

Creative Job Searching

Brianna Blaser
Science Careers/AAAS

AAAS

- International nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing science, engineering, and innovation throughout the world
- Membership-based organization
- Publisher of *Science*
- Source for a broad range of career development resources through *Science Careers*



Every so often you might run across an employer who is good at finding hidden talent, but don't count on it. So take full responsibility for getting found.

- Brooke Allen

The US chemical industry saw jobs decline by 1.8% in 2008 compared with 2007, and economists are predicting additional losses in 2009. The pharmaceutical industry...lost about 4,700 jobs, or 1.6%, between last January and November. Classified advertisements printed in C&EN for open industrial positions were down about 2/3 in December 2008 compared with the same month in 2007 and 2006. Industry and government ads posted at the ACS Careers website were down about 20% in December 2008, compared with 2007.

– Jyllian N. Kemsley, *Chemical & Engineering News*

But it's not all bad...

The unemployment rate for advanced degree holders is much lower than the overall unemployment rate.

Unemployment rates among scientists remain low as compared to other professions.

Introduction

- What do I mean by “creative job searching”?
- Others’ creative approaches
- What can you do?

Proactive and Creative Job Searching

Brianna Blaser

Science Careers/AAAS

Be Proactive and Creative in Your...

- Self-exploration
- Networking
- Locating openings
- Resumes and CVs
- Interviewing
- Negotiating

Job Search Timeline

- Exploration
- Applications
- Interviews

Preparing for Your Job Search

- Two areas to think about:
 - Be proactive and creative by thinking about what you really want
 - Be proactive and creative by figuring out what you can do with your skills

Preparing for Your Job Search

- Self-assessment
- Build skills and seek out new experiences
- Research your options
- Informational interviews

Questions to ask yourself

- What do you like to do? What energizes you?
- Do you want to do lab work/research?
- Where do you want to work?
- What do you want to wear to work?
- How often do you want to change projects?
- What sorts of hours do you want to work?
- Are you willing to travel?
- What sort of funding situation do you want to be in?
- What non-science interests or skills do you want to use?
- How important is your income level? job security?
- What sort of stress levels do you want to deal with?
- Would you like to work independently or as part of a team?

Questions to ask others

- What attracted you to this field?
- What do you like most or least about this position or field?
- Describe a typical day or week.
- What steps did you take to break into this field?
- What skills are most helpful in your job? How can I develop them?
- To what professional associations do you belong?
- What advice would you give somebody interested in your line of work?

Networking

- Be proactive and creative by making use of your contacts

Networking Your Way into Work

- Helpful at different stages of the job search
- Networking strategies to consider
 - Informational interviews
 - Networking events
 - Social networking sites
 - Be creative...

Locating Openings

- Be Creative By Looking for Jobs in Multiple Ways

Finding Job Openings

- Networking
- Professional organizations & conferences
- Job boards
- Institution/Company websites
- Regional hiring trends
- Career fairs (?)

Typical Ways that Employers Like to Fill Vacancies

- From within
- Using proof
- From a friend or colleague
- Using an agency that they trust
- Using an ad they've placed
- Using an unsolicited resume

Which methods to use?

- Easiest routes:
 - Applying for jobs online and through ads in journals
- Better methods:
 - Asking for leads from your network
 - Seeking out contacts within specific organizations
- Using multiple job search methods!

Cast a broad net. Tell everyone you know that you are looking for work and ask them to tell everyone they know. Describe your capabilities in general terms so that you seem appropriate for a wide range of jobs. Defining yourself—or your contact list—too narrowly runs the risk of foreclosing career paths due to your own lack of imagination.

- Brooke Allen

Look Broadly

- Geographically
- Sectors
- Career paths

Resumes and CVs

- What is the purpose of a CV/resume?
- What is the difference?
- Which should you use?

CVs vs. Resumes

	CVs	Resumes
	Longer & comprehensive	Tailored summary
	Full listing of background and research	Brief snapshot of skills and experiences
Length	Flexible (shorter in industry)	1-2 pages
Critical elements	Full list of publications, presentations, research, service	Transferable skills and experiences
Used for	Academic jobs, industry research, fellowships, grants	Non-research jobs outside of academia

Resumes

- Be creative by writing something that doesn't sound like a job description
- Marketing Tool
- Quantify accomplishments
- Keywords
- Be proactive by following up on your applications

Employers use resumes to eliminate candidates – not to select them. As an employer, I might respond to your resume if I find no imperfections, but I'll always respond if you:

- 1) Tell me a compelling story in two or three sentences that makes me want to know more,
- 2) Ask a question that can't go unanswered, or
- 3) Itemize in a letter a few of your qualifications that fit my needs perfectly – and the letter need not cover a resume.

- Brooke Allen

Interviews

- Be proactive and creative by showing up informed
- Ask educated questions
- Don't memorize answers
- Be proactive by following up afterwards

Negotiation

- Still okay to negotiate
- Be creative by asking about things other than salary

There is no secret, each job search is different.

- Lori Conlan, NIH

Hope. You can't know the future, so why not hold on to your optimism? A tough labor market can cultivate strengths that you never developed before.

Unemployment can lead to despair and flight, but it can also strengthen character.

- Thomas H. Benton, Chronicle of Higher Education

Conclusion

- Job searches take time
- Stay positive

Resources

- Career Forum and 4,000+ articles on ScienceCareers.org
- These slides available at ScienceCareers.org/outreach