

Starting a Job Search

Finding and applying for a job can be challenging unless you have a plan of action. The process takes time, and you must stay motivated. Procrastination will lower your motivation and can lead you to accept a job beneath your expectations and abilities.

Securing a good job involves more than just locating a promising position. You'll need to do these important things during the job search process:

- Gather your personal information
- Create a top-notch résumé
- Complete applications fully
- Write strong application cover letters
- Beat the competition in an interview



Match Yourself to a Company's Needs for an Employee

Your success in obtaining a great job depends on how well you can match your skills and interests to an employer's needs. Just as a successful salesperson must know all about her product and be able to convince a buyer of its value, you must know your strengths and be able to sell yourself to a recruiter or employer.

"When I read your online ad, I saw how well my job skills and personal characteristics prepared me for such a position. May I give a brief description of the fit?"

If you do not impress an employer favorably, or if you cannot explain your skills, abilities and personal qualities clearly, you may be passed over for a less qualified person who is more convincing.

Know Yourself

You must know your qualifications and believe in yourself before you can win over someone else. To sell yourself in a résumé, job application or interview, plan in advance how to describe your background to show you will be an asset to the company. The employer may ask about your short- and long-term career goals and your experience and education. Being unable to respond quickly and concisely is awkward.

"While in high school, I decided to pursue a career pathway that would lead to a job like the one you have available. Then I took courses in the field, worked hard to build my soft skills, and completed an internship where I learned from experienced people on the job."

Action: Think of a position you would like to secure and write a few points you would make with a recruiter to convince the person that you are a good match for the job.

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Note to teachers: Forty lessons in **Job Ready Career Skills** are devoted to The Job Search. The titles are shown below:

Job Ready Career Skills Job Search Lessons

The Application Process

Completing a Job Application
Information for an Application
Why Companies Use Applications
Developing Job Information
Assuring Accuracy of Information
Writing a Cover Letter
Applying Online
Applying in Person
Following Up on an Application
Double Check Your Application

Effective Résumés

Things to Include in a Résumé
Locating Needed Information
Selling Yourself in a Résumé
Terms to Use in a Résumé
Matching Your Talents to a Job
Describing Your Job Strengths
Organizing Your Résumé
Writing an Electronic Résumé
Dressing Up Your Résumé
Using a Résumé Successfully

Interviewing Skills

Preparing for an Interview
Giving Interviews a Good Start
Questions Interviewers Ask
Questions Interviewers Shouldn't Ask
Questions to Ask in an Interview
Things to Include in a Career Portfolio
Interviewing Mistakes
Benefits to Ask About
Traits Employers Call Important
Considerations Before Taking a Job

Finding the Right Job

Locating Jobs
Networking
Job Shopping Online
Building a Job Search Website
Getting Results at Job Fairs
Searching the Classified Ads
Using Employment Agencies
Creating your Own Position
Landing an Internship
Staying Motivated to Search