

# Your Job Search Schedule

*A practical, flexible guide to finding work with purpose — and without burning out*

Developed by Lisa Howe | Career Solutions

## Before you begin: a note on how to use this guide

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Job searching is real work — and like any work, it needs structure, boundaries, and rest. This schedule is designed to help you stay organised and make consistent progress without turning every waking hour into a job hunt.

The single most important principle here: job searching does not need to be a 9-to-5 activity. In fact, treating it that way is likely to lead to exhaustion, reduced quality of applications, and a loss of the perspective and energy you need to interview well. The goal is focused, intentional effort — not hours logged.

*Think of this as a flexible framework, not a rigid timetable. Adapt it to your natural rhythms, your energy levels, and your life. Some days you will do more; some days, far less. Both are fine. What matters is the overall direction of travel.*

Your hobbies, social life, rest, and physical wellbeing are not rewards for finishing your job search tasks — they are part of the strategy. They keep you sharp, grounded, and genuinely present in conversations and interviews.

## The bigger picture: a phase-by-phase approach

Rather than thinking about job searching as a single overwhelming task, it helps to break it into phases. Each phase has a clear focus, which makes it much easier to know what to do each day.

Phase	Focus	Key activities	~Hrs/day
Phase 1 Weeks 1–2	Foundations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Self-assessment:</b> reflect on your skills, values, and what you are looking for in your next role.</li> <li>● <b>Target company research:</b> identify 10–20 organisations that genuinely interest you.</li> <li>● <b>LinkedIn profile:</b> update your headline, summary, experience, and turn on Open to Work.</li> <li>● <b>Learning:</b> identify skills gaps and begin one relevant course or resource.</li> </ul>	3–4
Phase 2 Weeks 3–4	Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>LinkedIn outreach:</b> send 3–5 personalised connection requests per day — quality over quantity.</li> <li>● <b>Informational interviews:</b> book 1–2 conversations per week with people in your target roles or companies.</li> <li>● <b>Continue learning:</b> dedicate regular time to developing relevant skills.</li> <li>● <b>Company research:</b> deepen your knowledge of target companies — culture, news, strategy.</li> </ul>	3–5
Phase 3 Weeks 5–6	Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Tailored applications:</b> apply to 3–5 roles per week, customising your CV and cover letter each time.</li> <li>● <b>Elevator pitch:</b> draft, practise, and refine your 60-second professional introduction.</li> <li>● <b>Exit statement:</b> prepare a clear, positive explanation of why you are moving on.</li> <li>● <b>Connections:</b> maintain LinkedIn outreach and follow up on earlier conversations.</li> </ul>	4–5
Phase 4 Week 7+	Interview Ready	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Interview preparation:</b> research interviewers, practise STAR-format answers, prepare smart questions.</li> <li>● <b>Elevator pitch rehearsal:</b> practise aloud — record yourself or practise with a trusted person.</li> <li>● <b>Exit statement review:</b> ensure your explanation feels natural and confident.</li> <li>● <b>Ongoing applications:</b> keep a steady pace of 2–3 tailored applications per week.</li> </ul>	4–5

*These phases often overlap — you will be doing some applications in Phase 2 and some company research in Phase 4. Think of the labels as a primary focus, not a strict rule.*

## A sample week: spreading your effort across the week

This is a suggested rhythm for a full week of job searching. You do not need to follow every column precisely — use this as a starting point and adjust based on your energy and commitments. The hours shown are a suggested maximum, not a target.

Day	Morning focus	Afternoon / later focus	Max hrs
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Weekly planning:</b> review your goals for the week, check job boards, and update your tracker.</li> <li>● <b>Company research:</b> spend 45–60 mins researching 1–2 target companies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>LinkedIn:</b> send personalised connection requests and engage with relevant content.</li> <li>● <b>Learning:</b> 30–45 mins on a course, podcast, or article relevant to your field.</li> </ul>	4
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Applications:</b> write and submit 1–2 tailored applications — slow and considered, not rushed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Elevator pitch practice:</b> record yourself, review, and refine.</li> <li>● <b>Informational interview:</b> if scheduled, treat it as a learning conversation, not a pitch.</li> </ul>	4
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Deep research:</b> explore a target company in depth — LinkedIn employees, news, Glassdoor.</li> <li>● <b>Learning:</b> structured study session.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Follow-ups:</b> send thank-you notes, progress emails, or re-engage a connection.</li> <li>● <b>Exit statement practice:</b> rehearse your narrative until it feels effortless.</li> </ul>	3–4
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Applications:</b> 1–2 more tailored applications or finish ones started Tuesday.</li> <li>● <b>Interview prep:</b> prepare STAR examples for common interview questions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Informational interview:</b> if scheduled. If not, use time for LinkedIn outreach.</li> <li>● <b>Reflective journalling:</b> note what is working, what feels hard, and what you are learning.</li> </ul>	4
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Admin and tracking:</b> update your application tracker, log conversations, and note any next steps.</li> <li>● <b>Light research:</b> browse job boards with no pressure to apply.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Learning or reading:</b> something you find genuinely interesting in your field.</li> <li>● <b>Week review:</b> celebrate what you did, not just what you applied for.</li> </ul>	2–3
Saturday & Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Rest and recharge:</b> job searching is demanding work — your brain needs recovery time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Hobbies and social time:</b> protect these completely. They fuel your energy and keep you grounded.</li> <li>● <b>Optional:</b> if inspiration strikes, jot ideas — but do not feel obliged to 'work'.</li> </ul>	0–1

*Notice that Friday is deliberately lighter. Finishing the week with a sense of completion — rather than a sense of falling behind — is important for maintaining motivation over weeks and months.*

## A sample day: how to structure your time

Below is an example of how a focused job search day might look. You can start this at whatever time works for you — 8am, 10am, or even later. The blocks do not have fixed clock times intentionally, so you can fit this around your own routine.

Time block	Suggested activity
<b>Morning routine (your chosen time)</b>	<b>Start gently:</b> eat, move, or do whatever helps you feel grounded before the day begins. This is not optional — it is part of the plan.
<b>Block 1 (~60–90 mins)</b>	<b>Deep focus task:</b> tackle the most cognitively demanding task first — writing an application, researching a company, or preparing interview answers.
<b>Break (15–30 mins)</b>	<b>Step away:</b> go outside if you can. Avoid screens. This break is doing work — it consolidates what you have just processed.
<b>Block 2 (~60 mins)</b>	<b>Connections and communications:</b> LinkedIn outreach, sending follow-up messages, confirming informational interviews, or engaging in relevant online communities.
<b>Lunch (proper break)</b>	<b>Eat away from your desk:</b> a genuine mid-day break improves afternoon concentration significantly. You deserve a real lunch.
<b>Block 3 (~45–60 mins)</b>	<b>Learning or practise:</b> work through a course module, practise your elevator pitch or exit statement aloud, or read something relevant to your target sector.
<b>Block 4 (~30–45 mins)</b>	<b>Admin and tracking:</b> update your job search tracker, log conversations, check job boards, and write down any next steps.
<b>End of day (firm stop)</b>	<b>Close down with intention:</b> write down tomorrow's top three tasks, then stop. Protect your evening — rest is a job search strategy, not a reward.
<b>Evening &amp; hobbies</b>	<b>Your time:</b> hobbies, social connection, movement, creativity. These activities are not breaks from job searching — they are the reason you are doing it.

*Total active job search time in this example: approximately 4–5 hours. Research consistently shows that after 4–5 hours of focused cognitive work, quality drops significantly. More hours ≠ better applications.*

## Quick reference: tips to keep you on track

Practical tips	Looking after yourself
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Quality over quantity:</b> 3 tailored applications beat 20 generic ones every time.</li><li>✓ <b>Track everything:</b> use a simple spreadsheet — company, role, date, status, next step.</li><li>✓ <b>One task at a time:</b> break each activity into small, specific actions to avoid overwhelm.</li><li>✓ <b>Batch similar tasks:</b> write all your outreach messages in one sitting rather than switching between tasks.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Set a daily 'done' signal:</b> a physical or ritual marker that tells your brain the work day is over.</li><li>✓ <b>Protect rest like a meeting:</b> block it in your diary and honour it.</li><li>✓ <b>Celebrate small wins:</b> a sent application, a new connection, a completed course module — all count.</li><li>✓ <b>Review weekly, not daily:</b> day-to-day fluctuations are misleading. Progress shows over weeks.</li></ul>

*Finally: job searching can feel relentless, and it is normal for it to take longer than expected. That is not a reflection of your ability — it is a reflection of the process. Keep going, keep your standards high, and rest without guilt. You are building towards something worth having.*

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