

**TopResume**<sup>®</sup>

# Jump-Start Your Job Search

“A goal  
without a plan  
is just a wish.”

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FRENCH WRITER

Congrats on taking the first step toward landing your dream job!

A recent TopResume study found that 65% of professionals say getting a new job is among their top New Year’s resolutions. However, less than half know *how* they’ll accomplish that goal.

A successful job search starts with a winning plan. To get you started, TopResume and I created a step-by-step action plan to help you successfully plot your next career move and get the job you deserve. Tackle each of these assignments one at a time to turn your job goals into reality.

And, should you get stuck along the way, [TopResume is always here to help!](#)

Happy hunting!



Amanda Augustine, CPCC & CPRW  
Career Advice Expert



### Take a trip down memory lane.

Sometimes, in order to move forward, we must look back – for inspiration, lessons, or clues that can help guide our way. [Think about what you wanted to be when you grew up.](#) While you might not be able to pursue your childhood dreams, consider how you can leverage your current skill set in an industry that gets you closer to that work.



### Inventory your skills and interests.

Make a list of every job, internship, and volunteer role you've held in the past 10 years. Then, write down *exactly* what you liked and disliked about each position. Look for themes that will help you identify career paths that interest you, as well as play to your greatest strengths in the workplace.



### Figure out your next move.

The most successful job-search plans begin with a clear goal. Where do you want your career to go? Are there any positions you need to pursue *today* that will allow you to gain skills and experience required for your future dream job? If you're still unsure of your next career move, [try these exercises.](#)



### Create a target company list.

Based upon your job goals, what companies interest you? [Build a list of target employers](#) that meet your location, industry, size, and corporate-culture needs. Use this list to search for job openings and people within your network who can provide you with an inside track on the organization and its hiring needs.



### Write down your goals.

You're 10 times more likely to accomplish your goals if you write them down. Once you've decided on your [job goal](#), document it. If you successfully complete your goal, what would that look like? What would be the outcome? When you define success, you're creating parameters that will help you stay on track. Post your goal near your home computer or store them on your phone to stay focused.

### Upgrade your resume.

Craft a resume that showcases your achievements, experiences, and career goals. [This list](#) will help you gather all the information you'll need to impress recruiters. Don't have the time or unsure where to start? [Let TopResume's professional writers do the heavy lifting for you!](#)



### Brainstorm your selling points.

The modern-day job search requires every job seeker to become a salesperson. During the job hunt, you'll market the most important product of all - your candidacy. What work experiences, skills, education, personal interests, and activities outside the office make you a good candidate for the role you want?

Brainstorm a list of selling points you can incorporate into your job-application materials, LinkedIn profile, networking conversations, and interview responses to pitch your value. Make this process easier in the future by [creating a brag book](#).



### Prepare a cover letter.

Studies show that 53% of employers prefer candidates who send a [cover letter](#) with their resume. Craft an eye-catching cover letter that highlights your best selling points and can be customized for each job application.



### Google your name.

Most employers will Google your name as part of the vetting process. Make sure you're aware of what they'll find so you're prepared to explain away any damaging information or, better yet, find opportunities to [improve the search results](#).



### Get a free critique.

Find out how your DIY resume will fare against the bots with [TopResume's free resume evaluation](#). Our experts will provide a confidential, comprehensive review to determine how well your resume communicates your skills and expertise, along with personalized recommendations on how to strengthen your resume.

Or, skip the hassle and [work with a TopResume expert](#) to create a resume that gets you interviews faster by telling the best version of your story.

### Upload a profile pic.

While headshots are still considered a no-no on a conventional resume, your LinkedIn profile is 40% more likely to be clicked upon with a [professional one](#). Upload a photo of you - and you alone - that's appropriate for your profession. Use this same photo for your [Gmail profile picture](#) if you're using Gmail for your job-search communication.

### Lock down your personal accounts.

If you have any personal social media accounts you don't want employers associating with your candidacy, now's the time to increase the security settings and change the usernames to a nickname so you're 100% confident your private accounts are well-hidden from recruiters.



### Mobilize your search.

Thanks to technology, we can work - and job hunt - wherever our mobile devices can get a signal. Add [apps to your smartphone](#) and other devices so you can search for networking events, reply to emails, [review job listings](#), and, most importantly, access your resume while on-the-go.

### Update - or create - your LinkedIn profile.

Use your new resume as a starting point to [revamp your LinkedIn profile](#). Make sure your career story on LinkedIn - that is, your work history, education, and current job goals - is consistent with your new resume.



### Identify your references.

Target three solid people who have insight into your experience and capabilities whom you trust to say good things about you and your work. Once your contacts agree to be [references](#), send them a copy of your new resume.

### Request a LinkedIn recommendation.

Hiring managers, recruiters, and HR professionals are on the lookout for "social proof" of your talents. [LinkedIn recommendations](#) are a perfect opportunity to share reviews from your former employers, managers, peers, direct reports, customers, and clients.



### Order business cards.

Don't overlook this important personal-branding tool. Order a set of business cards that include your personal contact information so you're always ready to network. You can purchase a package for around \$25 from vendors like Moo or VistaPrint, or go green by creating a digital business card with [Haystack](#) or [Zap](#).

### Register for a networking event.

Look at sites like 10times, Meetup, and Eventbrite for upcoming events that are relevant to your industry. Use these face-to-face opportunities to find new organizations to add to your target company list and increase the number of relevant connections in your professional network.

### Set weekly goals.

Once you have all your materials in place to market yourself to employers, now it's time to put them to good use. Set small goals each week to keep your job search on track. For instance, you may commit to a certain number of job applications and networking activities to complete each week. [Check out TopResume's blog](#) for more advice to keep your job search moving in the right direction.



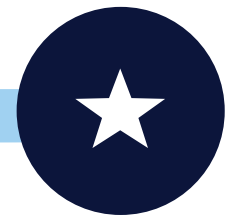
### Join a professional association.

Whether you're changing careers, re-entering the workforce, or simply needing to infuse your professional network, a professional organization is a great way to meet new people in your target industry. [Check out this free directory](#) of professional associations to find one that's right for you, or ask your network for recommendations.



### Practice your pitch.

Work on delivering an [elevator pitch](#) that explains what you're passionate about and how you can provide value to a prospective employer. Be prepared to modify your pitch depending upon the audience and occasion.



## Need more help?

Our pros are here to do the heavy lifting.

Let us turn your resume into a story that lands *2x more interviews*, guaranteed!

[Get started ▶](#)



## ABOUT TOPRESUME

TopResume is the largest resume-writing service in the world. We've helped over 300,000 professionals land more interviews and get hired faster.

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With TopResume, you'll work with an expert writer to create a resume that:



Showcases your achievements, experience, and career goals.



Highlights keywords and skills that recruiters are seeking.



Gets you interviews faster by telling the best version of your story.

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[Learn more about how we can help you.](#)

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