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JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

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JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

“Successful job seekers must have both good information and well-developed job hunting skills. Three important factors for a successful job search are an awareness of your skills and goals, an understanding of the labour market and a well planned job search campaign”.

The following six steps will help you conduct an effective job search:

STEP 1: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Identifying your values, interests and skills will help you with your job search. Although self-assessment can be a time consuming process it will provide you with valuable information and help you to facilitate career decisions and prepare you to market yourself as a potential employee.

Values

An awareness of what you value in a career will help you when exploring career goals and help to attain satisfaction in your work.

Below is a possible list of career values. Which values are important to you?

- Salary
- Benefits and pension
- Professional status
- Job Security
- Working conditions and schedules
- Working as part of a team
- Working independently
- Mental challenge
- Challenging and stimulating co-workers
- Variety

Interests

Interests are closely related to values and frequently trigger skill development. You can identify your interests by looking at enduring themes in your life such as activities that persist over time, consistent choices or the way you spend your time. A tip for discovering your interests is to keep a log of what you like to do and then rank them.

Skills

A skill is something that you do well. Recognizing your skills and communicating their usefulness in writing or verbally to a prospective employer will help you with your job search.

Below is a list of ways to effectively communicate your skills:

- Describe your skills in concise, unambiguous terms
- Refer to actual experiences to demonstrate your skill level
- Connect your skills concisely to the need of a prospective employer

Be sure to list some transferable skills. Transferable skills are skills which are useful in a variety of work environments. Some examples include word processing or database software knowledge and writing effectively.

STEP 2: RESEARCH AND EXPLORE CAREER OPTIONS

This next step in the job search process will help you take the values, skills, and interests that you assessed in step 1 and relate them to the demands of the work world. Personality and career guidance assessments are excellent tools for this search.

Internships, cooperative education positions, part-time, summer jobs and volunteer opportunities are great ways to explore career options.

STEP 3: CHOOSE A CAREER AND TARGET EMPLOYERS

After you have completed researching possible careers, several field options will emerge as the most realistic and attractive. It is most likely that there will not be one single career that will utilize all of your skills, interests and values. Therefore it is important that you try to target a career that will satisfy some of your high priority needs.

At this point it would be beneficial to speak to a career counsellor or get feedback from professionals in the prospective field which you have chosen.

Good research on employers will not only provide you with a competitive edge, but it will also help you when deciding which employers you want to reach and which strategies you could use to contact them.

STEP 4: PREPARE JOB SEARCH MATERIALS

Once you have targeted your career goals you should start to tailor your resume and cover letter to reflect your interests, values and skills. Your resume and cover letter should reflect the needs of your prospective employers.

STEP 5: PLAN AND CONDUCT A JOB SEARCH CAMPAIGN

Develop a list of employment contacts and job opportunities. The more contacts and interviews a job seeker has, the more job offers they will receive.

Listed below are some possible job search strategies:

1. Advertised job opportunities

The most common means of job searching is applying to advertised job openings. Several popular sources of job listings include Employment Resource Centres, classified ads (newspaper, on-line, etc.) and websites (employmentservice.sl.on.ca).

2. Develop a contact network

Once you have targeted a specific career or position, you should familiarize yourself with professionals in that field or organization. These professionals offer you an insider's view and build your contact network. This contact network may open doors for you that may have otherwise been closed. Your network may also include friends and family members, classmates, professors and on-line discussion groups.

3. Contact employers directly

There are several ways that a job seeker can go about contacting a potential employer, including:

- Send a cover letter and resume to the Human Resources department.
- Contact managers in organizations that interest you to request an appointment to discuss possible employment opportunities. During your appointment emphasize your knowledge and interest in their organization.
- Be sure to follow up all interviews with a thank you letter or phone call.

4. Follow-up and record keeping

No matter how many job search strategies you choose, always be sure to follow up and keep records. Maintain a careful record of all interviews, thank you notes and referrals.

5. Be Persistent

If your job search is not producing the results you are looking for try a new approach.

If your job search campaign has been successful, you may find yourself with multiple offers. Determine which position you would like to accept and thank everyone else.

STEP 6: NETWORK

What is networking?

Networking is the art of building alliances. It's talking to people you know and asking them to introduce you to others. It's not contacting everyone you know when you are looking for a new job and asking if they know of any job openings. Networking starts long before a job search, and you probably don't even realize you are doing it.

What is a network?

A network is a group of people connected to you through family, friends, education, employment and community.

Why network?

Most jobs are in the hidden job market. Only 20% of available jobs are actually advertised. Employers would much rather talk to someone who has been recommended by someone they already employ or know. It's easier for them because they have your first reference and it saves them considerable effort in advertising the position and sorting through resumes and cover letters.

You are networking when you:

- Attend professional association meetings or trade shows
- Talk to other people at sporting or music events
- Volunteer for a local charity or community event
- Join a social club or religious group
- Talk to your neighbours

Who should be in my network?

Chances are you already have a network which may include your family, friends and neighbours. Other people to consider are:

- Employers and co-workers
- Teachers and classmates
- Coaches and teammates
- Club members and leaders
- Community leaders

JOB SEARCH WEBSITES

 Adecco	www.adecco.ca
 Apparel Human Resources Council	www.apparel-hrc.org
 CACEE	www.cacee.com
 Canada Employment Weekly	www.mediacorp.ca
 Canada Job Search	www.canadajobsearch.com
 Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency	www.cfpsa.com/
 Canuck Careers	www.canuckcareers.com
 Charity Village	www.charityvillage.com
 City of Kingston Career Opportunities	www.city.kingston.on.ca/cityhall/jobs/careers.asp
 Cool Jobs Canada	www.cooljobscanada.com
 Cultural Human Resources Council	www.culturalhrc.ca
 Drake International	www.whatsonkingston.com/busdir/drakeint/index.html
 Employment & Business Journal	www.ebjonline.com/search.cfm?Page=search
 Job Shark	www.jobshark.ca
 Kelly Services	www.kellyservices.com
 Kingston Canada	http://livework.kingstoncanada.com/en/
 Kingston Employment Youth Services	www.keys.ca
 Kingston This Week	www.ktw.ca
 Kijiji Kingston	http://kingston.kijiji.ca/
 Manpower	www.manpower.ca
 Monster	www.monster.ca
 Public Service Commission of Canada	http://jobs-emplois.gc.ca
 Service Canada Job Bank	www.jobbank.gc.ca
 St. Lawrence College Employment Service	www.employmentservice.sl.on.ca
 Working in Canada	www.workingincanada.gc.ca
 The Kingston Whig Standard	www.kingstonwhigstandard.com
 The Ontario Public Service Careers	www.gojobs.gov.on.ca
 Osprey Careers	www.ospreycareers.com
 Workopolis	www.workopolis.com
 Youth Canada	www.youth.gc.ca