Atuuni
Career Hub

LEARN | GROW | ACHIEVE

JOB SEARCH GUIDE

A Practical Guide to Finding Work, Standing Out, and Moving Forward



Fartun Mohamed
Founder & Career/Workforce Development Practitioner
Atuuni Career Hub

Find Opportunities | Build Your Resume | Prepare for Interviews | Grow Your Career

Your Next Opportunity Starts Here

Introduction: Stop Searching Randomly. Start Searching Strategically.

Looking for a job can feel overwhelming, especially when you are applying to many positions and hearing little or nothing back.

You may find yourself asking:

- Why am I not getting interviews?
- Am I applying for the right jobs?
- Is my resume communicating my value?
- Should I apply to more jobs or network more?
- How do I know whether my job search is actually working?

A successful job search is not simply about **applying to as many jobs as possible**. It is about being clear about what you want, understanding the value you bring, targeting the right opportunities, building relationships, and consistently learning from your results.

This guide will help you create a more focused and practical job-search strategy.

1. Define Your Target Job

Before you start applying, get clear about **what you are looking for**.

A common mistake is saying:

“I am open to anything.”

Being open can be useful, but applying for everything can make your job search unfocused.

Start with these questions:

Target role:
What job title or type of role are you targeting?

Examples:

- Program Coordinator
- Project Manager
- Career Advisor
- Human Resources Specialist
- Marketing Coordinator
- Business Development Officer

Industry or sector:
Where do you want to work?

Examples:

- Non-profit
- Government
- Education
- Technology
- Healthcare
- Financial services
- International development

Location:
Where are you willing or able to work?

Consider:

- Your city or region
- Remote work
- Hybrid work
- Relocation
- Commuting distance
- International opportunities

Your target job statement

Complete this sentence:

I am looking for a _____ role in the _____ sector/industry, preferably in _____, where I can use my strengths in _____ to contribute to _____.

Your job-search filter

Before applying, ask:

Does this opportunity match at least 3 of these?

☐ Target role
☐ Relevant industry
☐ Location/work arrangement
☐ My experience level
☐ My skills
☐ My career direction

☐ Reasonable salary/benefits
☐ Opportunity for growth

Remember: A focused search does not mean limiting yourself. It helps you direct your time and energy toward opportunities that make sense for you.

2. Assess Your Current Position

Before changing your resume or applying for more jobs, take a moment to understand where you are now and where you want or be.

Your job search becomes stronger when you know your **skills, experience, strengths, gaps, and evidence of impact**.

A. Identify your strengths

Ask yourself:

- What am I good at?
- What do people come to me for help with?
- What problems can I solve?
- What responsibilities have I handled successfully?
- What do I enjoy doing?
- What type of work gives me energy?

Write down your **top 5 strengths**.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Know Your Five Strengths

Before attending an interview, identify **at least five genuine strengths** that describe you and that you know well. These strengths should be based on your **real skills, experiences, and behaviours**—not simply words that sound good on a resume.

You can use these five strengths to prepare for different interview questions when they arise. For example, a question about teamwork may allow you to demonstrate your **collaboration** strength, while a question about handling challenges may allow you to demonstrate **problem-solving**.

For each strength, prepare a real example that shows:

- What is the strength?
- When have you demonstrated it?
- What action did you take?
- What was the result?
- What did you learn?

The goal is not to memorize five answers. It is to know your strengths so well that you can naturally connect them to different interview questions.

Know your strengths. Know your examples. Know your value.

Write down your **top 5 weekness**.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Understanding Your Weaknesses

We all have weaknesses because we are human. Having weaknesses does **not** make you less capable—it means there are areas where you can continue to learn and grow.

During an interview, employers may ask about your weaknesses. The goal is not to present yourself as perfect, but to demonstrate **self-awareness, honesty, and a willingness to improve**.

Before your next interview, identify **at least five weaknesses or development areas** you know about yourself and think about what you are doing to improve each one.

For each weakness, ask yourself:

- What is the weakness?
- How does it affect my work?
- What am I doing to improve it?
- What progress have I made?
- What have I learned from working on it?

Remember: A strong answer does not simply name a weakness. It shows that you **recognize it, take responsibility for it, and are actively working to improve.**

B. Identify your transferable skills

Your skills may be useful beyond your current or previous job.

For instance:

Experience	Transferable Skill
Managing a team	Leadership
Supporting clients	Client relationship management
Organizing events	Project coordination
Preparing reports	Research and analytical skills
Resolving problems	Problem-solving
Training employees	Facilitation and communication
Managing deadlines	Time management

Think beyond your job title.

Your experience is more than the name of your previous position.

C. Identify your gaps

Look at 3–5 job postings for your target role.

What skills or qualifications appear repeatedly?

Create three lists:

I already have:

I need to strengthen:

I need to learn:

Then decide which gaps actually matter for your target jobs.

You do not need to meet **100% of every job description** before applying.

---

3. Prepare Your Application Materials

Your application materials should make it easy for an employer to understand:

Who you are → What you can do → What value you can bring?

Your Resume

Your resume should be targeted to the type of role you want.

Avoid sending exactly the same resume to every employer, each employer is different and looking for different skill sets and qualifications.

Check your resume:

☐ Does the top section clearly communicate your professional direction?
☐ Does it highlight relevant skills?
☐ Are your most relevant experiences easy to find?
☐ Do your bullet points show accomplishments, not just responsibilities?
☐ Have you included measurable results where appropriate?
☐ Is the language clear and professional?
☐ Does it reflect keywords from the job posting when they genuinely match your experience?
☐ Is it easy to read?

Turn responsibilities into accomplishments

Instead of:

Responsible for administrative duties.

Try:

Managed emails, scheduled meetings, organized files, and updated records to keep daily office operations running smoothly.

The goal is to show **what you did and why it mattered**.

Your Cover Letter

Not every application requires a cover letter, but when one is requested—or when it can add value provide—avoid simply repeating your resume and add more about information not included on the resume and that will increase your chances of getting an interview.

A strong cover letter should answer:

Why this organization?
Why this role?
Why you?

Keep it focused and specific.

Your LinkedIn Profile

Your LinkedIn profile should support the same professional story as your resume.

Review:

☐ Professional photo
☐ Clear headline
☐ Strong About section
☐ Relevant experience
☐ Skills
☐ Accomplishments
☐ Education/certifications
☐ Professional activity

Your LinkedIn profile does not need to copy your resume word-for-word.

Think of it as another opportunity to communicate your professional value.

4. Build a Targeted Job-Search List

Do not rely on one job board.

Create a list of organizations you would genuinely like to work for.

Find opportunities through:

- Employer career pages
- LinkedIn
- Indeed
- Government job boards
- Professional associations
- Recruitment agencies
- Community and industry organizations
- Networking contacts
- Events and conferences
- Friends and families

- Referrals

Create your target employer list

Start with **15–30 organizations**.

Organization	Target Role	Location	Contact/Connection	Website	Status
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Researching
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Applied
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Networking

Don't just look for jobs.

Research organizations even when they do not have an advertised position.

Look for:

- Recent organizational growth
- New programs
- New funding
- Expansion
- New departments
- Leadership changes
- Upcoming projects
- Organizations that regularly hire your type of professional

Sometimes your next opportunity starts with a **conversation before a job posting appears**.

5. Network Intentionally

Networking does not mean asking everyone:

“Do you know of any jobs?”

Good networking is about **building genuine professional relationships and connections.**

Start with people you already know

Think about:

- Former colleagues
- Supervisors
- Classmates
- Professors

- Clients
- Professional contacts
- Community members
- Industry professionals
- Alumni
- People you meet at events

Your networking messages

Keep it short and human:

Hi [Name], I hope you're doing well. I'm currently exploring opportunities in [field/role]. I've been following your work in [area], and I would appreciate connecting and learning more about your experience.

You do not need to immediately ask for a job.

Ask for information

Consider asking:

- How did you enter this field?
- What skills are most valuable in your organization?
- What changes are you seeing in the industry?
- What advice would you give someone entering this field?
- Are there professional groups or resources you recommend?

Follow up

After a conversation:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. I really appreciated your insights about [specific topic]. I will keep your advice in mind as I continue my search.

Good networking is not a one-time transaction. **Stay connected.**

6. Create a Weekly Job-Search Plan

A job search becomes easier to manage when you treat it like a project.

Instead of spending hours scrolling through job boards every day, create a weekly routine.

Example weekly plan

Monday — Research & Planning

- Review new opportunities
- Identify priority applications
- Research target employers
- Plan your week

Tuesday — Applications

- Submit 2–4 targeted applications
- Customize your resume
- Write targeted cover letters when appropriate

Wednesday — Networking

- Contact 3–5 professional connections
- Attend a networking event or webinar
- Send follow-ups
- Engage meaningfully with professional content

Thursday — Skills & Professional Development

- Complete a course
- Practice an important skill
- Research your industry
- Improve your LinkedIn profile or portfolio

Friday — Follow-Up & Review

- Follow up on previous applications
- Review networking conversations
- Update your tracker
- Identify what worked
- Plan the following week

Weekend — Rest and Reset

A job search can become emotionally exhausting.

Rest is part of the process.

7. Track Your Progress

If you are not tracking your job search, it can be difficult to know what is working.

Create a simple job-search tracker.

Date	Organization	Position	Application	Networking	Follow-Up	Result
Sept. 2	ABC Org.	Coordinator	Submitted	Contacted B	Sept. 9	Waiting
Sept. 4	XYZ Inc.	Specialist	Submitted	Contacted A.	Sept. 11	Interview
Sept. 6	DEF Org.	Manager	Submitted	Information meeting	Sept. 13	Follow-up

Track more than applications.

Monitor:

Applications

- How many targeted applications did you submit?

Networking

- How many meaningful conversations did you have?

Interviews

- How many interviews did you receive?

Follow-ups

- Did you follow up appropriately?

Results

- What happened after each application?

Job Search Tip

If you are **applying for many jobs but not getting interviews**, your **resume may need to be reviewed and improved**. It should clearly show how your skills and experience match the jobs you are applying for.

If you are **getting interviews but not receiving job offers**, focus on improving your **interview skills**. Practice answering questions, prepare specific examples, communicate your value clearly, and connect your experience to the employer's needs.

Remember:
No interviews → Review your resume.
Interviews but no offers → Work on your interview skills.

Your Job Search Dashboard

At the end of each week, ask:

My numbers

Targeted applications: _____

Networking conversations: _____

Follow-ups: _____

Interviews: _____

New connections: _____

Skills developed: _____

My reflection

What worked this week?

What did not work?

What will I change next week?

What If You Are Applying but Getting No Interviews?

Don't automatically conclude:

“I'm not qualified.”

Instead, examine the process.

If you are submitting many applications but receiving few interviews:

Review your **targeting and resume**.

Ask:

- Am I applying for jobs that genuinely match my experience?
- Does my resume reflect the language and priorities of the role?
- Are my accomplishments clear?
- Am I demonstrating relevant skills?

If you are getting interviews but not offers:

Focus on your **interview strategy**.

Ask:

- Am I answering questions clearly?
- Am I providing specific examples?
- Am I connecting my experience to the organization's needs?
- Am I demonstrating the value I can bring?
- Am I asking thoughtful questions?

If you are struggling to get networking conversations:

Review your **approach**.

Ask:

- Am I reaching out only when I need a job?
- Are my messages personalized?
- Am I building relationships before asking for opportunities?
- Am I participating in professional communities?

Your 30-Day Job Search Action Plan

Week 1 — Get Clear

☐ Define your target roles
☐ Identify preferred industries/sectors
☐ Define your location/work preferences
☐ Identify your top skills
☐ Identify skill gaps
☐ Research 10 target employers

Week 2 — Position Yourself

☐ Update your resume
☐ Customize your LinkedIn profile
☐ Prepare a professional introduction
☐ Identify your key accomplishments
☐ Prepare a basic cover-letter framework
☐ Build your job-search tracker

Week 3 — Build Connections

☐ Contact former colleagues
☐ Connect with professionals in your field
☐ Attend one professional event
☐ Request informational conversations
☐ Follow up with people you meet
☐ Continue researching employers

Week 4 — Apply, Follow Up & Evaluate

☐ Submit targeted applications
☐ Follow up on appropriate applications
☐ Continue networking
☐ Practice interview responses
☐ Review your results
☐ Adjust your strategy based on what you learned

Your Job Search Checklist

Before you start each week, ask:

CLARITY

☐ Do I know what roles I am targeting?

POSITIONING

☐ Does my resume clearly communicate my value?

TARGETING

☐ Am I applying for relevant opportunities?

NETWORKING

☐ Am I building genuine professional relationships?

EXECUTION

☐ Do I have a realistic weekly plan?

FOLLOW-UP

☐ Am I following up professionally?

TRACKING

☐ Am I recording and reviewing my progress?

LEARNING

☐ Am I improving my approach based on what I am learning?

Your job search is not just about **finding a job**.

It is about understanding your value, communicating that value clearly, connecting with the right people, identifying opportunities, and taking consistent action.

You do not need to have everything figured out before you begin.

Start with clarity.
Build your strategy.
Take focused action.
Learn from the results.
Keep moving forward.

Need support with your job search?

If you are unsure where to start, struggling to get interviews, changing careers, or trying to position yourself more effectively in the labour market, professional career coaching can help you create a strategy tailored to your goals.

Atuuni Career Hub
Helping people build careers, strengthen programs, and grow successful businesses.

Book a Career session | Visit Atuuni Career Hub | Connect with Us