

LANDING A JOB - GUIDEBOOK

There are an abundance of jobs in most economic sectors today. Many industries today are looking for qualified people and operating with employee shortages. That is good news for the job seekers out there.

To land a job does require a strategy. A solid game plan is necessary to gain entry into a workplace or position that you are qualified for and interested in. Applying to a bunch of jobs that are posted is one way of going about it. There are other approaches that are useful and may actually assist you in being hired for a job you desire.

APPROACHES FOR A SUCCESSFUL JOB SEARCH

1. Step One – Research

Take a deep breath in – let it out and do it again. Having done that, open yourself up to the fun possibility of doing research! That’s right – allow yourself to have fun checking out the companies that offer jobs in the areas you are qualified for or interested in. When doing the background research on companies keep the following in mind:

- Are you open to relocation? If not, focus your efforts on those companies that are in your area or within commuting distance from where you live.
- If you are open to commuting, how far are you willing to commute daily? Is it 1 hour each way – 1.5 hours each way? Whatever the number is, have it a distance you are comfortable with.
- Should commuting to and from work be an option for you, do you have a reliable vehicle that will take you there and back consistently?
- In the event you live in or near a community that has a dominant industry, take the time to check which jobs you qualify for in hard-to-fill situations.
- For those who are looking for entry level positions, whether you are a labourer, an apprentice tradesperson, or a new graduate from a professional program, take the time to ensure your background and experience fit with what the minimum requirements are for the job you are interested in.
- Use your time wisely; applying for jobs that are outside of your scope of experience and interest will not serve your purpose.

2. Step Two – Narrowing the Field

Identifying companies that you want to work for is vital. When you live in a large metropolitan area you may have a large number of potential employers to choose from. Take the time to whittle down the companies by addressing their values, operating principles, along with their participation in the communities they are based in their support of local initiatives.

For those living in smaller centres where there is one dominant industry or facility that is the main employer within a geographic area – it is important to do the same. In other words, if the way the business values and operating principles conflict with your own point of view the chances of landing a position for the long term are minimized. That does not mean you should not take a job with the employer. The experience gained from working for that company will be beneficial over the longer term.

For tips on narrowing the field engage Marie-Helene for a private session by emailing careersolutions@effectiveplacement.com.

3. Step Three – Resume

A resume is still the tool that is used as the baseline for deciding who gets an interview for a job. To make it to the yes pile, your resume needs to reflect the skills and experience that are required to do the work.

Having a generic resume and using it to apply for different jobs in different companies does not work. Updating your resume to reflect the job and the values of a company that you are interested in is an approach that will land you results.

There are numerous tools available to assist you with putting together a resume. Try them out. If you are qualified and have the background and experience for the roles you are applying for and are not making it to the interview stage – your resume could be the issue.

For assistance with developing a resumes that will attract attention and result in interviews engage Marie-Helene for a discussion on rates at careersolutions@effectiveplacement.com.

4. Step Four – Applications for Jobs

Most employers use some form of an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to rate the applications of candidates for jobs. All ATS's use various Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithms to determine if an applicant has the right skill sets to be considered for a job. These algorithms are based on the identification of key words defined by the employer in terms of skill and experience.

For your application to be considered for an interview whether that be a pre-screen or a full interview with a hiring manager your resume needs to have several key words within the document. To ensure selection your resume needs to reflect those parameters. In the event it does not – your application will be overlooked.

5. Step Five – Interview

Interviews are what move the process forward. Forward motion may be a job offer or a decision to withdraw your application for the position. Either result is helpful. The reason that both options are beneficial will be clear in a bit.

Today most interviews take place online using various video tools. Two types of interviews are typical in a hiring process. The first is a pre-screening interview. This one takes place with a company representative working in the Talent Acquisition area. Here you will be asked general questions about your interest in the job, and why want to work for the company. Specific questions include your willingness to relocate, your current educational credentials, your current salary, or your salary expectation for the job. You will also be asked to describe briefly what skills, knowledge, and abilities make you a good candidate for the position.

During the pre-screen be prepared to answer each question directly and succinctly. When it comes to the salary question – do not assume that this is something that will come up later for discussion. Be prepared to state salary expectations clearly. Ask additional questions in relation to benefits and bonus plans. The information gathered here is usually the basis for an offer. Clarity is the best strategy here.

The second stage of the interview process is with the Hiring Manager and the Talent Acquisition person who did the initial pre-screen. Interviews typically consist of two types of questions – behavioural and technical. The behavioural interview questions are frequently based on key values and behaviours that the company employees are expected to emulate in their day-to-day work.

There is a tendency to minimize behavioural interview questions. These questions are vital to the interview process and are used in making hiring decisions. As someone who is being interviewed your ability to stand out from the rest of the candidate pool is based on the answers to these questions.

Answers to the questions all require an example that illustrates the behaviour that is highlighted in a question. Safety and addressing conflict are two examples of question areas that are common. Preparing for an interview includes reviewing the values of the company.

For assistance in practicing behavioural interview questions engage Marie-Helene for a discussion on rates at careersolutions@effectiveplacement.com.

6. Step Six – Offer Acceptance or Decline

The purpose of an interview – is to give a good one. A good interview may result in the position being offered to you or not. When a job is not offered it – the interview itself was still successful. Success here is determined by your participation in the process. Practicing your skills in an interview is priceless. The more opportunities you have to practice – the better you are at the process and that ultimately leads to an offer or offers of employment at some time in the future.

An offer may have been made and you may have the opportunity to consider it and accept or decline. Declining an offer is not an easy decision and one that requires courage on your part. You may decline based on meeting the Hiring Manager and making the decision that working for this person would not be in your best interests. Declines are also made based on the total compensation plan offered, or on changing personal circumstances in your life.

For those wishing to have additional assistance in the job search process, please send an email to Marie-Helene at: careersolutions@effectiveplacement.com.