Finding the job you want takes many steps and involves just as many decisions. This checklist is designed to help you along the way and guide you to the appropriate sources. Be sure to discuss your progress with your career advisor.

Knowing What You Want
- Choose your ideal work environment—large corporation, small business, government agency or nonprofit organization.
- Choose your ideal location—urban, suburban or rural.
- List your three most useful job skills and know which is your strongest.
- Know whether you want to work with people, data or things.
- Know whether you enjoy new projects or prefer following a regular routine.
- List some of the main career areas that might interest you.
- List your favorite leisure time activities.
- Know what kind of reward is most important to you in a job—money, security, creative authority, etc.

Researching Career Options
- Develop a list of career possibilities to research.
- Visit your career services library and utilize the Internet to learn about various careers. The Dictionary of Occupational Titles and the Occupational Outlook Handbook are valuable resources.
- Meet with a Career Counselor to discuss career options and ways to research careers.
- Consider whether your desired career requires an advanced degree.
- Keep up with current trends in your field through trade publications, news/business magazines and newspapers.
- Identify employers interested in interviewing someone with your academic background and experience; create a list of three or more employers in the field you are considering.
- Use the Internet to learn more about potential employers and check out salary surveys and hiring trends in your anticipated career field.
- Make at least three professional contacts through friends, relatives or professors to learn more about your field of interest.
- Meet with faculty and alumni who work or who have worked in your field to talk about available jobs and the outlook for your field.

Getting Experience
- Narrow down the career options you are considering through coursework and personal research.
- Participate in a work experience or internship program in your chosen field to learn of the daily requirements of the careers you are considering. Such assignments can lead to permanent job offers following graduation.
- Become an active member in one or more professional associations—consult the Encyclopedia of Associations for organizations in your field.
- Volunteer for a community or charitable organization to gain further work experience. Volunteer positions can and should be included on your resume.

Creating a Resume
- Form a clear job objective and know how to support it with your skills and experience.
- Use action verbs to highlight your accomplishments.
- Limit your resume to one page and make sure it is free of misspelled words and grammatical errors.
- Print your resume on white, light gray or beige paper. Use a easy to read font and utilize italics, bold and underlining to highlight sections.
- Compose a separate cover letter to accompany each resume and address the letter to a specific person. Avoid sending a letter that begins “Dear Sir/Madam.”

Preparing for the Interview
- Arrange informational interviews with employees from companies with which you might want to interview. Use your network of acquaintances to schedule these meetings.
- Thoroughly research each employer with whom you have an interview—be familiar with product lines, services offered and growth prospects.
- Practice your interviewing techniques with friends to help prepare, or set up a mock interview at Career Services to practice.
- Using the information you have gathered, formulate questions to ask the employer during the interview.
- Arrive on time in professional business attire.
- Collect the needed information to write a thank-you letter after each interview.