Conducting a Successful Job Search

Conducting a job search is the most time consuming part of finding a new position but often candidates put little effort into the hunt. The internet has given companies many posting options and without a thorough search many candidates miss out on opportunities. Here are a few keys to maximizing efficiency and casting the widest net possible.

- Know what you want to do and where you want to work!
- Use a consolidated search engine such as Indeed.com but also check other resources.
- Sign up for job feeds with specific results.
- Post your resume on Monster, CareerBuilder, LinkedIn, Visual CV, etc. so recruiters can contact you for un-posted positions.
- Join professional associations and network.
- Only apply to a position if you meet the minimum qualifications.

Applying for the Opening

Job applications can be exhausting but letting that frustration show or putting in little effort can take you out of consideration in a hurry.

- Complete the FULL application and NEVER use the phrase “see resume.”
- If you are having trouble with the application, call the Human Resources Office for assistance.
- Use a professional email address (spoiledprincess@yahoo.com will probably not get an interview).
- Names your resume file appropriately – use your first and last name or initials and resume.
- Resumes should be Microsoft Word or Adobe .pdf documents.
- Include a cover letter but make it professional and brief but always convey your passion for the job.
- Read the posting carefully for key words/phrases/expectations and tailor your resume to highlight similar achievements and experience.
- Highlight your achievements, not just job duties.
- Find something that you believe separates you from the competition and prominently display it on your resume and cover letter (this must be something that would be of value to your potential employer!).
- Past salaries or salary expectations should only be included if requested.
- Be honest with your experience, recruiters will call references.
- Keep resumes to 2 pages or less in length.
- SPELL CHECK! Also have someone proofread for grammar if possible.
- Read the directions, FAQ’s, glossary and any other information about the process before you begin.
- Call to inquire about the position if you haven’t heard anything after a week. Do not call more than once!
- Check Social Media sites and put a privacy filter on all of your accounts.
Acquiring the Interview

You found a way to shine brighter than 100+ other applicants and got the interview. Now what?

- Research the company and be prepared to tell the interviewer why you want to work there.
- If the first step is a phone interview use a land-line if possible and make sure you have a place that is quiet with minimal interruptions.
- Dress as professionally as possible no matter what the job may be.
- Arrive 5 – 10 minutes early. Do a test run before the interview if it is a place you have never been before.
- Leave your cell phone in your car!
- Review the job description or posting the day of the interview.
- Bring extra copies of your resume, a note pad, and two pens.
- Show excitement about the position and maintain an upbeat attitude (no bad mouthing of previous employment, managers or co-workers!).
- Answer questions clearly and succinctly. Avoid talking too much or in circles.
- Be prepared to provide specific examples of past performance in certain situations.
- Be prepared for unusual questions. This is a new technique for interviewers to see how you handle stress and problem solve.
  - Example: If you were pencil-sized and stuck in a blender, how would you get out? (http://www.glassdoor.com/blog/top-25-oddball-interview-questions-2010/)
- Be prepared for negative ("contrary evidence") questions and find a way to make the positive.
  - Example: Tell me about a time when you received negative feedback.
- Prepare questions to ask at the end of the interview. Don’t ask about benefits until a second interview or when a job offer is made.
  - Example: Why is this job open? What challenges does this position face? What goals do you have for the first year in this position? What do you like about the department or company?
- Be honest about your weaknesses but find a way to show that you can turn them into a strength.
- Don’t act desperate. Managers want employees who are looking for the right opportunity, not just any job.
- Close the interview by telling the interviewer exactly why you are the person for the job. Sell yourself with an enthusiastic, short summary.

Follow-Up Tips

The interview is over and you want to make sure you get the job. Try these tips.

- ALWAYS send a short, hand-written thank you note to each interviewer.
- Call if you haven’t heard back from the interviewer in the expected time frame.
- If you are not moved forward ask if there is something you could do to improve in the future.
- When you get the job offer ask for time to review it. Employers expect you to negotiate and it never hurts to ask for a higher salary, bonus or more vacation time.