

Top 10 Strategies for Job Seekers

Mary Salvino

SMART Career Planning.com

1. Take the time to create templates of both your résumé and your cover letter. Once the templates are created, it will be easier for you to customize them for potential employers. Potential employers will want to know what you can do for them. Why should they hire you over the other candidates?
2. Step outside your comfort zone. You will have greater success if you look beyond the industry with which you are most familiar. You have learned many skills throughout your employment history. It is time to identify those transferable skills and apply them to a different industry.
3. Remain open to opportunities that may not be exactly what you are looking for in terms of salary or job title. Know that once you are on the inside, it will be much easier for you to slide into the position you truly desire and for which you are qualified.
4. Take action to hone or enhance your skill set. This is a good time to take a course as well as a good time to practice answering questions that could be asked during an interview.
5. Manage your digital footprint. Know that all potential employers will take the time to search for you on the pages of a variety of social networking sites. Take action to remove any photos or information about you that is unflattering.
6. Set short-term SMART [Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Rewarding, Time-bound] goals. Create a job search checklist for yourself that includes a specific amount of time looking for work on various job boards, a tracking system that will list the date of your application, the type of job, the number of interviews that you have been granted, and the follow-up calls that you have made. Don't forget to write thank you notes!
7. Stay fit. Do not neglect your physical or mental health. Unemployment is akin to running a marathon. Both mental and physical health are critical for success.
8. Network. Network. Network. Use the Internet, look at newspaper ads, scan the career opportunities posted on the websites of potential employers or professional associations, etc. Keep personalized business cards with you at all times and remember to practice your 'elevator speech' at every opportunity. Know that good job searching techniques involve both on-line and off-line activities. It will also be productive to register with a variety of recruiters and employment agencies.
9. Apply for opportunities for which you are both over and under qualified.
10. Set up informational interviews. Know the background of the companies so that you can ask intelligent questions about the organization. This is also your opportunity to learn more about the industry, identify potential jobs that may work for you within the

industry, get a few contacts, and get good advice. Information interviews are non-threatening and you are more likely to land a job through an informational than through advertised opportunities.

© Mary Salvino 20090629