

Plan it

Career Readiness Guide

The following career readiness guide identifies steps to work towards achieving your career goal. Users can adopt and develop the guide as a career readiness system to support the achievement of a career goal. First, answer the career goal questions. Then, assess steps 1-4 to determine the immediate actions needed to complete your career goal. [Visit our Career Development Webpages!](#)

What is your career goal after graduation? _____

What additional information, experience, or skill do you need to gain to facilitate your career goal? _____

What is the next step (action) you need to take to help you achieve your career goal? _____

STEP 1

- If you are unsure of your career goal, start by describing your personality, abilities, interests, values, and meaningful experiences; otherwise known as your *career self-concept*
- Use diagnostic tools to help you identify your career self-concept and career preferences:
 - O*NET Career Exploration Tools
 - Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
 - Strong Interest Inventory
 - Clifton Strengths Assessment
 - 16 Personalities

Assessment

- Discuss career interests with a Career Pathways Advisor
- Talk to a Pre-Health, Pre-Law, or Pre-Grad advisor
- Meet with USC Dornsife Faculty
- Contact a Career Center counselor

STEP 2

- Explore majors, minors, and elective courses
- Study Career Pathways Major 2 Career Maps
- Review *What can I do with a major in* on Handshake
- Network on LinkedIn & the Trojan Network

Exploration

- Conduct Informational Interviews with USC Alumni
- Review ONET online & BLS Occupational Handbook
- Research on Handshake, LinkedIn, Indeed, etc.
- Work. Intern. Research. Volunteer & more!

STEP 3

- Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
- Oral /Written Communication
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Information Technology Application

Skill-Development

- Leadership
- Professionalism/Work Ethic
- Career Management
- Global & Intercultural Fluency

STEP 4

- Establish professional social media like LinkedIn
- Draft a Resume or CV
- Write a Cover Letter
- Develop your Elevator Pitch

Career-Search

- Practice interview skills
- Identify career opportunities
- Apply for career opportunities
- Negotiate offers when applicable

L.A.M.P Sorting Tool

The LAMP Method is a strategic framework developed by Steve Dalton in his book *The 2-Hour Job Search*. It is designed to help job seekers bypass the "black hole" of online applications by creating a data-driven list of target companies and prioritizing them based on the likelihood of securing a referral.

The acronym stands for **List, Alumni, Motivation, and Posting.**

1. List (Target Companies)

The first step is to generate a comprehensive list of roughly 40 companies you are interested in. The goal is to spend no more than 40 minutes on this. You can find these names through:

Past employers or competitors.

"Best of" lists (e.g., Fortune 500, Best Places to Work).

LinkedIn searches or industry news.

2. Alumni

For each company on your list, you determine if you have a "warm" connection. This is usually a fellow graduate from your university or a former colleague.

Goal: Identifying someone who is more likely to respond to a request for an informational interview.

Scale: You mark this as "Yes" (connection exists) or "No" (no connection).

3. Motivation

This is a subjective score (1 to 10) based on your personal desire to work at that specific company.

High Score (10): A dream company where you are highly driven to land a role.

Low Score (1): A company you included just to fill the list, but have little passion for.

4. Posting

Check to see if the company currently has job openings that match your skill set.

- Scale: * 3: Active posting that fits your profile.
- 2: Openings exist, but they are a stretch or slightly off-target.
- 1: No current relevant openings.

How to Use the Results

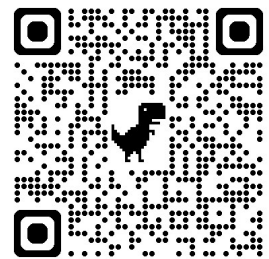
Once you have filled out your table, you sort your list to find your "Top 5."

The priority is generally determined by high Motivation and the presence of Alumni. A company where you have a contact and high interest is a "Tier 1" target. The LAMP method argues that an active Posting is actually the least important factor, as the goal is to get a referral before a job is even posted or before the applicant pool becomes too crowded.

The Next Step: Outreach

After identifying your top targets, the method moves into the informational interview phase, often utilizing the "6-Point Email"—a brief, low-pressure request for 15-20 minutes of an insider's time to learn about their experience.

See an example of a laid out spreadsheet already prepared at the bottom of the "Career Advising" tab on the Dornsife Career Pathways website



Pre-Made Spreadsheet