What is the job search process?
Over your lifespan you are likely to go through the job search process several times. On average, you can expect to have between 3-5 career changes and up to 6 different jobs within a career. Each time you decide you want a career or job change, you need to start the job search process again. The specifics of your job search will change each time, but the process remains the same.

What do I need to know before I start?
Some rejection will be a part of job-hunting. Make sure you have a support system of family or friends to help when you are feeling discouraged. Also, try using rejection to improve your skills for the next opportunity.

Remember that finding a job is your responsibility. You are the one who has to get out there and make things happen - no one can do it for you.

Finally, there is no magical way to find a job. It is hard work, takes time and may be boring and frustrating. Your perseverance will eventually pay off and can result in the ultimate reward - a satisfying job!

How much time will the job search take?
Sources suggest that you should prepare for a long job hunt (average 8-23 weeks), spend at least 20 hours per week searching, and have an alternative plan.

In general, finding a job is directly proportional to the amount of time spent searching and number of strategies used to identify potential openings.

What are the steps in the job search process?
There are six general steps, and Career Services can help you with each of them. There are handouts and books detailing the job search process. A career counselor can get you started or guide you toward the next step. Career Services can also help you create and review your resume and cover letter. The order of your job search process may vary depending on your specific needs and goals.

Self-Assessment - Before you start looking for a specific job you need answers to questions such as: What are my work-related skills, interests and values? What have I learned from my academic, paid and volunteer experiences? What kind of position am I seeking? Where do I want to live? What are my career goals? What kind of lifestyle do I envision for myself?

Employment Objective - Having a clear idea of who you are and what you want to do with your life will help you develop a concrete career objective - one that accurately reflects what you are seeking.

Resume and Cover Letter - These are the two most basic marketing tools for your job search. Developing an effective resume and well-targeted cover letter is essential.

Job Search Strategy - The successful job search requires a definite plan of action. How will you develop a list of potential employers? How will you contact them? How can you build your network to include them? What are your communication strengths and how can you best use them?

Interview - It is easy to be so intent on getting interviews that you neglect to prepare for them. Have you researched the organization? Are you prepared to communicate what you can contribute? Have you studied the kinds of questions often asked?

Job Offer - “You’ve got the job!” are the four words job hunters most want to hear. But what then? Are you prepared to evaluate (decline or accept) the offer? And what about salary negotiations?

What job search techniques work?
Your plan of action will include a variety of job search techniques:

Networking - Let people know you are looking! Talk to family, faculty and friends. You could also contact Career Services and ask about Blugold Career Network - a database of alumni and friends of UW-Eau Claire who have volunteered to be a resource for you. Remember that EVERYONE is a potential contact.
Cold Calls - This is the old “knocking on doors” technique where you call companies or go in person to inquire about possible openings. However, using this technique requires careful preparation because you will leave an impression with every person you meet in the process. You need to be prepared to interview on the spot.

Field Specific Listings - These are job announcements found in professional journals and newsletters. They are more career specific than those found in daily newspapers. Have you searched the Internet yet? An increasing number of field-specific listings can be found there.

Mass Mailing/E-mailing - Sending out a large number of cover letters and resumes is a common but passive strategy. It is important that you know the odds - for every 80 letters you mail out you can expect 2 - 4 positive replies. You need to consider how much time and money you want to spend for this kind of return.

Want Ads - This is still the most widely used job search technique. Like mass mailing, want ads do not always yield a high positive return although some career fields use them more regularly than others. Newspapers are, however, useful in gaining a perspective about a specific area. Subscribing to a paper in a city or state where you hope to work can be a useful strategy if you plan to relocate.

Career Fairs - UW-Eau Claire’s Career Conference and Internship Mania are held annually. Network with employers and find out who is hiring. Some representatives may even take your resume.

Experiential Learning - This includes opportunities such as internships, volunteer work, research and even student employment in your field of interest. More employers are looking for students who have experience working in their field of interest, and some have begun to hire only from within their pool of interns.

Informational Interviews - Although the focus of informational interviews is to find out more about a company or a career field, you can also find out about specific openings and how the organization does its hiring. It can also serve as a networking tool. Always ask if there is anyone else you could talk to about your career interests.

Luck and Chance - Don’t underestimate the power of fortuitous circumstances! Lucky people, however, are frequently those who know how to maximize their good fortune. This is achieved by actively researching and learning ways to position themselves in the right place at the right time.

Job Search Databases - Blugold CareerLink is a job search database specifically for UWEC students and alum. Registering for Blugold CareerLink allows students and alum to search for jobs and internships. It is also a tool employers use to find matches for their job openings. Students registered with Blugold CareerLink have the opportunity to participate in on-campus recruiting, where interviews are conducted right in the Career Services office.

Should I keep a record of my search?
Absolutely! Develop a file system and keep a notebook! Keep track of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of your prospects. Record the dates of every contact you make. This will help you stay organized and may later prove to be very helpful.