Job Search Success

Peterburg Public Library - Job Seeker Worksheet

1. **What is your ideal role… what do you WANT to do?**

Different jobs require different skills, training, and education. Below are some questions to consider when evaluating your own abilities and qualifications:

* + What jobs have you held in the past? What did you like or enjoy about these jobs? What were you good at?
  + What other experience do you have that could help you in future jobs? Have you completed training, education, certification or a specific degree?
  + What are some of your strengths or skills that you are most proud of?
  + Can you think of specific companies or organizations, where you would want to work?
  + What are some of your personal interests or hobbies that you enjoy? Could any of these be turned into possible career opportunities?
  + What kind of work do you not enjoy?

1. **What are your preferences in a work environment?** 
   * Describe your ideal work environment (location, schedule, type of team, type of boss, etc).
   * What do you like better? Jobs with a lot of projects (every day is new/different and each thing is done once) or jobs with a lot of processes (more repetitive/repeated work that you can do over and over again flawlessly)
   * Do you want to work with people (influencing them, making them happy, teaching them) or do you prefer working with data/things (analyzing, evaluating)?
   * Do you like to just “figure it out” or do you prefer to have clear instructions/training to follow?
   * What is your transportation situation? Do you have reliable transportation to and from a possible job?
   * How many hours per week are you able to work?
2. **Ready, Set, Search!**

Once you determine both where you may want to work and what work you are qualified for, you can begin to explore openings near you.

* + Do you have an updated resume, in a professional format? If no, you’ll need to work on one. Make a resume that highlights your work experience and skills. Online applications will almost always require you to submit or upload a resume. If you are applying with a paper job application, print off your resume and give it to the employer along with your application.
  + Who’s in your network? In other words, do you know people with good jobs, who might be able to introduce you or refer you to hiring managers?
  + Have you registered with an employment agency? Sample agencies include Express Employment Professionals, Innovative Staff Solutions, Kelley Services, or Manpower. These organizations can help people find jobs. Give them a call!
  + Have you ever applied for jobs online before? If yes, where?

Online Search Strategies

* + One common way to search for jobs is to use online career sites such as Ziprecruiter, Indeed, LinkedIn, CareerBuilder, Facebook, as well as sites specific to your industry. Almost all businesses and non-profit organizations are posting jobs online.
  + Typically, the job-seeker can filter by location, salary, and more to find a good fit.
  + Consider making a profile on these sites in order to highlight your skills and experience to potential employers.

More Personal Approaches

* + Another strategy is to reach out directly to the companies you are interested in applying to. Call, email or stop by. Ask the employer about the hiring process, if there are any openings, and how you could apply.
  + Look online for a phone number to call or simply walk into the establishment to speak with someone personally.
  + Ask around to see if you know anyone, or even a “friend of a friend” who works at a place where you would like to work. Ask these friends if they would share your resume or introduce you to a manager.

1. **Work your job search like a job!**

Plan to spend time every day, consistently, to search for jobs. Sample Daily Activities:

* + 1 – 2 hours of hour active job searching via job sites.
  + 1 – 2 hours of updating your resume or “customizing it” for specific jobs you are interested in. Update key words and highlight aspects of your experience that are most relevant. Delete information that is not relevant.
  + 1 hour of networking. This could be online via LinkedIn, Facebook or other social media (for the purposes of job-seeking and asking for introductions!) Post professional content, like, comment, share, connect with new people who work at places/jobs you are interested in.
  + 1 hour lunch/coffee/network in person by attending meetings or professional events.
  + 1 hour interview prep: Practice responses to sample competency-based interview questions

1. **General Search Strategies and Tips**

It can be helpful to plan out the steps you will take when interacting with the employer and applying for a position. Below are some tips to consider when applying to a position:

* 1. Put your best foot forward. Always be professional and respectful when interacting with the employer and completing your application.
  2. Create a professional email address that contains your name and/or profession. Keep the humor out of the email address!
  3. Keep it positive. Even if you’ve been fired from a previous position, laid off, or have been unemployed for a long time. Focus on the positive. What are you looking for and what skills can you bring to an organization?
  4. Many employers will ask why you are applying for this position. Be prepared to give a thoughtful answer about why the position is genuinely interesting to you. Do not say that you are only applying for the position because of the pay, or something similar.
  5. When applying, communicate your strengths to the employer. Applications will often give you room to explain your past work experience or skills. Use this space to explain why you are a great candidate for the role! Don’t leave any space blank if you can use it to share something positive about yourself.
  6. When you meet the employer in person, dress professionally. This communicates that you care about the position and want to make a good impression.