Don’t stop your job search efforts just because we’ve moved into the holiday season. There are still jobs available; in fact, companies may want to fill positions before the end of their fiscal year, or may want to interview for positions that will become available after the first of the year, in their new fiscal year. Be sure to do the following:

**Follow up** on any pending positions that you’ve applied to, or interviewed for. Reconnect with the recruiter or hiring manager to let them know you’re still interested in the position, and to see where they are in the hiring process.

**Contact the third party recruiter (headhunter)** you’re working with (or find one in your field), to update them on your status, and see if there are any new positions they’ve received for which you may be a good match.

**Keep checking job sites for your field, RIT Job Zone, and company sites for postings.** Companies may receive fewer applications as people’s minds are elsewhere, so be diligent in checking for new opportunities.

**Step up your networking activities.** Reach out to your contacts with a holiday greeting, and a brief update on your status.

Attend community, association, and organization holiday parties and get togethers; make it your goal to meet new people with whom you can develop a networking relationship in the new year. Don’t forget family and neighborhood parties; every get together is an opportunity to develop new contacts. Keep things light – don’t overwhelm people with your problems or job issues; keep a few business cards handy; and always think about how you can help other people you meet.

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**East Coast Online Alumni Career Expo**

RIT is participating in an online career fair just for alumni. Brazen Careerist will hold the fair on Thursday, January 19, 2012, from 11am-3pm. By participating, you’ll gain direct access to dozens of the East Coast’s top employers (30-40 are expected), and get the opportunity to speak with recruiters and hiring managers that make hiring decisions.

Participating candidates save time by eliminating the "internet resume black hole." In addition, you’ll gain access to great employers and recruiters looking for candidates outside of their routine job-search network.

You’ll have direct conversations (through online chat) with recruiters, giving YOU the power to decide which opportunity is the best fit for your next career move.

Register for the Expo online at [www.alumnicareerexpo.com/alumni](http://www.alumnicareerexpo.com/alumni) - register for free before January 10th ($10 after).
LinkedIn Skills Beta

In an effort to help their members further highlight their skills, LinkedIn has introduced the beta launch of LinkedIn Skills. This section is located in the More tab on the main navigation bar, and is different but related to the Skills section in your Profile.

Skills catalogs the top companies, people, regions and jobs related to skills in which members have expertise. Professionals can keep pace with their competition by discovering the most popular skills (current “buzzwords” too) others are adding to their profiles. Hiring managers and recruiters can tap into top talent with the specific skills they need. And job seekers can focus their search to companies where their expertise would be the best fit and make the most impact.

When you search for a particular skill, LinkedIn will show key people within that skill set and show you the top geographic locations, relevant companies, targeted jobs and groups where you can interact with other people. You can also explore similar skills and compare their growth relative to each other.

After you have searched for a skill, you can add it into your profile directly from that skill’s page. In order to become one of the members listed in Skills, you’ll need to add skills to your profile (again, go to the Edit Profile page and click on “Add sections“ which is located under the blue box).

Job seekers can benefit from this new feature, so check it out!

Volunteer Your Way to a Paid Job

Volunteering is a good way to spend your time if you’re searching for a job. Helping out in your community can benefit your job search in a number of ways.

Giving back helps you maintain a positive attitude and outlook, which will carry through to the rest of your job search. You’ll also feel useful, with a reason to get dressed and out of the house, instead of bemoaning your employment situation. Prospective employers will see that you’re being productive during your down time.

You’ll be able to add new skills and experiences to your resume, which can fill any gaps you have in your resume, and will make you a more well-rounded candidate. If you’re able to volunteer in your career field or industry, all the better – this will be relevant experience. Otherwise, you’ll be able to demonstrate leadership, teamwork, communication, problem solving, and other valued skills.

You’ll be able to network, making new contacts that may lead to potential job opportunities. Everyone has their own circle of contacts, so if you develop good relationships with those you volunteer with, they’ll be more apt to recommend you to people they know, and tell you of openings they hear about. If you’re volunteering in your industry, the chance to demonstrate your skills and flexibility to those who have access to openings you’d be a good match for increases immeasurably, and their recommendations will be invaluable.
The Hidden Job Market

When job searching, most people tend to focus their efforts on applying to posted positions, then waiting to hear (or more often not hear) back from an anonymous HR contact.

A more proactive approach is to go after the jobs that are "hidden", or not advertised or known to the general public. Hidden jobs refer both to jobs that are not advertised because they expect to be filled through referrals, and those positions that in the formative stage – not yet, but soon to be, developed. In fact, it’s estimated that 80% of all jobs are never advertised.

The best way to locate the hidden jobs is to be a savvy industry researcher. Determine the industry and companies you want to work for. Remember that most openings will be in the small to mid-sized companies, so don’t limit your search to the Fortune 500.

Once you have your targeted list, you can track movement with the company. Read local business journals and online articles to hear about expansions, new products, new markets, or other developments that may indicate a need for new personnel.

On LinkedIn, check the new hires on a company’s page, to find potential opportunities (and see where these people worked before – since they’ve left, the company may need to replace them!).

Also on LinkedIn, search for start-up companies (key words start-up or stealth), to connect with new companies that may need your expertise.

Consider sending an unsolicited resume to a targeted contact at your company of interest. If you’ve been following the company and feel you can fill a need they have, send a resume that clearly outlines how you solve problems that match theirs, and they may create a job for you.

And of course, continue to manage and expand your network, so that your contacts will refer and recommend you when they hear about openings. LinkedIn, professional associations, and alumni connections are all good ways to build your network, and will substantially increase your chances of being at the right place at the right time for the perfect job opportunity.

Networking Do’s

Networking is a difficult activity for many people, but is essential for a successful job search. Keep these in mind as you do your networking.

Be memorable. Determine what makes you unique, and create an elevator speech that focuses on your value proposition and what you have to offer.

Respect people. Maintain your space when talking with people, and give the person your complete attention.

Be prepared. When you go to a networking event, plan some interesting topics that you can discuss, so that you’re comfortable carrying on conversations.

Have a conversation, and try to develop a connection, instead of trying to push your resume or card on people.
RIT Job Zone Refresher

Whether you’re a recent graduate, or an experienced alumnus/a, RIT’s Job Zone online job listing system should be a resource in your job search. We post jobs at all levels, and employers consistently contact us for alumni candidates in all career fields. Here are some ways you can utilize Job Zone in your search.

Search active positions, in the majors related to your career field; this may include majors other than the one you were in at RIT.

Search archived positions. The system stores all jobs posted in the last few years, so you can search your career field for potential companies to research and reach out to.

Search agent. You can set up a search agent to have the system notify you when jobs meeting your criteria are posted.

Employer database. If you’re interested in a particular company, you can see if our office has a recruiting relationship with them, which may open doors. If the contact is not listed, your Program Coordinator can provide that information to you, or send your resume on your behalf.

Events. Find information on our upcoming Career Fairs, workshops and programs held by our office, and information sessions by employers; you’re welcome to attend any event in which you’re interested.

CareerSearch. This database gives you access to over a million companies, and is searchable by industry and geographic location, so is especially helpful if you’re searching for a job in a targeted area. The information provided on each company is extensive, including key people that you can use for research and outreach. (Found on the Job Zone main menu.)

InterviewStream. An online video mock interview program, in which the program ask you questions, you respond and are taped, and you can review your responses, and forward them to your Program Coordinator or anyone else for critique. (Found on the Job Zone main menu.)

Professional Network. RIT alumni and employers have agreed to act as advisors to students and alumni looking for advice and guidance in their careers. Search for advisors in your career field, or company of interest, and request a connection for informational or networking interviews.

Your Program Coordinator will be happy to answer your Job Zone questions, or show you how you can best use the system in your job search.