



# Career Starter Checklist

**A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR  
STUDENTS AND NEW GRADUATES**

Do you want to enter the workplace, but have no idea how to begin?

Ready for the job search? Do you know the steps to take?

Are you afraid you don't have the skills for a fulfilling and rewarding career?



**Start Strong.  
Claim Your Future.**

# Congratulations!

## An exciting new chapter awaits you!

This checklist is designed to guide you through a structured process to confidently navigate your career launch and achieve your professional goals.

### STEP 1 GET CLEAR ON YOUR DIRECTION

- Identify your strengths, values, and what energizes you.
- List 5 strengths you bring to the table.
- Write down 3 roles that align with your major strengths and interests.
- Choose 2–3 target **job functions** to investigate.

 **ACTION** Complete a career assessment (e.g. StrengthsFinder, Myers-Briggs, or O\*NET).

### STEP 2 EXPLORE THE MARKET

- Research what skills and certifications top employers in your field of interest seek.
- Identify any skills gaps and name 3 skills you want to build in the next 6 months.
- Choose 2–3 target **industries** to research based on interest and preference.
- Follow 5–10 industry leaders on LinkedIn to track trends.

 **ACTION** Fill skill gaps with relevant online course, micro-credential, or certification.

### STEP 3 CREATE YOUR DOSSIER (RESUME/COVER LETTER)

- Write clean 1-page format resume with professional summary and headline.
- List jobs, internships, volunteer work, clubs, and leadership roles.
- Include relevant courses, skills, presentations, research, & campus activity.
- Turn responsibilities into accomplishment bullets.
- Develop a master cover letter template to customize for each application.
- Always proofread for grammar, formatting, & consistency.

 **ACTION** Review your dossier with your campus career center or a career coach.

### STEP 4 OPTIMIZE YOUR LINKEDIN


- Create a compelling LinkedIn profile with a headshot and strong headline reflecting goals.
- Update your About section.
- Use your resume as a guide to fill in your experience section.
- Connect with classmates, alumni, and professors.

 **ACTION** Send 5 personal requests on LinkedIn to increase connections and opportunities for informational interviews.




## STEP 5 START NETWORKING

- Make a list of personal contacts and reach out to explore job opportunities.
- Use LinkedIn and industry knowledge to identify 5 new people in your target field to contact and send introductory messages.
- Ask responders for advice or a brief informational chat.
- Decide on 3 **companies** in your field to follow closely based on desirability.
- Comment on professional posts of leaders in your target companies.

 **ACTION** Devise, practice, and perfect your “elevator pitch”.

## STEP 6 APPLY WITH CONFIDENCE

- Create a target company list of 15–20 organizations you'd be happy to work for.
- Set up job alerts on LinkedIn, Indeed, Handshake, and company career pages.
- Customize your resume for each application.
- Find a face (e.g. hiring manager, team member) for each application you send out and reach out to them.
- Track every application (date, company, role, contact, status) in a spreadsheet.

 **ACTION** Apply to 3–5 jobs weekly with customized resumes and cover letters.


## STEP 7 SHOWTIME: ACE THE INTERVIEW

- Prepare answers to common behavioral questions using the STAR method.
- Research each company's mission, culture, and recent news before every interview.
- Develop a confident, concise answer to “Tell me about yourself”.
- Prepare 3–5 thoughtful questions to ask at the end of every interview.

 **ACTION** Practice with a mock interview — on video or with a coach — until you feel natural and poised.

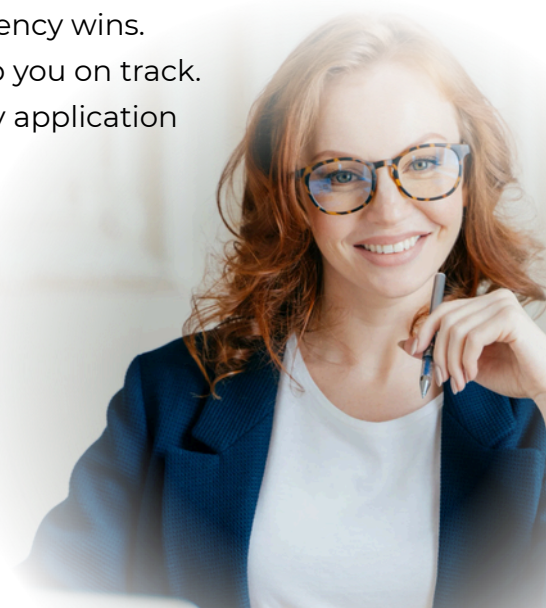
## STEP 8 MINDSET & MOMENTUM

- Set a realistic timeline and weekly job search routine — consistency wins.
- Find an accountability partner, mentor, group, or coach to keep you on track.
- Celebrate small wins — every interview, every connection, every application counts.
- Keep documenting your achievements in a “Power Points” log.

 **ACTION** Join a career community or job seeker group for support and leads.

**DON'T WANT TO DO THIS ALONE?**

**You Don't Have To!**





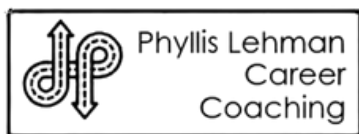
***I can help you navigate through each and every one of these steps***

A coach keeps you accountable and helps you make sure you haven't missed anything

It's faster when you have an experienced coach to get you through everything

Job seekers who work with a career coach are 2.67 times more likely to land a job than those who search alone, according to the Harvard Business Review

**Feel like you have more of a story to tell? Book a day and time for us to have a longer conversation - Schedule an Appointment**



*Phyllis Lehman*

**Contact me with any questions and I'll be happy to help!**

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