

How to Manage Your Time While Job Searching

Feeling overwhelmed with finding work as a new grad? Remember, job searching is like a full-time job and managing your time effectively will help optimize your efforts. This handout will help you plan each week and remain organized as a job seeker.

Criteria	Weekly Time	Actions This Week
1. Structured Scheduling	→ 30-35 hours/week (~6-7 hrs/day)	→ Block consistent daily sessions for applications, research, outreach, skill-building, and breaks. Treat it like a full-time job!
2. Daily Priorities	→ ~1 hour/day	→ Select 2-3 key tasks each day and label them High/Medium/Low priority.
3. Focused Intervals	→ ~2-3 hours/day	→ Work in 25-minute bursts with brief 5-minute breaks to maintain high focus.
4. Application Tracking	→ 3-4 hours/week	→ Record applications, deadlines, interview dates, contacts, and follow-ups.
5. Organization Research	→ 3-4 hours/week	→ Research target companies, roles, and industry updates thoroughly before submitting your applications.
6. Networking Outreach	→ 6-8 hours/week	→ Send LinkedIn messages, schedule info sessions, and attend relevant events.
7. Skill Development	→ 3-5 hours/week	→ Spend time on online courses, certifications, or mini-projects to stay sharp.
8. Grouping Tasks	→ Integrate into schedule	→ Group related tasks (e.g., cover letters, emails) to reduce context switching.
9. Wellness & Breaks	→ 5-7 hours/week	→ Include exercise, rest, social time, or hobbies to recharge and avoid burnout.
10. Weekly Review & Reset	→ 1-2 hours/week	→ Reflect on progress, celebrate wins, note blocking times, and modify the plan accordingly for next week's schedule.

Time Management Pitfalls to Avoid

Try not to do the following:

- **Skipping weekly planning:** Leads to unfocused, inconsistent effort.
- **Not prioritizing tasks:** All tasks feel equal; critical ones get sacrificed.
- **Ignoring tracking:** Forgetting follow-ups or deadlines causes missed opportunities.
- **Neglecting breaks:** Leads to burnout, low motivation, and mental fatigue.
- **Underestimating task time:** Misjudging durations clogs your schedule.
- **Allowing distractions:** Social media, phones, and discouraging articles about the job market can derail progress.
- **Over-focusing on one option:** Limits opportunities and delays your search.
- **Overcommitting your time:** Too many tasks leave no room for core activities.

Time Management Tips While Job Searching and Balancing Personal Life

Consider these tips when managing your job search and personal responsibilities (such as health, social obligations, or caregiving):

- **Time-block for both areas:** Reserve specific periods each day for job search tasks (e.g., applications, networking) and personal responsibilities like pet care, meals, medical appointments, and family time.
- **Set non-negotiable personal appointments:** Schedule essential activities such as meal times, exercise, or family routines as fixed commitments that you treat just like job-search time.
- **Create focused boundaries:** When in job-search mode, minimize distractions and stay present; when it's time to shift to personal life, close your browser or put your job search aside entirely.
- **Use support and delegate:** Lean into your immediate circle of support! Ask for help with childcare, pet walking, errands, or household tasks whenever possible, so you have predictable, uninterrupted time for focused work.
- **Schedule self-care and recovery:** Plan for breaks, downtime, or leisure activities each day to recharge, which will help you maintain energy, focus, and motivation throughout both personal and job-search activities.

Remember to [contact Career Services](#) for additional 1:1 support when developing good job search and networking strategies.