

ADVENTURES IN MEDICINE

Career & Life Planning

Survival Guide



*Job Search
Timeline*

Discovery Resource

ST-01



Your Guides:

When you're setting out on the journey of a lifetime, it helps to have an experienced guide. That's why we're here. The authors of this professional career guidebook have decades of frontline experience in healthcare management and physician recruitment and retention. In fact, the collective recruiting expertise totals more than 100 years in the field and more than 40,000 physician applications, 10,000 candidate interviews and 2,000 physician placements nationwide.

The guidebook also reflects the findings from hundreds of hours of research and countless surveys and interviews with residents, practicing physicians and their spouses, program directors, hospital and group practice executives, and hiring managers.

Above all, we've listened to the needs of physicians as they seek to find the right career direction, whether fresh from residency or after many years in medicine. Finally, we have field-tested the contents of this guidebook in real-life situations. We hope you will find us to be trustworthy companions on your journey.

The first leg of the journey starts with the job search timeline. The adventure begins.



In This Stage: Job Search Timeline

Climbing Mount Everest is no small task. Such an adventure takes years of planning, and a serious investment of time and money. Yet, the goal is remarkable — and **ONLY A FEW** reach the peak. Sound familiar?

You've invested years of your life and money you didn't have, and you've focused on a goal that few attain — a remarkable career in medicine.

Why bail out now?

Do you have the final **ROADMAP** to find the right job, in the right hospital, with the right staff and latest technology, to give you the career and lifestyle you've envisioned?

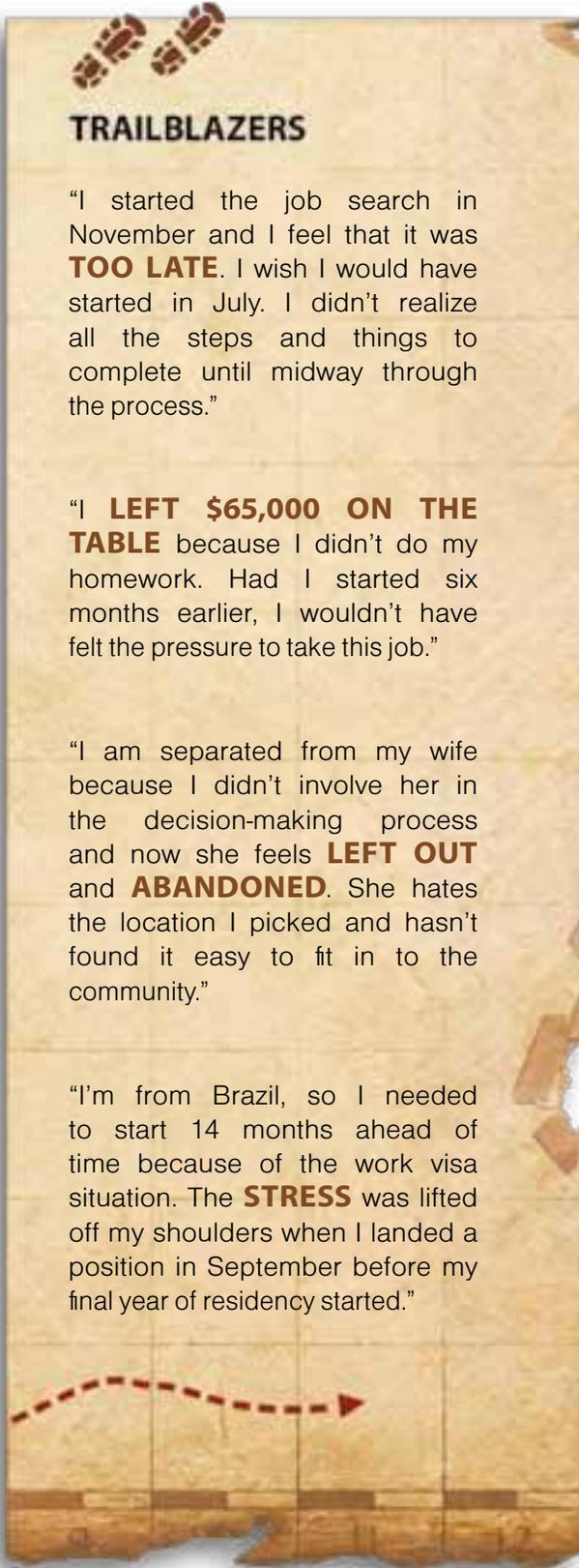
In this stage, you will create that roadmap — a simple, organized path to help you manage the job search process. You'll be organizing yourself to finish, reach your goal and begin your career with **CONFIDENCE** and **DIRECTION**.

Ready? Let's get started!

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TRAILBLAZERS

"I started the job search in November and I feel that it was **TOO LATE**. I wish I would have started in July. I didn't realize all the steps and things to complete until midway through the process."

"I **LEFT \$65,000 ON THE TABLE** because I didn't do my homework. Had I started six months earlier, I wouldn't have felt the pressure to take this job."

"I am separated from my wife because I didn't involve her in the decision-making process and now she feels **LEFT OUT** and **ABANDONED**. She hates the location I picked and hasn't found it easy to fit in to the community."

"I'm from Brazil, so I needed to start 14 months ahead of time because of the work visa situation. The **STRESS** was lifted off my shoulders when I landed a position in September before my final year of residency started."

Surveying the Landscape

The creation of a job search timeline is the foundational – and arguably most important – step in the job search process for a resident. By creating a timeline, you will walk away with a **TACTICAL, STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS** for your job search that will give you a clear roadmap as you move forward. This will eliminate guesswork and redundant effort that wastes your time – time you don't have to spare.

You might be thinking to yourself, "Why do I need to develop a job search timeline? I'm too busy as it is, and I don't have time to do this. There are plenty of jobs for physicians in today's environment, so I can study for my boards instead. What's the rush?"

But think about how many years you've spent studying and preparing to become a physician in the first place. You owe it to yourself, and perhaps your family, to invest time up-front, get organized and take a more clinical, well-thought-out, and planned approach to the job search process, just as you have done during your training.

By creating a job search timeline, you will set your **DIRECTION** and **FOCUS**, gain **CONTROL**, and ultimately spend **LESS TIME** on the search for the right job for you.

Beginning the Job Search

Dr. Kenton Lee, Program Director for Family Practice Medicine in Rockford, Illinois, recommends that residents begin the job search process in their second year by preparing their CV and identifying their options. He assigns third-year residents as mentors for second-year residents to help them learn how to handle non-clinical issues, including the job search.

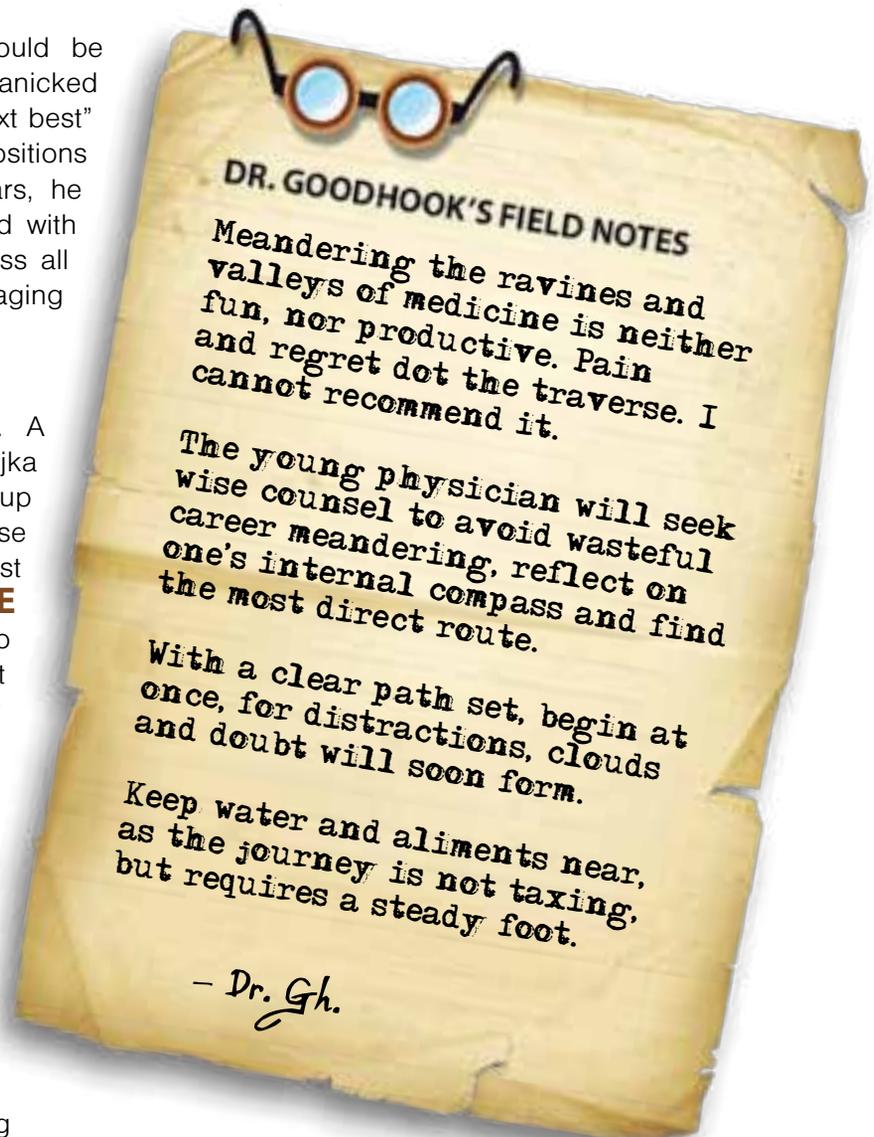
Dr. Lee shared a story about one resident who started looking three months prior to graduation. The resident didn't think it was a big deal, because he wanted to practice in the Chicago market, which was only 45 minutes away, and he assumed there would be a "plethora" of options to choose from.

Once he started looking in the Chicago suburbs, he realized that most of the opportunities did not match his criteria, such as loan repayment and higher salary. In fact, he found the opposite: the job possibilities paid 20 to 25% less than smaller, rural communities, and he could find no loan-repayment options. To make matters worse, the resident learned that the cost of living — specifically buying a house — was much higher than he had anticipated.

Once the resident realized that he would be working a lot harder for less money, he panicked and took the first offer, settling for the "next best" opportunity because the most desirable positions were no longer available. After two years, he found himself disappointed and frustrated with the job and began the job search process all over again, uprooting his family and damaging the momentum of his career.

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated case. A 2006 Physician Retention Study by Cejka Search and American Medical Group Association reported that **46%** of those physicians who leave a practice are most likely to do so within the **FIRST THREE YEARS** of employment. According to the survey results, a lack of cultural fit with the practice and/or the community was a driving force in turnover. This data is consistent with past reports, stating a "poor cultural fit with the practice" is the single most frequently mentioned reason for voluntary separation (51%). In addition, "Relocated to find a better community fit" was mentioned **20%** of the time.

However, family reasons that required the physician to relocate were also strong contributors to turnover, with "relocating to be closer to own or spouse's family" **42%** and "spouse's job required relocation" **22%** revealing that moving for family reasons is a significant cause for physicians leaving the practice.



ADVENTURES IN MEDICINE: THE RESIDENT'S GUIDE

Below you'll find a list of implications of starting your job search earlier versus later. Which ones resonate with you? Are you someone who is proactive and takes action, or someone who procrastinates and waits until the last minute?

STARTING EARLIER	STARTING LATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Planning up front provides you the opportunity to devine your VALUES where decision making becomes much more CLEARER.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ It may take LONGER to find the right job with the right fit.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ You have MORE TIME to evaluate options and negotiate contracts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ You may LOSE OUT on the best job opportunities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ You can FOCUS on things like preparing for boards, finishing residency, and completing visa requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ You may have LIMITED options (location, compensation, etc.).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ You can complete the licensing application process ON TIME.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Your CV and references may be MISSING important information that could limit job opportunities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ You're more likely to find a job that meets your PERSONAL and PROFESSIONAL NEEDS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ You may NOT BE ABLE TO START WORK right away because you haven't completed the state licensing process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Having more time increases your CONFIDENCE and ability to make decisions that are right for you and your family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ You risk taking a job that pays the bills but leaves you UNHAPPY, DISSATISFIED and QUITTING after a short time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ You may be able to sign a contract with a hospital or practice MANY MONTHS prior to the start date with a possibility of receiving a stipend while you finish your training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ You could become REACTIVE and PANICKY often leading to poor decision making.

Job Search Questionnaire

Complete this questionnaire that contains thoughts and perspectives related to the job search process.

	Very True	True	Some-what True	False, Not at All
1. I started the job search already.				
2. There's so much to do and not enough time to complete everything.				
3. The job search process is overwhelming. I've never had to find a "real job" before, and I don't know where to begin.				
4. I'm excited about the possibilities that are out there. I can't wait to get started or keep searching.				
5. My spouse or partner is assisting me in this process.				
6. I expect to have 5-10 job offers given the demand for my specialty; therefore, I'm in the driver's seat, and I can call all my own shots.				
7. I have a solid network of people whom I can turn to for help.				
8. Searching for a job is a lower priority for me right now.				

REFLECTION

What do your ratings of these statements indicate about your **ATTITUDE** toward the job search process?

Are you **SATISFIED** with your attitude at this point? If not, what is one action step you can take to begin to address this?



GUIDE POINTS

1. Started job search — If you have, what benefits are you seeing? If you haven't, when do you plan to begin? How will you make this a priority? How do you feel about the process? Confident, scared, anxious?
2. So much to do and not enough time — How much time will you devote to the job search process? Finding the right position takes time. Plan on spending three to four hours a week for a period of three to six months, especially during the initial stages of identifying the type of position you want to pursue.
3. Job search is overwhelming — At the end of this stage, you'll fill out a job search timeline that captures all the activities and critical decisions that you must make. When you look at the big picture, it can be overwhelming, but when you break it down by phases and steps, it's easier to work through the process.
4. I'm excited about the possibilities — How's your attitude? A positive attitude is a must when it comes to a job search. If you view it as a chore or a hassle, this attitude will be translated into how you present yourself on paper and in person.
5. Spouse or partner is involved — If you have a spouse or partner, it's critical that they are part of your team and involved in the decision-making process. Your decisions impact their lives as much as yours.
6. Keep your values close — Verify your assumptions by conducting research online and/or by networking, learning about the salaries as well as the supply and demand for a particular area. Even if you determine that there may be several offers to consider, there may be 1 or 2 that align with your values.
7. Solid network — The job search process is lengthy and filled with unexpected twists and turns. Find a mentor and/or a team of people you trust who can offer advice and tips for success. Check with your program director and/or attendings to get the help that you need. Don't work alone or in a vacuum, because this decision is one of the most important that you will face in the months and years to come.
8. Make your career a Priority — re-entering yourself back into life after dedicating your life to medicine over a decade is no easy feat and it takes time.

Job Search Process: Four Phases

There are four distinct phases to work through that encompass all 10 stages of the job search process. Working through each phase will guarantee the best outcomes.

PLAN — DO YOUR HOMEWORK

- Stage 1: Develop your job search timeline.
- Stage 2: Know the medical market conditions and practice options.
- Stage 3: Understand compensation structures, productivity formulas and geographic implications.
- Stage 4: Align job options with your life, money and career priorities.

SEARCH — WORK YOUR PLAN

- Stage 5: Build your search strategy.
- Stage 6: Prepare for and conduct interviews.

DECIDE — CHOOSE THE JOB WITH CONFIDENCE

- Stage 7: Analyze and select the best job offer for you.
- Stage 8: Negotiate your employment contract.

IMPLEMENT — START THE JOB

- Stage 9: Implement healthy financial disciplines early on.
- Stage 10: Transition into your first job.



GUIDE POINTS

Goal Setting

1. **MORE THAN ONE** goal associated with the job search process is acceptable.
2. Make sure you use the **SMART** criteria to create goals that make sense and provide focus and direction.
3. Don't confuse **ACTION ITEMS** with **GOALS**. Action items are related to goals in that they are specific activities that you will complete in order to achieve the goals.
4. **SHARE** your goals with the people in your network (program director, attending physicians, colleagues, friends, family members) and get their opinions: Ask them to evaluate your goal(s) on the SMART criteria. Ask if they are relevant and realistic based on what you've described, and talk about your ultimate job-search objective.
5. Do not short-change this task! When you write down and verbalize goals, you're likely to **ACHIEVE** them — as long as they follow the SMART criteria, especially being **REALISTIC** and **TIMEBOUND**.

Crafting Job Search Goals

Goals in life and work are very important. Obviously, you have worked hard toward the goal of completing medical training. Now you are at the point of creating the goal that addresses: **"NOW WHAT?"** Goal setting involves a simple formula that is widely used in business, professional and personal settings. This model is called **SMART GOALS**. In case you're not familiar with SMART goals, the acronym stands for:

S	SPECIFIC
M	MEASURABLE
A	ACHIEVABLE
R	RELEVANT
T	TIMEBOUND

Follow this formula and create a SMART Goal for your job search:

- DATE:** By this date...
- ACTION:** my job search goal is to...
(list actions)
- RESULTS:** resulting in...
(describe the outcome).

EXAMPLES:

By January 1, my job search goal is to complete phase one (plan) and phase two (search) activities that result in a minimum of five on-site interviews and three job offers to consider.

What makes this SMART?

DATE: January 1

ACTION: Complete phase one and phase two

RESULTS: Five on-site job interviews and three job offers

By June 1, my job search goal is to complete phase three (decide), resulting in choosing a job offer and signing a contract for hire with a preferred employer based on my top two choices.

What makes this SMART?

DATE: June 1

ACTION: Complete phase three

RESULTS: Choosing a job offer and signing a contract



Now that your job search goals are established, it's time to evaluate each phase of the job search process and identify specific activities that you plan to complete. Taking a more systematic, planned-out approach to the job search process increases your odds of landing a job that is right for you.

Creating Your Timeline

PLAN <i>(Stages 1-4)</i>				SEARCH <i>(Stages 5-6)</i>			
TIMEFRAME <i>(Month(s)/Year):</i>				TIMEFRAME <i>(Month(s)/Year):</i>			
	START	FINISH	✓		START	FINISH	✓
Complete/update CV, cover letters and reference letters.				Identify job opportunities.			
				Mine your network.			
Identify your core values.				Research job postings.			
Create your life-purpose statement.				Select recruiters.			
Identify your life, money, and career priorities.				Research and contact employers.			
Apply for licenses, visas (international students).				Respond to postings.			
Identify "must-have" physician leadership competencies.				Schedule interviews.			
Build your advisory team (mentor, professionals, family, etc.).				Prepare for interviews.			
				Conduct phone interviews.			
				Conduct in-person interviews.			
				Evaluate outcomes.			
				Follow up with employers.			

The purpose of this timeline is to provide a roadmap of your job search journey. For each of the major phases, indicate the timeframe you will spend on that phase by writing the month(s) and year in the space provided. For each activity, identify a desired start and finish date. Finally, when a particular activity is complete, check it off and move on. (Some activities may overlap with other phases.)

DECIDE (Stages 7-8)				IMPLEMENT (Stages 9-10)			
TIMEFRAME (Month(s)/Year):				TIMEFRAME (Month(s)/Year):			
	START	FINISH	✓		START	FINISH	✓
Receive and evaluate offers.				Get your finances in order with a spending, savings and investment plan.			
Assess offers based on priorities, compensation and “must-have” physician leadership competencies.				Protect your life and career with a healthy dose of work-life balance.			
Select a job offer.				Know the job requirements.			
Negotiate your contract.							
Provide verification of necessary documents.							
Complete pre-employment requirements (credentialing, background checks).							



1

COMPLETED

Stage 1 Action Checklist

Make sure you have completed these tasks by the end of this stage:

- Create your job search timeline.
- Determine your job search SMART goals.
- Create/update your CV, cover letters and reference letters.

"Reduce your plan to writing.... The moment you complete this, you will have DEFINITELY given concrete form to the intangible DESIRE."

— Napoleon Hill