CAREER

Start with a search plan

Focus prevents busywork.

THE PRACTICAL JOB SEARCH PLAYBOOK

SET A 30-DAY TARGET

Choose one primary role and two related titles. Define location, schedule, work authorization requirements, and your minimum acceptable conditions before browsing.

- ☐ Primary role: ____
- ☐ Related titles: ____ / ____
- ☐ Target locations or remote boundary: ____
- ☐ Weekly time blocks: ____

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What work do I want to do repeatedly?

Which requirement is truly non-negotiable?

USE A SIMPLE WEEKLY RHYTHM

Reserve separate blocks for research, applications, conversations, and follow-up. A smaller plan completed consistently beats an ambitious plan you cannot sustain.

EXAMPLE

Monday: save 10 relevant roles. Tuesday: tailor two applications. Wednesday: contact one person. Friday: review the tracker and send follow-ups.

This guide offers general job-search education, not legal, immigration, financial, or employment advice. Confirm hiring, pay, eligibility, and workplace-rights questions with the employer or an appropriate qualified professional; consult official government labor resources for your location.

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Define a credible target

Match your evidence to the work you seek.

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BUILD A ROLE SCORECARD

Read five postings for the same target. List repeated responsibilities, tools, and outcomes. These patterns become your resume language and interview preparation.

- ☐ Repeated task or skill
- ☐ Evidence I already have
- ☐ Gap I can address honestly
- ☐ Where it appears in my materials

WRITE A VALUE STATEMENT

Use a plain sentence: ·I help [who] achieve [outcome] by [relevant strengths].· Keep it specific enough to guide choices, not so broad that it fits any job.

EXAMPLE

I help busy operations teams keep customer requests moving by organizing details, communicating clearly, and improving handoffs.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What outcome have I helped create?

What proof could I share?

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Find worthwhile openings

Search broadly, then evaluate deliberately.

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USE THREE CHANNELS

Combine employer career pages, reputable job boards, and conversations with people who know the field. Save the posting link and date because listings can change or close quickly.

- [ ] Search employer sites for organizations you would consider
- [ ] Use title variations and skill keywords
- [ ] Ask contacts what titles their teams actually use

SCREEN BEFORE YOU SPEND TIME

Read the entire posting. Check core duties, required eligibility, location, compensation information where provided, and application instructions. Skip roles that conflict with a clear boundary.

EXAMPLE

A posting says ·hybrid· but requires three office days in another state. If relocation is not possible, record it as a no and continue.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What evidence makes this role a strong match?

What question must be answered before applying?

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Tailor each application

Make relevance easy to see.

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TRANSLATE THE POSTING INTO PROOF

Select the three most important needs you can support honestly. Mirror plain-language terms when accurate, then connect each term to a result, responsibility, or project in your resume.

- ☐ Need: ____ | my evidence: ____
- ☐ Need: ____ | my evidence: ____
- ☐ Need: ____ | my evidence: ____

QUALITY CHECK

Confirm the employer name, job title, dates, links, file name, and requested materials. Never claim a credential, result, or experience you cannot explain.

EXAMPLE

Instead of ·expert in project management,· write ·coordinated a six-week volunteer event schedule for 12 participants.·

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Could a reader find my strongest relevant evidence in 15 seconds?

What fact needs correcting before I submit?

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Reach out with purpose

Ask for perspective, not favors.

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CHOOSE PEOPLE THOUGHTFULLY

Start with former coworkers, classmates, community contacts, or people connected to a target organization. Request a short conversation about their work; do not demand a referral.

- [ ] Why this person is relevant
- [ ] One question I can ask
- [ ] A reasonable time request: 15·20 minutes

USE A RESPECTFUL MESSAGE

Personalize one sentence, make the request small, and give an easy way to decline.

EXAMPLE

Hello Maya, I am exploring customer support operations roles and appreciated your post about team onboarding. Would you be open to a 15-minute conversation about the skills your team values? I understand if your schedule is full.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What did I genuinely notice about this person's work?

What will I do if I receive no reply after one follow-up?

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Track and follow up

Use dates so opportunities do not live in your head.

THE PRACTICAL JOB SEARCH PLAYBOOK

RECORD EVERY ACTION

For each role, track company, title, source, date applied, contact, status, next action, and follow-up date. Add a brief note about why it fit.

- [ ] Applied
- [ ] Interview requested
- [ ] Waiting
- [ ] Closed or declined
- [ ] Follow-up sent

FOLLOW UP ONCE, PROFESSIONALLY

If the posting gives no instruction, a concise follow-up after the stated timeline·or roughly one to two weeks·can be reasonable. Do not repeatedly contact people who have not responded.

EXAMPLE

Hello Jordan, I applied for the Operations Coordinator role on May 3. I remain interested and would be glad to provide any additional information. Thank you for your time.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What is my next action and exact date?

Which applications should I close rather than keep revisiting?

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Prepare for conversations

Bring evidence, questions, and a calm plan.

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PREPARE THREE STORIES

Choose examples involving a challenge, collaboration, and learning. Use Situation, Task, Action, Result. State your own contribution and use numbers only when accurate.

EXAMPLE

Situation: requests were missed. Action: I created a shared intake list and daily check-in. Result: the team had one visible queue and fewer duplicate responses.

ASK USEFUL QUESTIONS

- ☐ What would a strong first 90 days look like?
- ☐ How does this team decide priorities?
- ☐ What challenge is most urgent for the person in this role?

CLOSE THE LOOP

Send a brief thank-you within 24 hours, naming one useful detail from the conversation. Review what you learned and update your target or materials when the evidence calls for it.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Which story best demonstrates my fit?

What did I learn that changes my next move?