

If you are graduating from college in the spring and have not already started looking for a job by February of your graduating year, you're arriving very late in the game. By now, employers who have formal, structured entry-level opportunities (i.e., training programs) have extended most or all of the job offers they plan to extend to students in the Class of 2007.

You have no time to cry over spilled milk! Here's what you need to do IMMEDIATELY!

1. **Figure out what you want to do!** A critical step that students sometimes forget. Knowing the type of work you want to do is going to drive your job search strategy. Knowing what you want to do and being able to articulate it – quickly and clearly – will also prepare you for interviews. Try the Princeton Review Career Quiz - <http://www.princetonreview.com/cte/quiz/default.asp?menuID=0&careers=6>
2. **Create a resume – or two.** Your resume is your first opportunity to make a good impression. Or not. Within the first 2 or 3 seconds of review, I know whether I want to spend anymore time reviewing a resume. If it's poorly formatted, I won't take the time! Jobstar Central offers good tips and samples. <http://jobstar.org/tools/resume/index.php>
3. **Start looking.** Since you've gotten a late start, you need to **quickly** explore every job search opportunity you can find. This is one of those times when it's important to call on assistance from friends and family. Let everyone you know (literally) that you're looking for a job and ask for referrals. As soon as you have names and numbers, start making calls! You should also consider searching online, but don't let the Internet be your only search tool. Get started at College Grad.com - <http://www.collegegrad.com/>.
4. **Write a winning cover letter.** Always write a cover letter to accompany your resume when applying for jobs. In two or three well written paragraphs, your cover letter should help you express your interest in the job and company, highlight your relevant skills and experiences and set out a plan for follow-up. Jobstar Central has some very good tips and sample cover letters.
5. **Interview, interview, interview.** Interview with everyone you can for every opportunity that comes your way. Even if the job isn't exactly what you're looking for. Even if you don't get or want the job your interviewing, a good interview can open the door for other opportunities. Plus, with interviewing, practice makes perfect. Visit your career services office on campus to explore opportunities to do "mock interviews." Before you attend your interview, even if it's just informational, be sure to learn as much as possible about the company and be able to explain why you would be a good asset to them. How do your skills and experiences make you the best person for the job.
6. **Follow-up.** Always collect business cards during your interviews so that you can send thank you letters to everyone you've met. You should send a brief letter or email thanking the interviewer for his or her time, reiterate your interest in the company and the job and why you're the one to hire!

For those of you who are have a year or two before graduation, you should be looking for an internship. NOW IS THE TIME! You can use the apply the same advise and use the same resources.

Jump in feet first and remember – the best way to predict the future is to create it!