



3. Online Job Searches

Most employers expect that job seekers will use the internet as their primary tool for finding job opportunities and, in many cases, applying for jobs. But, as most of us know, the web can be a big and overwhelming place. This section outlines some guidelines that will help you get organized, ask meaningful questions, and look for answers in the right places.

Strategy

Successful job seekers have typically learned the art of time management and goal setting – key elements of an effective job search strategy. For example, many successful job seekers commit a block of hours every day for searching and identifying companies they want to contact and jobs to which they want to apply. Consider a schedule in which every Monday morning you conduct internet searches that, at a minimum, result in the names of 10 new employers. Tuesday's goal could be contacting the 10 employers you identified Monday. Tuesday morning, from 9 to 11 a.m., might be a good time to reach employers.

Staying Organized During Your Job Search

Grabs the attention of employers and recruiters

- What is next on my plan?
- What can I accomplish today?
- Who on my networking list can I talk to?

Organized people tend to plan ahead. As you wrap up your day's activities, make a to-do list, using your job search plan, for the following day. This will help you remain focused, since even when things come up unexpectedly, you'll be able to get back on track quickly. Finally, review your job search plan weekly to see if there are other actions to include, and to check completed items off your list.

Research

Research is a critical part of the job search process. It can help you:

- Identify companies that may be hiring in your field. Visit the [Business Finder](#) to identify and get contact information for employers in your local area.
- Prepare you for a job interview.
- Learn about potential growth of businesses and industries.
- Focus your job search on employers that share your values.
- Understand how you can apply your skills in a new field.

Once you've identified some companies you're interested in – or perhaps even scheduled an interview – you can visit the companies' websites to learn more about them. Locate websites by entering the full name of the business into a search engine. Refer to Section 9 (Job Interviews) of the Reemployment Activities



Chapter for more information on researching employers. Below are some key questions you might ask about potential employers:

Questions

Where to Search

What products/services does the employer provide? What industry trends are affecting the company?

Employer websites. These often describe the company unit(s) that may be hiring in your field. They also provide details on the types of products or programs they offer.

Regional or state publications:

- Chamber of Commerce directories
- Manufacturers' directories by state

National publications. Most libraries have copies in their business sections.

- National Trade & Professional Associations
- Standard and Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors & Executives
- The MacMillan Directory of Leading Private Companies
- Ward's Business Directory of Major U.S. Private Companies

These are just a few examples. Almost every industry has its own trade association.

How many employees does the employer have? What jobs does the company typically hire for? What is the employer's hiring policy? Where is the employer located? Does it have more than one location? Is it on the bus line?

Employer websites. These often include size of their workforce, hiring policies, and job openings. They may also provide details on company location(s) and mass transit options. Also, check recent press releases for news about plant expansions, new product roll-outs, or sponsorship of events.

College and university placement or career services offices. See if the company is recruiting on campus. Find out which qualifications they look for when they hire.

What are the employer's mission and values? How long have they been in business? Is the employer involved in community services? If so, what types?

Employer websites. Look for annual reports. Annual reports outline the employer's successes, growth, history, and financial status. Or contact the employer's public relations office or personnel department. Companies that give back to the community often have a section of their website devoted to their efforts.

What is the employer's financial situation? Is the company making money? Has it downsized in the last five years? Has there been any recent important news related to the company? What do others think about the company?

Employer websites. Review recent and past press releases. Annual reports often include a financial report for the year. If the company has investors, detailed financial reports may also be online.

Current newspapers, trade journals, and business magazines. The business section of most papers has articles about local companies and their executives. You can find back copies in library archives. Also check [Businessweek](#) for company and industry news.

What's it really like to work for this employer? How does this employer make hiring decisions?

Current or past employees. Talk with people who are working or have worked for the company.

Alternatively, of course, you may enter any question directly into a popular search engine such as Bing or Google. It never hurts to try!



Keeping Track

Another key component of an effective job search strategy is to keep track of your efforts. It is likely that your job search could involve hundreds of contacts and potential opportunities. You will need to organize this information to ensure you are making progress.

To do this, many job experts recommend using a "contact tracker," which creates an organized list of companies you've contacted, dates, your action to date (such as application submitted or interviewed) and the status of the lead.

Most unemployment insurance programs have their own form of contact tracker. To ensure you are in compliance with the requirements of the program, it is certainly recommended that you use the form provided by the state you are filing against. If you are a NH unemployment insurance recipient, you are required to provide the information below.

Please provide details of your first work search effort for last week.

* Work Search Date: * Method of Contact: **Select One**

* Employer Name: Applied on Company Website
 Employer name is unknown Applied on Job Search Website
Browsed Company Website
Browsed Job Search Website
Email
Fax
In person
Mail
Phone

Contact Name:

Address Line 1: PO Box:

Address Line 2: Country:

City: State: Country:

Telephone: Extn: Fax:

Email Address:

Company Website:

Job Search Website:

* Type of work: Job ID #:

Outcome of Work Search

* Results: **Select One**

Interview Date: *If scheduled for interview* Interview Time:

Start Date: *If offered a job*

However, if you feel like you need to track more information than what is required, consider designing your own tracking tool.



Creating a spreadsheet is an effective way to keep track of your job applications. It doesn't have to be fancy, and it's up to you how detailed you want to get. Here is some key information to include:

- **Company Name** – The name of the organization you're applying.
- **Contact** – Your point of contact at the company; probably the person to whom you addressed your cover letter, such as a Director of Human Resources or Office Manager.
- **E-mail** – The e-mail of your point of contact, or, if preferred, a phone number.
- **Date Applied** – When you submitted your application.
- **Application Summary** – What you submitted: a cover letter, resume, and any additional materials, like a portfolio or reference list.
- **Interview** – When your interview is scheduled.
- **Follow-Up** – Did you send a [thank you e-mail or letter](#)? If so, indicate the date sent.
- **Status** – If you were rejected, offered the job, asked in for a second interview, etc.

If you don't want to use Excel, you can create a simple table in Microsoft Word or a similar word processor. Just insert a table and choose the number of columns based on how many categories you want to keep track of (company name, contact information, date applied, and so on) and the number of rows, relative to how many positions you're applying for.

A system for organizing your search activities will not only advance your job search but will also help you quickly and easily provide the required information for your NH UI claim to ensure continuation of benefits during your period of unemployment.

If you are drawing unemployment insurance, make sure you know the answers to the following questions:

- a) What are the allowable activities and/or methods of employer contact?
- b) Is there a required number of job search activities you must perform every week? If yes, how many?
- c) Is there a required number of employer contacts you must perform every week? If yes, how many?
- d) What are acceptable methods of documentation for these activities and/or employer contacts?

Failure to follow the State's requirements can result in loss of benefits or you may risk being overpaid and having to pay money back. For more details, please refer to the **Tying in Your Reemployment Efforts with Your Unemployment Insurance Benefits** section.

Note that these are only guidelines. The best tracking mechanism is one that you understand and feel comfortable using. The following is an example of how such a tracking chart might look. It is designed for a one-week timeframe.



Tools

There are many online tools you should use to make the most of the internet during your job search:

- **Company websites** can help you learn more about businesses or organizations. A company's website is the first place you should go to research an employer. The quality and amount of information on sites vary widely. You will often find vision and mission statements, a history of the organization, names of key leaders and supervisors, business goals, and job postings.
- **Social media sites** like LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook can be an invaluable part of a job search. Visit [Take your network online](#) for information and tips on using these sites for job searching.
- **Job boards or job banks** are the most common tool used to search for jobs on the Internet. Most let you search by keywords to find jobs. Job banks are websites where job seekers can search and apply for job openings online. They are sometimes called job boards. Many let you search by location, field, industry, or job title. However, don't spend hours browsing job boards for openings. Your chances of finding a position listed on a job board are slim. Use the [Job Finder](#) to access four national websites that are updated daily, and learn how to [post your resume online](#).
- **Online periodicals** are an easy way to access newspapers, magazines, and trade journals. Trade journals have articles by industry experts, information on networking events, industry blogs, and job banks. To find a trade journal, try typing "trade journal directory" into a search engine. Your public library can also help you access databases of trade journals and professional associations.
- **Association websites** have information on trends, volunteer or professional development opportunities, best practices, industry news, and a job board. Almost every industry has an association. You may need to be a member to gain access to their content. Most charge annual fees. Some may have six-month memberships to give you time to see how useful the site is for your job search. [Find professional associations](#).
- **Job Fairs/Recruitment Events** are conducted statewide on a regular basis. For more information on any of these visit <http://www.nhes.nh.gov/media/job-fairs/index.htm>.

Search engines are the main tool to finding information online. They search for keywords you enter and create a list of websites based on them. You can use this to track down jobs and learn more about companies. Bing and Google are examples of popular search engines.

In addition, web browsers have many tools to help you make the most of your web searches. They remember the websites you visit and can pull them up in the future after just a few keystrokes. You can save and organize the sites you visit as bookmarks or favorites. This allows you to access them more easily later.



Be sure to also check out [online networking websites](#). These can connect you with potential jobs, colleagues, and business opportunities.

State Job Banks

Of the tools listed on the previous page, it is likely that job boards or job banks may be your first stop. This is because many states require that you build and/or post a resume within their statewide job bank in order to be eligible for unemployment compensation. State Workforce Agencies are required under law to run a statewide job bank that connects employers and job seekers. They do that by providing an online forum where employers post jobs and job seekers post resumes. These job banks also typically offer search functions for employers to find workers with the right skills, and job seekers to find available jobs that match their interests, abilities, location, etc.

The National Labor Exchange

The [National Labor Exchange \(NLx\)](#) is an electronic labor exchange network that collects and distributes job openings *exclusively* found on over 18,000 sites – and is growing on a daily basis. The NLx gathers currently available and unduplicated job opportunities from verified employers and pushes that content into state job banks and other sites. So check out NH's job bank (the [JMS](#)) – it's using advanced technology to power your job search!⁵

Other Job Banks/Boards

You have probably already heard of some of the more popular job banks, such as [Monster](#), [Careerbuilder](#), and [Indeed](#). These are large job banks that include jobs of all levels, occupations, and locations. We also recommend looking at some that specialize in certain kinds of jobs. You can search for "job bank" in any web browser. You will also find many useful job board listings and specialized job banks and resources in [Job Search Links & Career Resources](#).

Most job banks will give you a general introduction to using their site. Here are the common tasks you can do at most job banks:

- **Search and apply for job openings.** There are thousands of online job banks. Most work in the same basic way. Employers pay to post job openings. Job seekers search the openings for free. Individuals typically register to learn more and apply for jobs. This should also be free of charge.
- **Post your resume.** Sometimes you can post your resume without applying for a specific job. Then employers might find you for an open position. Follow the specific instructions on each job bank site to post your resume.



- **Get a feel for the jobs and the pay.** Job banks can be a good research tool. You may find good bullet statements for your resume. You can learn what skills employers are looking for. You can also learn what kind of pay to expect for different jobs.

Be On the Lookout for Job Scams

You should be cautious about any communications you receive offering you a job or mentioning that the sender viewed your resume online. Be cautious and NEVER send anyone money that has offered you work of any kind. Even if they have recently sent you a check which you deposited, the check could be a fake.

A few things to keep in mind when using job banks:

- **You should not have to pay to search through job openings on a job bank.** You should also be able to post your resume for free. However, you may have to register with a user name and password in order to use all the features of a job bank.
- **If it looks too good to be true, it probably is.** Sometimes, job postings on online job banks are scams. They try to get you to pay up front or perform illegal activities. Beware of job postings that ask you for an "up-front" investment of money. Also be wary of offers that seem too good to be true. For instance, you can't really earn thousands of dollars for depositing checks from foreign countries. And it may be illegal to ship items from your home. Read more about [job scams](#) on [Consumer.gov](#).
- **Never give personal information.** A legitimate company won't ask you for certain personal details online. Be careful about giving your social security or national ID number online. Also be wary of giving a credit card number, bank account information, or similar details.

Steps to better protect yourself:

- Be cautious of any employer offering employment without an interview (either in person or by phone).
- Be cautious of any employer who charges a fee to either employ or find placement for you.
- Please investigate thoroughly any employer requesting that you transfer funds or receive packages for reshipment, especially if they are located overseas. Most of these employment offers are check-cashing or shipping scams!
- Do not provide your social security number or any other sensitive information to an employer unless you are confident that the employer is legitimate.
- Be cautious of employers who conduct their interviews in a home setting or in motel rooms.
- Beware when money is required up front for instructions or products.
- Be cautious of exaggerated claims of possible earnings or profits.



Post Your Resume Wisely

Here are guidelines for making good use of your time online:

- **Explore niche (specialty) job boards.** Don't just post on Monster. Look at sites like [Dice](#) (for technology) or [Healthcare Career Connection](#) (for health care).
- **Target websites of companies you're interested in.** Determine which companies to target and post resumes to their sites. Better yet, contact these employers directly.
- **Try "aggregator" sites like NH's [JMS](#) and [Indeed](#).** These sites combine search results from job boards, company websites, professional associations, and other sources.



1. *Upload your resume to at least three different online job banks, including your state job bank.*
2. *Using the information you've learned in this section, research three companies/employers within your field of interest. Complete all the information required in the on the following page.*
3. *Track your weekly job searches and applications in an Employment Contact Tracker spreadsheet. Use the format provided to you by the NH Unemployment Insurance program ([Work Search Activity Log](#)), use the template on page 32, or use your own design (following the guidelines provided in the Keeping Track section). No matter the format, if you are receiving unemployment insurance benefits, please be sure you meet all required criteria.*



Company/Employer Research

	Company #1	Company #2	Company #3
Company/Employer Name and Address			
What products/services does the employer provide?			
Does this company/employer have more than one location? If yes, list other locations.			
What jobs does the company typically hire for?			
How many jobs in your field is this company/employer currently trying to fill?			
What are the employer's mission and values?			
How long have they been in business?			
Has the company/employer downsized in the last five years?			
Has there been any recent important news related to the company/employer?			
What's it really like to work for this employer?			



To document the completion of these activities, we recommend that you save your work electronically in an easily accessible location, with an appropriate file name and date.

Alternatively, you may also print out your work and maintain the document in your work search records. Be sure to properly label and date your print documents.



Confirm the applicable NH unemployment insurance requirements and be sure to follow them closely to avoid benefit disqualifications or overpayments.