Searching for Job & Company Information

Starting the Job Search Process

We know that starting the job search might be intimidating and stressful. You may be asking, *where should I even begin?* Here are a few starting points:

1. **Create a list of your dream companies.** This list can have as many companies as you like but a good number to start with is 10. After you complete your list, visit their website and begin your research.
   - If you don't have any dream companies that automatically come to mind, consider what field(s) you are interested in (i.e. healthcare, finance, education, gaming) or types of products you love using and search for top companies in that field.
   - If you have a dream job, search for that role and look at who is currently hiring that position. Visit their website to learn about the work they do, the people they work with, the products they create, etc. See the section below for more information on how to search for company information.
   - **NOTE**: Take notes of what peeks your interest, resonates, or excites you while researching. That way if you apply to a position at the company, you can look back and remind yourself what spoke to you.
2. **Do some LinkedIn research.** Do a quick search on LinkedIn and look for people who work at those companies and have something in common with you. For example: went to the same school, have shared friends/connections, participated in the same program or internship, etc.
3. **Reach out to people.** Schedule an informational interview, or a quick coffee chat with the people you've found in your search, to learn more about the company culture, roles, interview process, etc. Visit our Sample Messages resource for a sample outreach email.
4. **Apply online or through a referral.** After deciding you'd like to work at the company, see if they have open roles. Once you decide to apply to a position, take some time to see if you know someone who works at the company. This could be a mentor, a family friend, a professor, someone you've worked with in the past or took a class with, etc. and see if they would be willing to refer you. Referrals are important as they help to ensure your resume gets seen, but they do not always secure an interview. Visit our Sample Messages resource for a sample referral request.
   - It's okay if you don't know someone who can refer you. As you begin working, you'll start meeting more and more people. You can also join online affinity spaces and groups or conduct more informational interviews to grow your network overtime.
5. **You did it!** Once you apply for the role, the recruitment process will officially start. Keep a look out for emails/calls to schedule the first step of the interview process. Don't forget to take a moment to appreciate the work you've done to take your next step in your career!

How do you search for information?

Once you've created a list of your dream companies, roles you're interested in, or priorities you have for your job, you can start the research process. Most tech companies have plenty of resources online that you can use to learn more about them.

You can start with their own company website and then move onto LinkedIn, Glassdoor, or Fishbowl. But the best way to learn how to land a job at the company and what it actually feels like to work there is to talk to alumni, friends, or connections who have direct experience with the company.

An effective way to start is to search on LinkedIn for people who attended the same school as you and who work at the companies you are most interested in. We recommend sending a simple direct message, even if you don't know them; we find that your success rate increases (meaning you'll get more responses from these messages) if you find something in common. People are often willing to share their experience if you reach out and request a quick 15 –20 min call to learn more about them, their role, and the organization. We've also included example outreach messages in the Sample Messages resource provided.

Don't worry if you aren't able to get through all of your questions during the call. If you have further questions, you can always ask your interviewee if you can email them follow-up questions.

How do I make sure the role is right for me?

Some common role titles in computer science include Software Engineer, Data Scientists, and Machine Learning Engineer. In these instances, it's always important to be intentional about the roles you apply for in a specific company.

Be mindful that the same title may vary across different companies. Look on the company's website to make sure you have the correct title for the role you are interested in and learn as much information that is available about the role. This will allow you to gauge if it's a right fit for where you are in your career and your own interests. Don't forget that you can always revisit and reuse The Company & Role Worksheet in Task 1 if you are having trouble on where to start!

Question Deep Dive: Does 3 years experience *really* mean 3 years experience?

- Be sure to think critically about your past experiences and decide for yourself if you have the experience. When thinking critically, remember that many people in the tech world deal with imposter syndrome. **Imposter syndrome** is "when you doubt your competency and ability to do your job, participate in your community or accomplish personal goals." This can sometimes manifest in diminishing your experience or accomplishments, and questioning your knowledge and worth. It's important to be honest with yourself and others in interviews, which means being truthful about the soft and hard skills and experience you actually have.[1]

---

[1] Builtin, "Imposter Syndrome: What It Is and How to Overcome It at Work" by Jessica Powers (2022)

- **Did you know?** "Women typically apply for a job when they meet 100% of the criteria, while men usually apply when they meet 60%. Women are also 26% less likely to ask for a referral. The result is that they apply to 20% fewer jobs, despite being 16% more likely to be hired."[2]

Visit the Preparing for Behavioral Interviews resource for information and starting questions to ask when figuring out if the company culture is a good fit for you.

Additional Resources

If you are interested in the following companies, take a look at the linked blogs below. This could be a way for you to better understand more about the work at these companies.

- Medium Software Engineering Blogs:
  - [Airbnb Engineering & Data Science](#)
  - [Netflix TechBlog](#)
  - [Pinterest Engineering Blog](#)
  - [Lyft Engineering](#)
  - [Palantir Blog](#)
  - [Salesforce Engineering](#)

---

[2] Forbes, ["Reframe Your Imposter Syndrome As A Superpower"](#) by Alaina Percival (2022)
Note: This article only presents data from binary genders. It is important to note that anyone of any gender and background can experience Imposter Syndrome. The studies show that people from marginalized groups have higher rates and higher compounding effects when dealing with Imposter Syndrome.