Steps For Staying Organized During The Job Search Process

As you move through the process of applying for internship or job opportunities you will most likely be generating multiple applications leading to a number of important tasks and deadlines to keep track of. To assist you in keeping organized, try implementing the following steps to avoid missing a key deadline, confusing interview times, or forgetting to follow-up after an interview.

Step One: Create A Tracking System

You will want to begin by having a place where you can see all of your internship or job search details at the same time. There are two methods you can use for this.

- ☐ **A Spreadsheet**: Use Google Sheets or Excel to create columns that you can place check marks in as you complete each step of the application process. Some recommended columns to include **company name, person of contact at that company and their email/phone number, internship or job being applied for, date the application was submitted, date of interview, thank-you note sent, and status of application i.e. interviewing for internship or job**
- ☐ **A Project Management Tool:** Use Trello or Asana to create cards or projects for each internship or job you are applying for and then create tasks to assign to each of those projects to ensure you don't miss something like researching the company before an interview or sending a thank-you note after an interview.

Step Two: Utilize the Label & Folder Features In Your Email

Having a system for your email will prevent communications from getting confusing or lost as there will most likely be some back and forth messaging to get something like an interview scheduled. Follow these steps to keep your email in-box organized.

- ☐ **Labels**: Create labels related to common types of emails received during the application process such as phone interview, video interview, and reference check. Whenever an email comes in, give it a label that matches with the content of the message and what step is being scheduled.
- ☐ **Folders:** Create folders (in Gmail you'll have to utilize additional labels) for each company you are submitting an application to and then when an email comes in related to that company, give it the appropriate label, and place it in the company folder. This will enable you to quickly review all of your correspondence for a specific company so you know exactly where you are at in the application process with them.

Step Three: Use Folders & Professional Naming For Your Documents

When you are applying for an internship or job you will submit a resume and perhaps additional documents such as a cover letter and reference list. To avoid sending a cover letter that may reference another company, create folders on your computer or Google Drive for each company you are applying to and keep all documents related to that company in that folder. Remember to use professional naming for your documents.

☐ **Sample Naming for Job Search Document**: Sample, Samantha_Resume_Clinic Assistant_Children's Minnesota

Step Four: Save The Job Description

Most job postings are only on a company website for a specific period of time before being taken down. However, you may not receive an invitation to interview until after the posting has already been taken down. During the interview, you'll want to be able to show how your skills and qualifications align with the candidate profile outlined in the job posting so it is important you don't lose this!

☐ **Don't lose the job posting- copy and paste the job description to a document that you can save to refer back to it later.**

Step Five: Utilize Your Calendar To Keep Interviews Organized

The calendar feature built into most email platforms is one of the strongest tools you have to ensure you don't double book yourself with interviews. Most calendar features also enable you to set reminders such as when to submit a resume so you don't miss the deadline of the job posting closing.

☐ As soon as you schedule an interview block that time off in your calendar and consider adding additional time for preparation or drive time if it is an on-site interview.

Step Six: Quality Over Quantity For Job Applications

By applying for lots of jobs you may think you are increasing your chances of obtaining something that is a good fit for you. However, keep in mind you need to tailor your application materials for each employer. Applying for a high number of jobs could make this difficult, and will also be giving you more dates and deadlines to keep track of.

☐ Carefully evaluate each job posting to determine if you meet the job requirements and if the job is actually something you want to be working in

Bonus Tip: Keep Your Workspace Clean To Promote Focus

When you are surrounded by clutter you may find it difficult to keep your focus on your internship or job search. Work on your applications somewhere you can be free of distractions.