

How to stay on top of your job search

Trying to find your ideal role can take effort. From the admin of updating and tailoring your cover letter and resume, to the process of searching and applying for jobs to thinking big and making decisions, there's a lot to keep track of.

But there are ways to organise and simplify your job search and make it a much smoother process.

Check out these practical tips from Leah Lambart, career coach at Relaunch Me, and you'll be well on your way to streamlining your search.

1. Map out what you want from work

"Before you launch into your job search, think about what you really want out of your next role," Lambart says.

Grab a big piece of paper and map out the following:

- What technical and soft skills do you want to use?
- What type of people do you want to work with?
- What would be the values of your ideal organisation?
- What is your ideal workplace culture?
- What are your preferred locations?
- What is your preferred salary range?

2. Define your personal brand

This may sound intimidating, but it's really just about communicating what you've done in the past and what you want to do in the future.

"Having a strong personal brand can make a huge difference in helping you land your dream job," Lambart says. "Employers want people who know who they are, and who are able to present themselves as attractive employees. It's not the employer's job to work out what you can do for them."

This is why it's crucial to think about what matters most to you, and why the above mapping step is so important.

You should also be able to clearly communicate why you left your last role. "Your personal brand should include a strong 'leaving statement,'" Lambart says. "An employer will want to know why you left your previous role, so be prepared and practice answering this question so it's convincing."

Search outside of your comfort zone

Once you're fully aware of what you want, it's time to start searching – and this means going beyond the roles you've held and maybe even the industry you've worked in.

Get creative and search beyond the traditional job titles in your industry. Titles tend to evolve over time, especially in creative industries.

Use SEEK to scope out new terms and also find jobs that align with your experience that you might not have previously considered. You might surprise yourself by finding new ways to apply your skills and experience.

3. Keep tabs on your job search

Once you know exactly what roles you're interested in, set up customized search alerts on SEEK. "Having jobs that match your search criteria appear in your inbox on a daily basis will ensure that you don't miss out on suitable opportunities," Lambart says.

When you're signed in on SEEK, you can track and manage all of the jobs you've saved and applied for, plus your previous searches and recommended jobs. If you want to get even more detailed, you can use your own spreadsheet as well. There are many free templates online that let you input and keep track of every little step, from application to interview to proficiency tests and feedback.

4. Become an active networker

"The more people that know you are looking for a job the better," Lambart says. "Don't hold back from telling friends and acquaintances that you're in the job market and what type of work you're looking for."

Lambart recommends writing a list of previous colleagues, bosses and/or clients that you had a great working relationship with. Then you can contact them to ask them to keep you in mind for suitable opportunities.

Organise to get out there and connect with people in your areas of interest over lunch or coffee, Lambart recommends. “New jobs often come out of these meetings – it’s all about timing!” Talking with people regularly about what you’re looking for will also give you more confidence and practice that will bode well for your job interviews.

5. Stay positive and schedule breaks

“Job searching can be an intimidating and impersonal process,” Lambart says. There can be many reasons why you might not hear back or be offered a job – the role could have been withdrawn, an internal candidate could be promoted, the hiring manager might not know what they want. So, Lambart says, “Try not to take it personally.”

“Connect with others going through the same process, seek support from a career coach if you need it, and make sure you take a break from your job search at least one day a week.”