Getting Started with a Career Search

Finding a field of work:

1. Think about your interests, abilities, and skills and about possible careers you would like to pursue. If you are unsure what career you are interested in, you can visit career.arizona.edu and utilize search engines that match your interests/abilities to possible careers. (DISCOVER is a popular engine on the career services website).
   - Another helpful website is “What can I do with this degree?”
     http://career.arizona.edu/webresources/career-major-exploration-resources/what-can-i-do-with-this-major-degree/-what-can-i-do-with-this-major-degree/
   *Tip: Schedule an appointment to speak with a career counselor in the UA Career Services Center: 520-621-2746.

2. Once you know what type of career field(s) you are interested in, you can research the career to find out what type of education, work experience, and skills are required or preferred.
   *Tip: Go beyond your internet search and perform an informational interview with an actual professional in the field. Detailed information about informational interviews can be found at:
     http://www.career.arizona.edu/student/jobs/job-search-guidelines/job-search-guidelines#information

3. Decide where you want to work and what your desired outcomes are. Ask yourself:
   - Is your search limited to a certain region, state, or city?
   - Is my search limited to certain agencies/companies/organizations?
   - What am I passionate about?
   - What are the details/duties of the job and can I perform those duties?
   - Is there a certain salary range I am seeking? *Tip: NACE Salary Calculator:
     www.jobsearchintelligence.com/NACE/jobseekers/salary-calculator.php

Narrowing your search to specific positions:

1. Get specific: Once you know what career field you are interested in, you are ready to see what types of positions are available to apply for. For example, if you know you want to work in Non-Profit Administration, you can start by searching for non-profit organizations that exist in your area. Search individual organizations’ websites to get an idea of the company’s goals and vision. If you like what you see, check to see if they are hiring.

2. Utilize Career Search Employer Databases to see what types of positions are linked to different career fields of interest. Some sites to review:
   - www.career.arizona.edu/Students/?vault
   - www.career.arizona.edu/students/?careersearch
**Applying for a position:**

**Resume**

1. Start working on your resume now! Make changes as you obtain new experience. Visit the Career Services Office in the Student Union. They can help you every step of the way, in creating and refining your resume.
2. Remember to customize your resume for the position you are seeking. This may mean changing your resume every time you apply for a different position. Make sure you highlight skills that the employer is looking for. Your objective should also be specific to the position you are seeking.
3. Play on your strengths! This is your advertisement and reflection of what you bring. Brainstorm what skills you have, think beyond just what your past jobs were and think about the skills you gained by having those experiences. For example, if your only past job experience is working at a clothing store and you are now applying for a professional position in a non-profit agency, state skills such as communication skills, customer service, leadership skills (maybe you were a shift supervisor or trained new employees), etc. Think of skills that will cross over to the position you are seeking.

**Cover Letter**

1. The cover letter is very important, because it serves many roles. It is a writing sample for one and you will want to make sure it is free of grammar mistakes and typos. In the cover letter, you will also get to express your interest and explain what you will bring to the position in your own words. Where the resume is very organized and precise, the cover letter is your chance to be creative and expressive.
2. In the first paragraph, make sure you are specific about the position you are seeking. The rest of the cover letter should persuade the reader about why you are the ideal candidate for the position.
3. Again, play on your strengths! List skills and past educational/work experiences that will cross over to this position. Discuss your passion for this line of work.

*Tip: Career Services is also a great resource for cover letter writing! Have someone in career services critique your cover letter.*

**Interviewing:**

1. Practice! Career Services offers mock interviewing in-person and online.
2. Dress professional.
3. Prepare questions of your own. Show that you have done your research.

*Information was obtained from career.arizona.edu to create this checklist.*