

Don't be a Diamond in the Rough: Tips to Employment

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ABSTRACT

No one can foresee a merger or acquisition. When it happens, big changes happen as well. So, what can you do to make yourself employable? What puts you ahead of the rest so they choose you instead of someone else? What do you need to do to get your next job? What are the resources that are available to you to help in the pursuit of your next opportunity? In this presentation, I will explore the types of things that will help you to succeed without spending time on the bench.

INTRODUCTION

It is time to look for your next job opportunity. Whether you recently lost your job or are just ready to make a change from your current job you must be prepared with phone calls, documents and knowledge. Where do I start? What are the steps to take? Who do I call? What do I need to prepare? It is the purpose of this paper to show you all that and more. There are so many things to prepare for the search. Having performed many searches over the years, I will share my experiences and what changes have taken place in the methodology of the search. I will start with the 'old school' way and move on to how we do it now. I know that I learned a great deal during my last search. I am hoping that this will help to focus your search and make the process a bit easier along the way.

JOB HUNTING IN THE PAST

So let's start by thinking about the way that job searches used to be done. Back in the 1980's and 1990's, when you wanted to look for a job, the first thing that we did in New York City metropolitan area, was buy a copy of the New York Times on Sunday. Have you ever heard anyone say that they got their job from the NY Times? My husband and I can actually say that we did. Every Sunday, we would buy the Times and scour the employment ads, and there were many. I would look at what jobs were available and see what skills were required. Then I would make a copy of my resume, type (yes, on a typewriter) a cover letter and send it off.

Another avenue was to work with a recruiter or headhunter. There were some agencies that charged a fee to the job seeker for using their services. And other agencies that would charge the hiring company for the services they received. In either case, someone presented candidates to companies. If there was interest, you were brought in for an interview. The recruiter was able to take what was learned about the position and the hiring manager and prepare you for the interview. The recruiter was the person who contacted you as to whether the opportunity would move forward or not. The recruiter usually had all of the answers as to why a company did not want to pursue the candidate. The recruiter was also the one who would coordinate the appointments for the next round of interviews and let you know who you had to see and why. Having a middleman was great when it came time for the offer and the negotiations.

Something else that was different was that you had to print several hundred copies of your resume for an all-out job search. You had one resume that was an all-purpose resume. You used one resume for every job. And then there was the cover letter, each one meticulously typed. After all of that was done, you had to address and stamp the letters and go to a mailbox to send it to the employer. Of course, the human resources representative would review your documents comparing them to the job description. If all went well, you received a phone call to schedule an interview.

Looking for a job was fulltime job in itself. It was a arduous task that required many hours of scouring the newspapers, talking (and being interviewed by) recruiters and tons of legwork. It was worth it in the end if you found the right opportunity at the right salary with the right benefits.

JOB HUNTING IN THE PRESENT

RESUMES

The goal of the resume is to get the interview, the first step in the process. You don't want your resume to be the stopper, but the entry to speak to someone about what your skills, background and generally how you would be an asset for the company to which you are applying. Remember that there are different styles of resumes. Make the resume fit your background and experience. If you are looking for a change in the type of job that you want, be creative in how you approach your resume. Remember that you can tailor your resume to the job title and specifications that are listed in the job description. This is a very

important distinction in how we look for a job today versus the old methodology. Keywords have become very important over the last several years. There are very sophisticated keyword search engines that focus on the information that you put into your resume. If the main keywords are not found in the search, your resume may get filed in the circular file and never be seen by the hiring manager. So, take advantage of advanced technology and make your resume reflect what is detailed in the job description.

For all of you veterans. Here is a little trick that I found in my searches when it comes to creating a resume. You should only have about 10 to 15 years of employment history on your resume. You want to make sure that you highlight the experiences that you have had without making yourself look too old. Most often, the last 10 years of experience is all that you need to move to your new opportunity. With that in mind, you should remove any references to the years that you graduated from college and/or graduate school. If you do have a degree from a university, there is no need to report on your high school activities. Only the very young, inexperienced place their high school information on the resume.

If the job you are seeking is internal to your company, there are a couple of steps that you might want to take before you actually apply for the position. In most companies, you can see who the hiring manager is for the opportunity. If that is true for you, you can call the manager and ask some questions about the opportunity. The main focus should be whether this job is a good fit for you. The reason to go through this step is that you keep your search quiet until you know you have the best chance of success in obtaining that position. It can be unpleasant if your manager knows that you are looking for something new and then you are forced to stay where you are if you are not wanted for the job.

Types of Resumes

Chronological

A chronological resume starts by listing your work history, with the most recent position listed first. Your jobs are listed in reverse chronological order with your current, or most recent job, first. Employers typically prefer this type of resume because it's easy to see what jobs you have held and when you have worked at them. This type of resume works well for job seekers with a strong, solid work history.

Functional

A functional resume focuses on your skills and experience, rather than on your chronological work history. It is used most often by people who are changing careers or who have gaps in their employment history.

Combination

Combination resumes let you detail both your skills and experience, while also backing it up with a chronological listing of your employment history. It is very flexible. The combination resume lets you tailor your resume to the job opening and tell the hiring manager a story about you.

Targeted

Targeted resumes are customized in detail to the specific job you are seeking. Everything from the objective, the qualifications to educational experience mirrors the job requirements that are relevant to the job.

All resume types

In the table below you can see an overview of each style of resume along with the advantages of its use as well as the disadvantages. You can also see when it is best used as well as when you shouldn't use it at all.

	Chronological Resume	Functional Resume	Combination Resume	Targeted Resume
Overview	Lists your work history in reverse order, starting with your current or most recent job and working backwards.	Focuses on skills and strengths important to employers. Omits specific dates, names, and places. De-emphasizes a spotty work history.	Blends the flexibility and strength of the other two types of resumes.	Highly focused document aimed at a particular job; a "capsule" of work experience
Advantage	Easy to write. Emphasizes steady employment record. Employers like to see job titles, level of responsibility, and dates of your work history.	De-emphasizes a spotty work history. Allows you to highlight specific strengths and transferable skills that might not be obvious when outlined in purely chronological order.	Shows off a strong employment record with upward mobility. Show how the skills you have used in the past apply to the job you are seeking. Emphasizes transferable skills.	Brief and direct. Easy to read.
Disadvantage	Calls attention to employment gaps. Skills can be difficult to spot unless they are listed in the most recent job.	No detailed work history. Content may appear to lack depth. Disliked by many employers. It makes them think you may be trying to hide your age, employment gaps, lack of relevant experience, lack of career progression, or underemployment.	Work history is often on the second page, and employer may not read that far.	May focus too tightly on one particular job. Content may appear sparse.
Best used	To emphasize past career growth and development in the same career. Or when the name of a former employer may be significant to prospective employer.	To emphasize transferable skills you have used in volunteer work, paid work, or coursework. Use this or a combination resume if you are a new graduate, have limited work experience, are changing careers or doing freelance work, or you do not want to call attention to your age.	To show off your skills developed throughout your work history instead of the specific positions you have held. Use when you are making a career change and names of former employers may not be obvious to prospective employer.	When job target is specific or you need separate resumes for different career paths.
Don't use if	There are gaps in your work history, when calling attention to your age could be a problem, you have changed jobs often, or you are entering the job market for first time or after a long absence.	You want to emphasize growth or development or if your duties and responsibilities in recent jobs were limited.	Your experience is limited, or there are wide gaps in your work history.	You aren't prepared to put the effort into writing an excellent resume.

Table 1. Types of resumes

COVER LETTER

The goal of the cover letter is to add things that the perspective employer should know about you that is not included in your resume. Some believe that it should be a formal evaluation of your skills, while others believe that it is an informal statement about you as a person. You need to take a look at the website of the company to see the most appropriate type of letter. Make sure that it is no longer than one page. Human Resources recruiters will not read passed the first page. Make sure that it has been put through a spell checker. You want to give a great first impression and mistakes in spelling and grammar are a sure way to get your letter filed in the circular file. You want that document to make it past the recruiter and into the hands of the hiring manager.

RECRUITERS

Don't discount the value of a recruiter. Recruiters are an important part of a job search. Some companies do not advertise the positions that they have open. They rely on recruiters to pre-screen candidates and work with them to fill the positions with qualified people. They can pitch your skills and experience to the hiring managers. They can give you the opportunity to apply for a job before it is advertised to the public. They do tend to single thread a candidate. What I mean by that is that they submit your credentials for one position and wait to see the outcome of that before they move on to something else. That is why it is important to use multiple recruiters to keep the process going.

There are two types of recruiters. The first is the contingency recruiter. Contingency recruiters learn about a job opening, are assigned to work on a job opening or scout around for job openings with employers. They submit resumes from their candidates and hope that one of their candidates gets the job offer. The second type of recruiter is a retained search firm. They work differently than the contingency firm. An employer hires a retained search firm to fill a key opening. Once the deal is signed, the retained firm has the assignment. No other firms can work on filling the job or submit resumes. The retained search firm reviews its database of candidates and submits a slate of several candidates for the hiring manager's consideration. One of those people is highly likely to get the offer after interviews are completed. If the employer doesn't like any of the candidates in the slate, the retained search firm will find more candidates to submit.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a new phenomenon in the world of searching for a job. There are friends, connections, followers working in all different types of industries in many different types of companies now. Social media can be a blessing or a curse. The curse comes in the realm of what you decide to allow the public to see. Remember that anything that you put on the internet can be searched by a potential employer. And if you think that this doesn't happen, you are gravely mistaken. The first place that most people start is Google. From there they can take a look at your profile on LinkedIn. They can then proceed to Facebook. The whole point here is that you need to be very careful with what you post. Take a look at yourself on the internet and see what others can see. Make sure before you start your search that you clean up things you don't want others – future employers – to see.

That being said, the blessing is that you can use the internet to your advantage. You have a great number of friends. You have a great number of connections. Use them well and wisely. Don't ask your friends and contacts for a job with their company. The strategy that I have employed is to ask them for help. Asking for a job puts people in an uncomfortable position. You can, however, let people know that you are looking for a new opportunity and ask them for advice. Reach out to those you know well and see what they have to say. Some of the suggestions may be things that you have not pondered. They may have you reach out to someone else. Go ahead and use all of the contacts and connections that are suggested. You never know where it will take you.

JOB SEARCH APPS

Did you know that seventy seven percent of job seekers use mobile job search apps? In a difficult job market, it has become critical to job seekers that they are available for new career opportunities 24 hours a day/7 days a week. This means that potential candidates worldwide are taking their job search with them, on their Android, iPhone or other smartphone devices.

If you're looking for a great way to stay connected to your job search wherever you go, then a mobile job search app may be the right way for you to approach your job search. I have listed below list of the top job search apps. The best part is that most of them are free!

Monster (FREE) Looking for your dream job on the go? Monster's mobile app is a good way to search through the hundreds of thousands of jobs that they have available. Not only can you browse through available jobs, but you can also manage your job

alerts, save recent job searches and apply for jobs, all from your smartphone. On your way to an interview? This also provides you with interview tools and tips to help you with the in-person interview.

LinkUp (FREE) This job search engine puts the power of the hunt in your hands with its simplistic, fun design. Whether you're on an Android, iPhone or iPad, you can have new opportunities at your fingertips in seconds. Find jobs that you're interested in and save them into your job basket so that you can apply for them later or set up job alerts to notify you when a position that you qualify for pops up.

CareerBuilder (FREE) This has an advanced search option that lets you enter specifics about what you're looking for like geographical location and job title. CareerBuilder has a mobile app that is a user-friendly way to keep your finger on the pulse of your job search. Users have the ability to recommend jobs, manage their resumes and keep a list of favorites, all with a few taps of their finger.

Indeed.com (FREE) Indeed.com is a popular search engine for jobs and has its own mobile app. With the app, users can search the huge database of jobs indexed by Indeed. Indeed focuses on comprehensive listings of jobs: their motto is "One Search. All Jobs." because they index jobs from direct employers, recruiting firms, and job boards.

LinkedIn (FREE) If you've already got a LinkedIn profile setup and established, then you're just a download away from being able to manage your status, sift through what your connections are doing and connect with new people. All of the functionality of the popular social network in one nice, neat little package! This makes a great tool for interviews, as you will be able to easily connect with hiring managers and prospective team members on the spot.

Now Hiring (99 Cents) This is the only paid app on this list. Simply answer a couple of quick questions about what you're looking for and let the app do the rest. You can even filter your results by geographical location, job status (full or part time and even internships) and date posted. The jobs on this app are updated and removed as soon as they've been filled, so you don't have to worry about applying for a position that's closed.

CONTACTS

You have lists and lists of contacts. You have contacts in MS Outlook. These are typically people with whom you email on a regular basis for business. You have friends in Facebook with whom you follow their life through quotes, videos and photographs. You have connections through LinkedIn with whom you have a professional relationship. You should go through all of your contacts and determine who can help in your search for a new position. This doesn't mean that you should ask them all for a job. A better tactic is to ask for help and advice. You can send out an email requesting help and advice (i.e., I am reaching out to you because I find that I need/want to make a change. Any insights, ideas or help would be greatly appreciated.) Make sure that you send your letter or email to the appropriate people who are in a position to help.

JOB WEB SITES

For Profit

Did you know that seventy seven percent of job seekers use mobile job search apps? In a difficult job market, it has become important to job seekers that they are available for new career opportunities 24/7. This means that potential candidates worldwide are taking their job search with them, on their Android, iPhone or other smartphone devices. The most important thing that any job seeker can do to improve their chances of landing a job is using multiple resources in their job hunting efforts. Your efforts should be focused on job search engines. Here are the top sites that you can use.

1. Monster.com

Monster.com has an international search function that will help you to find jobs across the globe. Monster offers a free "home page", a place for you to post your resume, and an entire section of some pretty cool "career tools" to help you research every step of the job hunting process.

2. Job.com

When it comes to finding a job, visiting a website like Job.com makes sense. Like Monster, it is one of the few job search websites that offers the ability to search internationally. Under "Additional Search Options", you can search from

general areas of the globe, such as Middle East, United Kingdom or Pacific Rim. The site boasts over 700,000 listings, and they all seem fairly current. It also has the ability to publish your resume so that employers can view it.

3. HotJobs by Yahoo

One of the things that Yahoo is very good at is providing content, and job seekers who visit the Hotjobs job search website are going to get exactly that. The site itself has the same "look and feel" of other Yahoo pages, and it has lots of articles and widgets from tools like Yahoo Answers. It offers a powerful job search engine that includes many thousands of listings from all over the world.

4. Indeed

Indeed is a great job search engine. Indeed is a job meta-search engine which means that employers don't actually have to list jobs with Indeed. It provides results from multiple search engines like Google and Yahoo, Indeed offers you job listings from not only sites like Hotjobs and CareerBuilder, but even the individual employer.

5. CareerBuilder

Like Monster and Hotjobs, you'll find a resume posting section, the ability to find jobs by company or industry, and a "job alerts" feature. What sets CareerBuilder apart from the others? Not a lot. But if you need another source that may have job listings the others don't – it's best to check it out, as there are quite a library of job listings stored there.

6. Alljobsearch.com

AllJobSearch's claim to fame is its ability, like Indeed, to search through multiple sources. The service covers the U.S., Canada and the UK. It boasts the ability to search over 200 websites, over 500 newspapers and over 300 newsgroups. Unfortunately, you're provided a list of links to outside sources like an online newspaper or Monster, and if you click the link, AllJobSearch will automatically search that engine with your job search terms. While it probably saves time searching for the many job sources around the Net, it doesn't exactly provide the search results as you'd normally expect.

7. SimplyHired

Of all of the job listings sites that you'll find on the web, SimplyHired has a good "tools" section, where you'll find some interesting widgets, like email alerts, trend research and salary information broken down by location and occupation. If you haven't yet decided exactly what you want – this is the first site you should visit.

8. USA.gov

The US government is one of the world's largest employers. The U.S. Federal government has its own giant online job database that you can search under whatever industry or discipline you're interested in. These jobs are worldwide, and the U.S. government lists the actual salary ranges.

9. College Recruiter

Over the years, employers got into the habit of going to college career centers to advertise their entry level positions. In fact, sometimes those are the only places they'll advertise those openings. The CollegeRecruiter search engine is networked with 11,000 career sites around the country including college, university and military offices. These are entry level positions, but when you want to get your foot in the door, taking an entry level position is often the best way to go.

Non-Profit

Although finding non-profit jobs still takes a great deal of work to find the job, online websites make it a bit easier to find leads to jobs across the country. Here are some non-profit specific sites. Browse the sites to see which ones appeal to you and your skill set. Make sure that you check out the site of the organization to see if their cause is what you believe in and at which you would like to work. One great way to get your foot in the door of a non-profit is to volunteer your services. If you can afford to do this, you could work your way into a paid position.

1. Opportunity Knocks

This is a career site is designed to enhance the search process for individuals and organizations who want to change the world. They not only list non-profit jobs, they also include a Nonprofit Wage and Benefit Report, a place to post your resume, helpful articles and a list of job fairs across the country that you can visit.

2. Idealist.org

Idealist has nonprofit job listings and hosts career fairs in many cities. You can sign up for email alerts for nonprofit jobs in your area. They also have a great number of articles about finding and establishing a nonprofit career.

3. Young Nonprofit Professionals Network (YNPN)

YNPN is a networking organization for the younger generation of nonprofit leaders. There are chapters across the

country with thousands of members. They sponsor a national leader's conference and conduct research on leadership issues.

4. Chronicle of Philanthropy

This site is especially helpful if you are interested in fundraising, but there are many types of jobs here from starter positions to executive directors. You do not need to subscribe to use the search tool.

COMPANY WEB SITES

Another way to approach a job search is to make a list of the companies with whom you would like to work. There are several ways that you can find out which are the best companies for benefits, salaries, how they treat employees, etc. Use the internet to do research about the company. You can look on each company's website to learn more about the company and see what job openings are listed. There are a great number of web sites that list the best companies for whom to work. You should take advantage of websites like Fortune, Forbes, Glassdoor or Crain's that publish lists every year. Whether it is a list of 100 companies, large companies or companies in a specific geographic area, these lists can help focus the type of company with whom you want to work.

CONCLUSION

There are many ways to approach your job search. It all starts with how you profile yourself on your resume and internet profiles. There is one thing that you can guarantee. If you can search the internet to find out more about a company and a job, they can certainly check you out as well. So put your best foot forward and show the world of employers that you are the best candidate for the opportunity. Show them how you can be a tremendous asset to the company. Tailor who you are and what you know to the job description. Show yourself in a positive light. Good luck in procuring your next job!

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RECOMMENDED READING

- What Color is your Parachute? 2016: A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers by Richard N. Bolles
- Moving the Needle: Get Clear, Get Free and Get Going in Your Career, Business and Life! By Joe Sweeney
- Who Moved My Cheese?: An amazing Way to Deal with Change in Your Work and in Your Life by Spencer Johnson and Kenneth Blanchard

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