From the Center for Advising and Career Development:

In Search of the Perfect Job

Identify important career-related aspects about yourself:

- Know Yourself: Analyze yourself in terms of interests, values, skills; take a career assessment
  - What are your strengths? Areas of growth (i.e. weaknesses)?
  - What are your academic accomplishments?
  - What leadership/communication skills, knowledge, & abilities fit with the job?
- Research occupations that match your interests, values, and skills
- Create a brief 2-3 minute “elevator speech” about yourself
- Develop a clear job objective

Utilize the Career Services offered by the Center for Advising and Career Development

- Log in to Couglink using your WSU network id to gain access to on-campus interviewing, scheduling an appointment with a career counselor, and other career-related resources
- Come to career drop-In hours daily from 2-4pm for resume critiques and questions
- Attend Career Expos and Internship Fairs held twice a year

Network with university alumni, organizations, mentors, professors

- Create a list people you know and their professional contacts – identify how they could help in your job search
- Sign up for an alumni mentoring program (i.e. WSU Alumni Association)
- Join professional societies that relate to your career choice
- Volunteer or intern at places that are related to your field of study
- Go to career fairs and speak to company representatives, even if not seeking a job
- Attend company information sessions at your college and talk to recruiters one-on-one

Set Goals

- A critical step in job search is knowing what do you really want in a career
- Research your interests, skills, and values
- Know employer and job-specific information in your job search
- Determine the relationship between job title and job function
  - Job title – the actual position name used by the employing organization to label a specific job
  - Job functions – the activities or tasks the person in the job does on a day-to-day basis
- Plan an informational interview to learn more about potential employers
Steps for Informational Interviews

- Identify people to interview
  - Pursue your own contacts (family, professors, current/former employers, mentors)
  - Use social media tools such as LinkedIn to find contacts
  - Contact organizations directly or search their website for people doing work in an area that interests you
- Initiate contact by phone or email
  - Indicate how you obtained their name and contact info
  - Emphasize that you are contacting them for an informational interview
- Prepare for the interview
  - Research the employer and career field
  - Develop a 30 second to 3 minute elevator speech to introduce yourself and your reasons for contacting the person
  - Plan for open ended questions to maintain fluidity of the conversation
- Conduct the informational interview
  - Dress in professional attire, avoid strong perfumes/colognes, forget your backpack, take a notepad, bring copies of your resume
  - Reinstate that your goal is to gather information rather than a job
- Follow-up
  - Write down what you learned, what you still need to learn, and your reactions to how this would fit with your lifestyle, interests, skills and future career plans
  - Send a thank-you note within 1-2 days to express your appreciation for their time
  - Keep in touch. Let the interviewee know that you followed up on one of their suggestions and tell them how things are going

Questions to ask at a career expo/internship fair:

- What types of skills and experience are you are seeking?
- What challenges do you see for your organization?
- What do you like most about your organization?
- Are there openings in your organization? What jobs do you anticipate will open?
- Do you have internships or summer jobs?
- Considering my interest, are there additional people in the organization I should contact?
- What are the typical entry-level opportunities in this career?
- What skills are most important for a position in this field?
- Describe the “normal” career path in your organization
- What type of training is available for entry-level staff?
- What advice would you give to someone who wants to break into this field?