I can name two or three careers/graduate schools I wish to pursue
- I have reviewed my all of my expenses upon graduation and have created a realistic budget by which I need to compare my salary needs

Step 2: Know Where You Want to Work or Pursue Graduate School

- I have researched organizations or graduate schools that hire someone with my skills, interests, values, strengths and personality type
- I have researched specific career titles, industries and employers and/or graduate schools
- I have a very good understanding of typical entry-level positions, typical salaries, and best geographic locations
- I have identified 10 potential employers and/or 5 graduate schools for what I am seeking

Step 3: Get Ready for the Search

- I have visited Career Services and Employer Relations (CSER)—College Center 412
- I have created my Resume (*OptimalResume* online is an excellent resource)
- I have had my Resume critiqued by a staff member at CSER and a professional in the field
- I can write effective Cover/email Letters and can individualize them for each career application
- I have developed my 30 second *elevator pitch* for quick encounters with employers or graduate school personnel
- I can answer the *Tell me about yourself* question
- I have identified three to four individuals who will serve as references
- I have developed my interviewing skills
- I have prepared for interviews by practicing my responses to typical questions and/or doing a mock interview with a staff member at CSER
- I have an interview suit (and shoes)
- I have a professional voicemail message in case an employer or graduate school calls
- I have a professional/neutral email address to give to employers and graduate schools

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Step 4: Begin Your Search

- I have an online account in CSER's *College Central Network* career and internship posting system
- I have my Resume uploaded into *College Central Network* so I can actively search and apply for interesting positions
- I have a system for keeping track of my contacts, interviews and other career and graduate school search activities
- I follow up on every interesting career lead immediately
- I have developed a list of potential networking contacts and keep in contact with them regularly
- I know every single word on my Resume in the event I am asked questions regarding any aspect of it (it's all fair game)
- I follow up each cover letter (email letter) with a phone call or additional email expressing my interest in the position and requesting an interview
- I send thank you letters or emails, in a timely fashion, to every person who interviews me

Graduate School Specific

- I fully understand all deadlines related to my graduate school program of choice and have developed a timeline (working backwards) to meet all deadlines
- I have researched the dates for taking the appropriate entrance exams (GRE, MAT, LSAT, GMAT, MCAT, etc.) and will pursue study advice as I deem necessary (self study, Kaplan, Princeton Review, etc.)
- I can clearly articulate the answers necessary for the graduate school essay to set myself apart from other applicants
- I have an understanding of the costs associated with pursuing graduate school and have researched opportunities to defray or eliminate expenses including loans, scholarships and assistantships (teaching, research, etc.)