A compilation of advice for interns and young professionals.
What you'll find in this guide:

· How do I find a job in the humanitarian/NGO sector?
  · Tips to find and apply for jobs
    · Tips to change career path
  · Tips and best practices to send applications and widen your network.
· How do I get there?
  · Tips to do a good interview
BLOC 1
HOW DO I FIND A JOB IN THE NGO SECTOR?
If you don’t get the job, ask the hiring manager to keep your CV, flagging your interest if positions open in the future.

Send your CVs to (smaller) organisations you like, don’t wait for them to have an open position!

Focus on umbrella organisations - e.g. Concord, Voice - because they allow you to get to know a lot of organizations.

Sometimes just entering an organisation is important, even if it’s not exactly the position you wanted. Start somewhere!

It’s okay not to match all the requirements. Focus on soft skills! The technical skills are something everyone can always learn.
Always justify why you want to change path, and then apply, even if you don’t fully match the criteria.

Try to look for things in common with the new position you are applying for, look at what similar things you have done in the past and use those in your motivation.

Be prepared to have to take a step back when changing your career path.
BLOC 2
APPLICATIONS AND NETWORKING!

Tips and best practices to send applications and widen your network.
Don’t be afraid to ask for external help and feedback: set up fake interviews with your friends, ask colleagues what they think of your resume, etc.

Don’t get stuck in the Brussels bubble: there is a whole wide world out there, and organizations in the sector usually appreciate someone with international experience.

Never give up: reaching your goals might take time, but each experience can be valuable if properly used in your applications!

Target smaller organizations as they are usually easier to get into and will enable you to build your profile by working on a variety of tasks!

You don’t always have to wait for vacancies to be published. For smaller organisations especially, you can e-mail your application directly.
"APPLYING FOR A JOB IS A JOB."

"Make sure each application and interview answers are tailored to the position and the organization recruiting."
RESUME & COVER LETTER 101

KNOW YOUR TARGET

1. Make sure you are clear about the why: why this organization? Why this position?
2. Check the website to find and showcase connections between your experience/past and the organization you are applying to.
3. When applying to a variety of different roles, have different CV and cover letter templates targeted at different types of jobs.
4. Personalize your cover letter: you can call HR to ask who is the hiring manager and use their name!

FIND THE MATCH

Match the advertised requirements with examples from your own experience.

1. The examples you use can come from your personal life (sports, hobbies, etc.) or sectors as long as they help you demonstrate a skill that is advertised in the job description.
2. Prioritize the requirements as you probably won’t have space to go through all of them: to identify the hierarchy among requirements, you can look at the wording (required vs desirable), but also deduct it from the advertised tasks.
3. Use the wording and tasks featured in the vacancy to match your own experience.
Don’t forget to label your application documents properly or as requested (Name_Resume.pdf for instance): it’s a detail but makes a difference when the recruiter has to process a huge amount of applications!

Read, re-read and then re-read your resume & application again. Grammar and spelling mistakes are a no-go!

Remember that recruiters might not spend more than 30 seconds reviewing your application: make it easy for them to see how you stand out.

You can have fun with it: to the written question “What can you bring to the organization”, a candidate started by replying “cookies” (be careful depending on the audience).
. Talk to your peers: gather information on other organizations, who are also hiring or is their organization a good fit for you!

. Don’t underestimate the importance of your connections: people who you already know can open doors for you both inside and outside the organization!

. Don’t be afraid to ask colleagues for support: they can send your resume to organizations they know or write a note to a hiring manager (especially if you are applying internally).

. Cultivate links: keep in touch with former colleagues and bosses, send them a word from time to time - this way, it will feel less awkward reaching out if you need their help in a recruiting process.

. Reach out to people you don’t know on LinkedIn or e-mail if you can find it: you have nothing to lose and you might actually be surprised by the attention people give to your requests.

For more concrete tips on networking, take a look at this comprehensive guide.
BLOC 3
HOW DO I GET THERE?
Tips to do a good interview.
Tips to Boost Your Interview Skills

**Before the interview**

| Tip # 1 | Remain calm, even before the interview (e.g. do some meditation, listen to some music). |
| Tip # 2 | Search hiring people and find a connection for interview. |
| Tip # 3 | Prepare the basic interview questions like ‘what is your motivation?, what are your strengths/weaknesses?, how would your co-workers describe you?’  
  Extra tip: use ChatGPT to attach the job description and ask to come up with 20 interview questions. |
| Tip # 4 | Suggestion: prepare an elevator pitch or show an object that describes you or identifies you for when they ask you to describe yourself. |

**During the interview**

| Tip # 5 | Don’t try to be perfect, just well prepared. Take time to reflect on the answer. |
| Tip # 6 | Make sure you have a question to ask to the interview panelists! Prepare some questions before the interview and/or ask follow up questions. |
| Tip # 7 | Questions on strengths and weaknesses: show self awareness, say what you are doing or can do to solve the weaknesses and do not share a weakness that is related to the core tasks of the job. |
| Tip # 8 | Evaluate the recruiters as well: see if they are a fit for you. |
| Tip # 9 | Send a thank you email after the interview  
  Extra tip: if you haven’t been able to answer a specific question, you can reply in an email if you want to clarify. |
GOOD LUCK FINDING A JOB

Do you have questions? Send an email to eu@oxfam.org