

Career Planning/Job Search Steps

Following are steps that have to be taken to ensure you are presenting yourself effectively:

1. Know yourself – understand your value proposition. Communicate “Why” you are seeking the job and “Why” you should be interviewed or hired.
 - a. What are your skills (what are you good at?)
 - b. What are your interests (what do you enjoy doing?)
 - c. What are your values (what is important to you?)
 2. Know the Career Field – understand what the career options are:
 - a. What are common likes / dislikes of those in the field / at the company?
 - b. What qualities do those in this field typically have?
 - c. What type of training / education is required for each level of the field?
 - d. What are salaries and trends of this career field?
 3. Make a decision on “Career Fit” - Take the information you compiled in steps 1 & 2 and decide where you need to focus your job search. This is also the information you will use to prepare your positioning statement or elevator pitch to meet people.
 4. Begin Preparation - Read job descriptions or network with people to identify what skills are required for this career field, (use Career Briefs > Employability Skills Grid for assistance)
 - a. Draft a resume (use Career Briefs for assistance) - highlight your qualifications related to the career field you’ve chosen.
 - i. The purpose of the resume – to get the interview
 - ii. The purpose of the cover letter – to entice someone to read your resume
 - b. Develop a target list of employers and find contacts
 - c. Brainstorm your own list of networking contacts (use Career Briefs > Networking)
 - d. Read through the Career Briefs on Interviewing
 - i. The purpose of the interview – to get the job offer
 - ii. Bottom Line: WHY SHOULD THEY HIRE YOU? (Or even give you their time?) Be clear on what you’re looking for – help them help you!
 - iii. Research the company, industry, career field – this helps you understand and communicate what you have to offer and what value you bring
 - iv. Identify the organizational culture and determine if this is a good fit for you
 - v. Ask good questions proving you have done your research
 - vi. Think through examples of times you been successful in the past and articulate them in a concise and clear story format
 - vii. Close the deal – after each interview, if you see the position would be a good fit, make this known. Emphasize particular areas mentioned during the interview and why you would add value.
 5. Always send a thank you letter – brief and to the point. Restate your interest and let the interviewer (or networking contact) know why they should hire you (or help you).
 6. Persevere – you are going to get many more “No’s” than “Yes’s”. This is no reflection on you, it’s a job search reality. Keep going, keep networking, stay in touch with a support group and/or encourager to keep you focused and effective.
-