It’s not uncommon to perceive the job search as a complicated or overwhelming process, one that can be vague and generates stress. Perhaps the process seems unclear.

And while we acknowledge that possibility, the Office of Career Strategy can assist you as you plan for your job search. We do not approach this as a monolithic process, but rather as one that includes small, achievable steps with actionable items that are well within your reach. Basic planning and consistent effort can streamline your approach.

In this video, we will cover two different phases of a successful job search: the philosophical and the practical.

Most students begin at the practical phase – we understand there’s limited time and resources for the job search process. However, it is important to consider the philosophical phase, which can include asking yourself basic questions. Getting answers to these questions helps us reveal important information about ourselves. These answers may not be entirely clear, may also require further investigation, and may change over time, and that’s okay! You will learn more as you investigate your options externally and reflect on how these options align internally.

Overall, this reflective process results in the development of a personal and professional narrative.

With these philosophical exercises under way, you can now implement the more practical, active phase of this process! These steps involve those most commonly associated with the job search:

1. First, understand the difference between industry and job function. You might know about Facebook and Google as technology companies that hire software engineers, but they also hire for Human Resources, marketing, accounting, & research and development roles. Alternatively, software engineers also work for educational institutions, financial firms, media organizations, and more!
2. Then, learn about employers that exist within your fields of interest.
3. Next, create a target employer list, including pertinent information. Keep track of which positions you’ve applied for and which company websites you plan to circle back to.
4. Expand your target employer list using OCS and outside resources. Be open to learning about new employers and that your employer list may ebb and flow as the process continues.
5. Engage with peers and alumni who work in, or formerly worked in, those industries or job functional areas of interest. This process, commonly referred to as networking, serves as a way for you to learn about a given company, industry, or job function. Remember, you are not reaching out because you think the contact can hire you into a position. You are reaching out to learn more about that person’s role within a company or their career trajectory. Most people love talking about themselves and the work they do, so don’t be afraid of asking for direction – chances are, they can share additional contacts and possibly point you in the right direction.
6. Finally, apply for positions as you discover them. Remember to follow up with those who helped you along the way and keep them informed of your progress.

This sequenced method of achievable steps, including establishing a confident professional narrative, investigating industries and employers, consistent networking, and applying to available positions will put you
on the path to success! Be sure to refer to our Career Strategy Workbooks for supplemental materials and an easy-to-follow checklist!