career
LAB

taking action towards success

MANAGING YOUR JOB SEARCH

Before You Apply

Assess your skills
- Look at job descriptions for jobs that interest you within and outside your field/expertise.
- Identify and save key words/phrases from job descriptions, and note if they appear frequently.
- List the qualifications, skills, and experience required.
- Keep a list your own skills, experience, and accomplishments. Not everything can go into your resume, but you might want to address it in a cover letter or bring it up during follow-up conversations or an interview. (See sample spreadsheets at the back of this guide.)
- Know which are your strongest and which need improvement.
- Categorize your skills according to the type of position they are appropriate for, your skill level.
- This list will be useful in the future when you embark on your next job search. You can come back to this in three, six, or twelve months and not feel like you're starting over.

USING TOOLS TO FIND JOBS ONLINE

- Search sites (Pratt Pro, Indeed, SimplyHired, Mandy, Mashable, Findspark, etc.).
- Don't make a habit of searching every site you come across. Find the ones that are specific to the industry that interests you (The Ladders or Mashable for tech jobs), and then use one or two broad sites like Glassdoor and Indeed.
- Use the same email, username and password for all of them so you don't have to remember a new one each time. (A good way to create a single password is to make sure there are eight characters, lower and upper case, and a mix of numbers and letters.)
- Use the job search and save features (LinkedIn and Pratt Pro).
- Use recruiters to help you find a job (Adecco, 24seven, CGRseven, Creative Circle, etc.).

WHEN YOU FIND A JOB YOU WANT TO APPLY FOR

Determine if it is the "right" job for you. You don't want to spend time applying for jobs that you don't really want.

- Does it match your skills and experience? Refer to the list you created before you started looking for jobs.
- What can you offer this job/job site in lieu of specific skills/experience? Do you have expertise in a software that is similar to what the company is looking for (i.e. Visio instead of Omnigraffle)?
- Can you learn on the job? If this is an entry-level position, there will be a lot more room for growth and learning.
- Are you willing to relocate? If the company has multiple offices, are there openings in their other locations?
- Salary & benefits - Is it enough for you to live on? Is the opportunity so amazing that you would be willing to make some sacrifices on pay? Is it a stepping stone to something else?

PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

- Copy each part of your cover letter(s) into a spreadsheet. Each time you apply for another job, find the statements that are appropriate for that posting and use it to start your new cover letter. Be sure you modify it to make it relevant to that job! (See sample spreadsheets at the back of this guide.)
- Save a resume on job sites like Indeed and Glassdoor.
- Create a plain text copy of your resume and cover letter. Some application systems don't accept file attachments and you will have to copy and paste text directly into a text field. Remove all formatting to make this easier.

TRACKING & FOLLOW-UP

Keep track of all your interactions for each job you apply for:
- Contact information
- Notes
- Timelines and dates: deadlines, application submission, follow-up emails, etc.
- Outcomes
- Interview dates, notes and follow-up, including thank-you emails/letters

(See sample spreadsheets at the back of this guide.)

Notice trends in the outcomes of your applications, and consider how changing your approach might improve your results.
- Which sites have better postings?
- Which positions do you get better results for?
- Are you successful applying to jobs where you don't necessarily have all the required skills, or should you wait until you've acquired them?

SAMPLE SPREADSHEETS

Assess Your Skills & Experience

	A	B	C
1	**Position Type**	**Required Skills/Experience**	**Level (0-1-2)**
2	Graphic Designer	Adobe CS6	2
3	Graphic Designer	HTML5	1
4	Graphic Designer	Wordpress	2
5	Graphic Designer	Podio	2
6	Graphic Designer	Photography	1
7	Graphic Designer	Retouching	2
8	Social Media	Photoshop	2
9	Social Media	Illustrator	2
10	Social Media	Wordpress	2
11	Social Media	HTML5	1
12	Social Media	Communications	1
13	Social Media	Excel	0
14	Social Media	PowerPoint	0
15	UX Designer	Photoshop	2
16	UX Designer	Illustrator	2
17	UX Designer	Visio	1
18	UX Designer	Omnigraffle	2
19	UX Designer	Communications	1
20	UX Designer	Project management	1
21	UX Designer	Excel	0
22	UX Designer	PowerPoint	0
23	UX Designer	Wireframing	1
24	UX Designer	Mock-ups	1
25	Web Developer	Dreamweaver	2
26	Web Developer	HTML5	1
27	Web Developer	Wordpress	2
28	Web Developer	CSS	1
29	Web Developer	Drupal	0
30	Web Developer	jQuery	0
31			

Applications | **Skills** | Cover Letter

Cover Letter Statements

	A	B
1	**Statement Category**	**Statement**
2	Skills - Photoshop	I am proficient in Photoshop and have used my skills to retouch photos for an e-commerce fashion startup...
3	Skills - Photoshop	I have used Photoshop to produce a series of high-quality photographs which I exhibited at...
4	Skills - Wireframing	
5	Experience - Communications	
6	Experience - Leadership	
7	Experience - Volunteering	
8		

Tracking Your Application Process

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	Company	Position	Post Date	Contact First	Contact Last	Contact Position	Contact Email	Contact Phone	Deadline	Date Submitted	Follow-up Notes	Interview Notes
2	HUGE	UX Designer	6/1/2013	John	Doe	HR Manager	johndoe@huge.com	123.456.7890	8/1/2013	6/12/2013	Called John on 6/20; position has been filled. Sent thank-you email same day.	
3	Red Antler	Content Manger	7/1/2013	Jane	Doe	Creative Recruiter	janedoe@redantler.com	123.456.7899	NA	7/18/2013	Spoke with Jane over the phone on 7/15; the company is reviewing applications until 7/30; will contact candidates for interviews on 8/1; wrote a thank you email on 7/16	
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Applications / Skills / Cover Letter

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Professional Areas of Creative Directors

Technology	Communications Design	Media/Entertainment

Occupations for Each Professional Area

Web Design	Graphic Designer	Copywriter
Mobile App Developer	Art Director	Media Coordinator
Game developer	Interactive Designer	Public Relations Coordinator

Keyword Options

Mobile video game developer	Visual communications	Marketing/Copywriting
UI/UX design	Multimedia production	Production