



Job Search Strategy Worksheet



Step 1: Determine your priorities for this NEXT position, fill out the chart.

Locations:	Job Types:	Salary Range:	Other priorities:
-------------------	-------------------	----------------------	--------------------------

Step 2: Fill in the Keywords box; topics, causes, tasks, populations, anything!

- Use keywords on [Handshake Jobs](#) or [a website from this list](#) to find 5+ cool jobs/internships and companies, using filters informed by your priority chart above.
- **Still not sure what you want? Try activities from this website.**

Keywords:

Step 3: Add your ideal start date at the bottom. Make a plan, working backwards.

Month	Recommended Strategies
Get Started & Organized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update resumes (federal), cover letters, and LinkedIn. • Bookmark websites, job search events, identity resources. • Keep contacts and applications organized with a tracker.
Get Applying & Connected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply to 2-5 jobs weekly; apply if you meet 70% of qualific's. • Reach out to CSU alumni on LinkedIn & Career Center events. • See Networking 101 & Informational Interview Checklists.
Get Interviewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Interview Prep Worksheet to prep answers. • Record yourself doing a mock interview on BigInterview. • Come to a drop-in to prep for salary negotiation.
	Game Plan: Zero interview invitations or offers at month 3-4? Make an appointment. Make a back-up plan to extend your job search time if needed, referring to your budget.
	Keep Going: Until you sign an official offer, keep applying and networking. Weigh your offers and options, make decisions to support your needs, and come to the Career Center for support (alumni have free access to the Career Center for 1+ year post-graduation!).

Ideal Start Date:



Make a Budget

Everyone has different access to financial resources, or fiscal flexibility. When asking “how much should I be making” a good place to start answering that question is **“how much do I need to survive and thrive?”** Fill in this budget worksheet to get a baseline! Determine salary range later with industry trends like using Glassdoor, informational interviews, and negotiation techniques.

QUICK TIPS & FACTS:

- A budget – an estimate of your costs and income needs – can help you determine your minimum salary requirements, and inform your application process.
- For federal student loans, you do not need to make payments until 6 months after graduation, called a “grace period.” See [CSU Financial Aid](#) for more advice, and [this loan calculator](#).
- In the United States, ~30% of your salary can go to paying taxes, so keep this in mind.
- If you want to live alone or not have any co-signers, landlords often require renter applicants to make 2x the cost of monthly rent, with a background and/or credit check – [find out the average cost of rent in the locations you’re considering](#). You can also review Craigslist ads for an estimate.
- [CSU Student Legal Services](#) can help you interpret leases and even job offers for free – especially if you have a criminal record, please make an appointment.

Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortgage or Rent _____ (Will you have roommates or live alone?) • Renters insurance (~\$12-25 per month) _____ • Utilities (gas, electric, water) _____ • Internet/Cable _____
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Transportation, Lyft, etc. _____ • Gas _____ • Parking _____ • Car Payment _____ • Car Insurance _____ • Routine Car Maintenance _____
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groceries _____ • Meals Out _____ (changes with location.) • Special Diets/Needs _____
Debts & Savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Loans _____ • Credit Card Payments _____ • Investments & Savings _____
Personal & Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone _____ • Clothing and Shoes _____ • Entertainment _____ • Gifts/Donations _____ • Child & Elderly Care _____ • Other _____
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescriptions _____ • Mental Health & Health Insurance _____ • Unplanned Medical Expenses _____
Estimated budget	\$ _____ X 12 = _____ Annual Budget (Starting Salary Range)