

LAUNCH

CREATING JOB HUNTING SUCCESS

A GUIDE FOR JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES



CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

USE THIS GUIDE TO LEARN ABOUT



LAYING THE GROUNDWORK
FOR A JOB SEARCH



IDENTIFYING AND
RESEARCHING EMPLOYERS



JOB SEARCH ACTIVITIES



RESUMES AND
SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS



INTERVIEW PREPARATION
AND SUCCESS



MAKING YOURSELF STAND
OUT AND FOLLOWING UP

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Breed-leading
genetics and
proven reproductive
managements.

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FOR JOB SEARCHING!

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OUT AND FOLLOWING UP



LAUNCH YOUR JOB SEARCH BY CREATING AN ACTION PLAN

Mark time blocks on your calendar that you will dedicate to job search activities, including attending job fairs.

ABOUT LCC'S CAREER & EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (CES)

Services

Student JobLink



Your connection to employers recruiting LCC students and alumni. Search and apply from among hundreds of full-time, part-time, internship, and apprenticeship positions on the [Student JobLink website](#).

Individual Appointments



Meet with a career advisor to start exploring careers, working on your professional documents, including a resume and cover letter, developing interview skills, starting your job search, and much more.

Options for scheduling an appointment:

Currently or recently enrolled students may self-schedule an appointment.

1. Go to [LCC Student JobLink](#). You will need to log in using your username and password. Note: This link is listed in the **Individual Appointments** section of the [CES website](#) home-page.
2. Choose **Career Advising Appt** on the navigation bar and then **Request New Appointment**.
3. Use filters and choose **Check Availability**, select your requested time slot, and click on **Submit Request**.

4. Appointment confirmation and reminder emails will be sent to you. Be sure to check your LCC emails.

Call (517) 483-1172 or stop by the Career Center (Gannon Building, Room 2219).

Special Events



CES offers a variety of career-related special events each semester. Some are offered virtually. From job fairs to company tours, visit the [CES website](#) or stop by the Career Center for the latest schedule of special events.

Overview

This guide is designed to provide you with information, resources, and tips that will help you navigate the various aspects of a job search for professional employment, whether you are seeking your first professional job, a more advanced job, or employment in support of a career change.

Ready to get started?

Call us at (517) 483-1172 or stop by the Career Center in the Gannon Building, Room 2219.



GET AN EARLY START

Lay the groundwork in advance. Start job-hunting early. Create an action plan and pace yourself.

GET READY, GET SET FOR JOB SEARCHING!

Lay the Groundwork

There are activities you can do well in advance to help you lay the groundwork for a successful job hunt.

- Gain paid work experience and community service/volunteer experience. Employers value **both**.
 - Engage actively in extracurricular activities. They help you build communication, teamwork and other skills employers especially seek in candidates.
 - Start networking early on in college; build and nurture relationships. Meet with LCC Faculty in your area of study during their office hours or by appointment. Ask them for career advice.
 - Get comfortable utilizing social media. Start a LinkedIn account and join some LinkedIn groups.
- Explore career options and work environments via informational interviewing and job shadowing.
 - Get your resume, LinkedIn Profile, and a cover letter critiqued by CES Staff.
 - Attend job fairs and other events coordinated by Career and Employment Services or others that give you access to employers and provide information about companies and career opportunities.

To learn more about these activities and about relevant supportive services, utilize the CES [Defining My Career Identity Guide](#), [Brand Yourself Guide](#) and [Get Career Ready Guide](#). Note: Online copies of these booklets are always available to view within the **Students** link on the [CES website](#).

Timeline: When to Get Started

Start your job search at least 6 months or more ahead of when you would like to start a new job.

- Employers may fill a job within two weeks or less, or may take several months.
- You can inquire about the status of your application, but never pressure an employer.

Create an Action Plan

- Make a list of specific job search activities to do, including attending job fairs. Set completion timelines and reserve blocks of time on your calendar for working on them. Mark them as done when you complete them. This will help you stay on track and feel a sense of accomplishment.
- Re-visit your plan at least weekly and adjust it if needed.

Review or Update Your Self-Assessment

- Identify and make a list of your strengths, skills, positive qualities and best work traits.
- Identify several key achievements and add these to your list above.

Find Relevant Resources for Your Job Search

- Talk to an LCC Career Advisor. Also, talk with reference librarians at the LCC Library and/or public libraries.
- Visit the [CareerOneStop website](#). Click on the **Resources For** tab.
- Familiarize yourself with job boards and job search engines. You could start with those listed on pages 10 to 11 in this guide.

Determine Your Job Target

To conduct an effective job search, you need to decide on a job target, or commonly used job title for the type of job you desire.

Sometimes different employers use different job titles for a specific type of job. Search for a specific job title on the [O*NET OnLine website](#), open the link, and view the “Sample of Reported Job Titles” to expand your list of possible job titles to use in searching for job listings.

Decide on Your Geographic Range and Identify Employers in Your Range

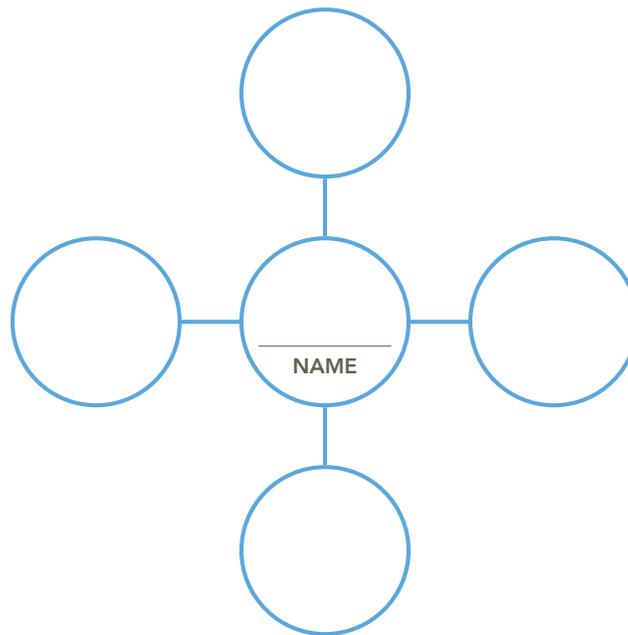
- Decide where you want to live and work. Are you willing to relocate for a job opportunity? How far are you willing to commute at any time of the year?
- Use online or print directories of employers. Ask a Reference Librarian for assistance.
- Use the internet and [Yellow Pages website](#) to search for a type of employer in a specific location. Then check out job listings on the employers’ websites.

Start Job Search Networking

Push yourself to further build and nurture a professional network! It can help to start by preparing a list of networking contacts or creating a My Network map diagram. See the diagram example and instructions provided on page 9. Develop and implement networking plans, such as those listed below.

- Ask instructors for input, ideas and possible contacts for your job search.
 - Work on expanding your LinkedIn connections.
 - Let family, friends and contacts in your community know that you are looking for a job, what you are looking for, and how you are a good fit. They might provide some leads.
 - Conduct company/organization/agency informational interviews in person, by phone, or via a virtual platform, and then follow up.
- Consider what you want to say when introducing yourself to employers, such as at career fairs. Read about and ask an LCC Career Advisor about creating an “elevator speech.”
 - Attend face-to-face or virtual career forums, job fairs, and networking events sponsored by LCC/Career and Employment Services and ones open to the public that are sponsored by one or more local universities/colleges, a company, or others. Visit the **Upcoming Career Events** section of the [Career and Employment Services \(CES\) website](#) frequently.
 - Send general inquiry letters (expressing future employment interest) and your resume to employers in advance of graduating.
 - Do some “cold calling.”

My Network



Instructions:

1. Write your name in the center circle.
2. For each person in your immediate family, local relative, or close friend: Draw a line outward from you (the center circle) about 2 inches and draw a circle at the end of each line. Write each of these persons' names in a circle, placing one name in each circle. Four circles for this purpose are already provided in the diagram to give you a start.
3. Repeat step #2 but draw the lines out about 4 inches. Write one name in each circle. Consider such other persons as:
 - a. persons at your current or previously attended school (such as instructors, advisors, counselors, student club members, and others with whom you developed a good relationship or whom you have found to be knowledgeable/helpful/resourceful).
 - b. any other individuals with whom you may have some frequent contact (neighbors and local professionals, such as doctors, an accountant, a lawyer, a personal banker, and others).
4. Start talking with these people, letting them know what type of job you are seeking and how you are a match for it. Ask if they have any suggestions for your job search or people (friends, relatives, professionals, and others) they suggest you talk with. As they suggest other contacts to you or give you employer leads, add more lines with circles at the ends starting from their circles. Write the names they have suggested to you in the new circles. Those new contacts may provide additional leads or referrals, too! And so on.

Utilize Social Media & Newsfeeds

- LinkedIn and other social media can be useful for marketing your employment value, learning about employment opportunities, and connecting with other professionals and employers.
- Work on building connections with individuals on LinkedIn and join some LinkedIn groups.
- As you gain education and experience in your career field, start posting articles on LinkedIn that demonstrate industry and career expertise.
- Subscribe to industry newsfeeds relevant to your career/industry to keep up on news, trends and peers' relevant interests.

Search for and Locate Posted Job Listings

On-Campus Jobs at LCC:

- Visit: the LCC [HR website](#) frequently for newly posted job listings.

State of Michigan Jobs:

1. Visit the [Michigan Civil Service Commission \(MCSC\) website](#).
2. Open any tabs or links labeled with words such as **Applicants**, **Career Services**, or **Resources**. You will find information and resources pertaining to resumes, cover letters, and interview preparation, and will likely find a list of state agencies.
3. Click on **State Jobs – View Current Openings**.

Off-Campus Jobs

- Visit LCC's [Student JobLink website](#).
- Visit websites of companies/agencies/organizations that interest you regarding employment. Look for an **Employment, Jobs, Opportunities, Careers**, or similar tab located somewhere on the home page.
- Utilize a variety of additional websites, including job board, job search engine, and social media websites. You could start with the sites provided on this page.

Michigan Sites:

- [Pure Michigan Talent Connect](#)
- [jobsinlansing.com](#)
- [Ann Arbor Spark](#)

Additional Sites:

- [CareerBuilder website](#)
- [CareerOneStop website](#):
Click on the **Resources For** tab.
You'll find resources for:
 - Entry-level worker
 - Career changer
 - Military and veterans
 - 55+ workers
 - Worker with a criminal conviction
 - Workers with disabilities
 - Credential seeker
 - Work from home
 - Getting back to work
 - ...and more
- [Glassdoor website](#)
- [Idealist website](#)
- [Indeed website](#)
- [LinkedIn website](#)
- [Military website](#) (Hover over the **Veteran Jobs** tab and select **Veteran Job Search** from the menu of options.)
- [MONSTER website](#)
- [SimplyHired website](#)
- [USAJOBS website](#)
- [ZipRecruiter website](#)

Analyze the Job Listings

For each job listing: Identify **keywords** and **professional buzzwords**. You will want to use many of these in your resume and cover letter.

Research Employers of Interest

- Research each employer's website (description, history, philosophy, mission, strategic plan, etc.).
- Search for recent news articles on the employer.
- Utilize LinkedIn to learn about the company/organization/agency and hiring manager.
- Ask a librarian for suggestions regarding resources and databases with information on companies and their major competitors. On the home page of the [LCC Library website](#) there is an **Ask a Librarian** 24/7 online chat tool.

Update Your Resume & Get Supplemental Materials Ready

- Create a package for each job application. Include a resume and cover letter customized to the job.
- Create or update a print portfolio and/or digital portfolio that includes a range of your best works. Ask an LCC Instructor or two of yours if they would review your choice of materials.
- You may need additional items, such as a professional philosophy statement and writing samples.

See the CES [Brand Yourself Guide](#) about resume and cover letter writing, and more, complete with resume and cover letter samples.

Network Actively

Many of the best professional jobs are filled based on referrals or recommendations.

Start Applying & Responding

Make sure your applications are 100% complete or they may not get considered.

To optimize your job search success and use your time well, selectively apply to jobs for which you meet all or most of the required qualifications.

- Submit your applications early. This demonstrates interest and organization.
- When there is a Job Posting Number (or Job ID Number, Requisition Number, or other similar term.) listed for a job, include that in your cover letter.
- Use a professional email address and voice-mail message greeting. Check your emails and voice-mail messages frequently. It is professional etiquette to respond to an employer the same day.

Create a Tracking and Filing Organization System

- Keep a log of what you send, when, to whom, any follow-up you do, any additional communication or contact employers have with you, and any additional important information.
- Create an online folder and/or paper folder for storing copies of materials you have submitted to an employer. It can be helpful to bring a printed set of these to the interview.



**AN INTERVIEW IS
A GATEWAY TO A
POSSIBLE JOB OFFER**

Central Woodmen
RIVERSIDE FINANCIAL



PREPARE FOR INTERVIEWS

Interview Preparation Resources:

- **CES Career Advisor:** Can provide information regarding current interviewing preparation resources. Offers interviewing (preparation & practice) appointments conducted in person or virtually.
- **Capital Area Michigan Works! (CAMW):** Offers services and resources to help you get ready for interviews. Call (517) 492-5500 to learn more.
- **The [indeed website](#):** Provides information about companies, what people say about their interview experiences with these companies, and more. Search for a company and click on the **Company reviews** tab to access this information.

Types of Interviews

Given that employers are using a wide range of interview formats and platforms and the job market is very competitive, **preparing for multiple types of interviews in advance is essential**. Simply relying on strong “people skills” and self-confidence is not enough!

Interviews take a variety of forms. For example:

- They can be conducted face-to-face, virtually, or utilizing a combination of the two (with some interviewers meeting with you face-to-face while others are video-conferencing in to the interview).
- One person may interview you or a group or panel of interviewers may do so.
- You may even be interviewed along with other candidates in a group interview.

1st Interviews: It is fairly common for a first interview to be conducted by phone for the purpose of determining if you meet the requirements of the job. If so, you want to keep your replies brief and to the point.

2nd Interviews: Several top candidates may be invited for second interviews after first interviews have been completed. Second interviews may involve a set of interviews with various stakeholders over the course of at least half a day. Preparation for second interviews needs to be more extensive.

Virtual Platform Interviews and Artificial Intelligence

Virtual (online) interviews conducted by a person or robot are increasingly common.

When artificial intelligence is used, the entire interview is likely to be recorded and then analyzed. Your facial expressions, body gestures, tone of voice, talking speed, content, word choice, problem-solving skills and more might be evaluated.

Tips for a Successful Virtual Interview:

Test your technology

- A virtual interview can allow you to highlight your technology skills to an employer. Familiarize yourself with a variety of virtual interview platforms. Check the quality of your internet connection and webcam prior to the interview.

Set the stage and minimize distractions

- Choose an area of your home or space with a business-like background. Keep it organized, simple, and uncluttered.
- Test out different lighting so the video image of you that the employer sees is clear and warm (not dark). Sometimes, a lamp turned on behind you or off to the side of your computer provides good lighting.
- Set up your computer so that the camera is at eye level.
- Create quiet conditions in and around your video space. Minimize possible distractions.

Prepare and practice

- The interview format may have changed from those you have experienced in the past, but the questions have largely remained the same. Doing company research and practicing your answers to common and behavioral interview questions are still critically important. Practice virtual interviewing, such as by appointment with an LCC Career Advisor.
- See suggested resources in the **Research Employers of Interest** section on [page 12](#) of this guidebook.

Dress for success

- Dress as if you were going to an in-person interview. ([See page 21 for more details.](#))

Be aware of and manage your body language.

- There will not be an introductory handshake to start the interview, but you still have the opportunity to showcase your communication and human relations skills, show confidence, and exhibit enthusiasm.
- Sit up straight with good posture and smile.

Selection Process Assessments and Activities

- Employers may ask you to take assessments/tests and/or complete activities before, during, or after an interview. An employer may even have you work with a group of applicants to complete a task or project as a team. Review the job listing to brainstorm some tasks you could be asked to do.
- The employer may be looking for specific skills and qualities, for example: leadership ability, good problem-solving and logical analysis skills, teamwork skills, and the ability to complete tasks on time within a tight timeline.

Available Resources:

- Capital Area Michigan Works! (CAMW) teaches basic computer skills and job search-related skills. Visit the [CAMW website](#) to learn more.
- The LCC Library databases include the Learning Express Library, with practice tests and tutorials in math, reading, and writing, and a variety of computer software programs. Ask an LCC Librarian about these.

Interview Questions

Prepare for Different Types of Questions

- Common and tough interview questions.
- Behavioral or competency-based questions.
- Questions about salary needs. (Ask an LCC Career Advisor about resources that provide salary data.)
- Unexpected questions. (Example: If you were a tree, what kind of tree would you be? This is a great opportunity to convey some of the key things about yourself.)
- Keep in mind that underlying almost every question the employers want assurance that you have the qualifications, ability, and motivation to do the job well and work well with others.
- Be ready to respond to: "Do you have any questions for us?" (See p. 20.)

The "Tell Me (or Us) About Yourself" Question

This is a common question at the beginning of an interview. It is a chance for you to paint a picture of why you are the ideal candidate for the job and reflect your personality. First, you need to be as familiar as you can with the duties of the job and the required and desired qualifications.

- What relevant value do I have to offer?
 - What are my top strengths, talents, skills, qualities and work traits that are relevant to this job?
 - How have I prepared myself for my career and for a job like this one?
 - What are some likely common challenges and problems that could arise on this job and how can I reflect my knowledge of them and confidence that I am ready to handle them? Have I handled such challenges/problems before successfully?
- What attracts me to this job and company/organization? How does this match with who I am and what I value?
- Is there a specific achievement or accomplishment I wish to include in my response?
- Is there more to my quick "life story" summary that would be beneficial and relevant to present?

Behavioral Questions and Competency-Based Questions

Employers often like to ask behavioral questions and competency-based questions.

Competency-based interview questions tend to ask about **specific skills** the employer is seeking. Reading the job listing in advance carefully and identifying the skills needed can help you prepare for this kind of question.

Behavioral interview questions usually ask about **past behaviors**. The assumption is that your past behavior dealing with a given task (challenge or problem) is likely to reflect what your future behavior would be responding to a similar task (challenge or problem).

Employers may or may not tell you, but they usually want your answer to a behavioral question to be presented in a STAR manner and sequence, where:

S = Situation (Context)

T = Task (Challenge or Problem)

A = Actions you took, not your team's actions

R = Results

This type of question often starts with "Tell me (us) about a time when."

A couple common ones are:

- "Tell me about a time when you faced a challenge on your previous job."
- "Tell me about a time when you experienced a conflict with a customer, client, or other individual."

You can prepare for these questions by considering common tasks, demands, challenges, and possible problems of the job and what question an interviewer could ask you to see if you could handle these well. Create some "mini-story" STAR responses in advance of an interview.

Interview Tips

- 1. Mini-Stories.** Come prepared with some “mini-stories” about key achievements of yours.
- 2. Your Key Value.** Determine in advance the five or so things about you that you want to be sure to convey about yourself during the interview and try to work them into the interview. Think about what problems you might be able to solve, what value you would bring/add.
- 3. Greeting.** Meet each interviewer at a face-to-face interview with a smile, confident handshake, and pleasant greeting.
- 4. Eye Contact.** Make good, natural eye contact throughout the interview. When several people are interviewing you, it is important to engage with each interviewer. As a specific interviewer asks you a question, make eye contact with that person. As you start to respond to the interviewer's question, make eye contact again. Then, be sure to make eye contact with every other interviewer one at a time, but in a natural way and confident manner. As you conclude your answer, make eye contact again with the individual who asked the question. This helps everyone feel involved and provides a sense of closure.
- 5. Ask Questions.** Prepare about two or three questions to ask, but feel free to diverge from them if other questions become more important during the interview. Think about what you need to know to determine if this is the **job, company,** and **company culture** that, together, are the best match for you. Some sample questions are provided below.
 - Could you tell me more about the projects in which I would be involved?
 - Who would be my supervisor and how would you describe that person's leadership style?
 - How would you describe the level of financial and resources support this department receives within the company (company, school, organization, or agency)?
 - How does the company define, support, and celebrate diversity?
 - What are the greatest challenges facing this department and company currently and how are those challenges being addressed?
 - What do you believe are the most important skills, other qualifications, and experience needed to be successful in this job? Then you could follow-up with “May I take a moment to tell you why I am confident that I am the ideal candidate for this job?” In this way, you can customize your reply.

Recommended Attire and Grooming

Your interview attire and grooming make an important first impression. A suit is common attire for many interviews for professional jobs, but there are some exceptions. Dress for a virtual interview the same way you would for an in-person interview. It helps you get into the right mindset and demonstrate professionalism and interest in the job.

Cosmetic scents, jewelry, and body art:

- Cologne, perfume or after-shave should be mildly scented and applied moderately, if used.
- Remove all body piercing jewelry, except for one pair of earrings.
- In addition, covering tattoos is recommended. Some employers require that tattoos be covered at work.

Men's attire:

- In many cases a suit, button-down shirt, and tie is the appropriate attire.
- The color of socks, dress shoes, and belt should match.

Women's attire:

- In many cases a suit (with a skirt or pants), is the best attire choice. A dress, skirt, or pants and blouse combination and an optional accessory jacket or cardigan sweater are sometimes acceptable choices, too.
- Closed toe shoes, flats or classic high heel shoes with up to 3 inch heels are typically acceptable.
- Carrying a small purse, especially an over-the-shoulder one, is an option, too.

Exceptions:

There are some exceptions. At some IT start-up companies where dress is business casual, for example, wearing business casual dress to interviews is often considered to be most appropriate. You can check with the company's Human Resources Department about appropriate interview attire.

Second-hand professional clothing:

- Inventory at a number of the local 2nd-hand clothing stores often includes some professional clothing.
- Capital Area Michigan Works! (CAMW) maintains a free professional clothing closet. For closet hours, call (517) 492-5500.

What to Prepare and Bring With You

- Typically: A padfolio with paper and pen, copies of your resume, a list of references, and a few personal items (e.g., comb, lip protectant/lipstick, etc.)
- In some cases: A portfolio/examples of your work, and maybe a short writing sample and a longer one



**LEAVE A VERY
POSITIVE IMPRESSION**

MAKING YOURSELF STAND OUT AND FOLLOWING UP

- Highlight your “soft skills” and personality, in addition to your “hard skills.” (Hard skills are ones you learn by taking courses or via on-the-job training and are specific to the career/job, typically, such as operating an ultrasound machine or creating a lesson plan. Soft skills are those that are more broadly applicable across careers and jobs, such as human relations skills and communication skills.)
- Illustrate that you’ve “done your homework” on the company/organization/agency.
- Show interest, confidence, enthusiasm and passion.
- Present a good closing to the interview (e.g., indicate why you are the ideal candidate for the job).
- Thank the employer verbally for the interview.
- Ask for business cards of the interviewer(s) at face-to-face interviews.
- Jot down some notes right after you leave an interview.
- Send a “thank you” note (via email and/or postal mail) to interviewers within 24-48 hours after the interview. It can be a good idea to send a customized one to each interviewer. Think about what each person asked you and talked about at the interview. Otherwise, send one to the Hiring Manager or Chair of the Search (or Selection) Committee and express that you extend your gratitude to all members of the committee.
- Follow-up as appropriate. (You can contact an LCC Career Advisor if you have any questions about this.)
- Prepare for a possible salary and benefits negotiation.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Lansing Community College

411 N. Grand Ave.

Lansing, MI 48933

Career & Employment Services

Gannon Building, Room 2219

517-483-1172 | cesjoblink@lcc.edu

lcc.edu/ces

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