

EXCEL PARTNERS, INC.

Permanent and Temporary Staffing Solutions

***DON'T INTERVIEW...
AUDITION!***

***Job Search Secrets
That Have Helped "Thousands"
Land Their Dream Job!***

***Learn These Secrets...
Take Charge of Your Career...***

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INTRODUCTION

There are countless books that teach you how to interview effectively; but truth be known, it is far more important for you to learn how to audition than how to interview. The word “interview” infers a series of questions and answers, yet the greatest mistake a job-seeking individual can make is to view an interview as a “fact finding mission.”

Whether the job market is strong or weak, there is always competition when seeking a new opportunity. The chapters in this book outline a step-by-step process that will show you how to outshine your competition and help you secure the best job opportunity in your chosen field.

As a recruiting firm, one of the hardest realities of our profession is that we can't find jobs for every individual we represent. The clients we represent look for a stable work history, specific skills and the exact experience they need. As a result, many very qualified individuals are not the “exact fit!”

Recognizing how frustrating this can be, this book was written to help you with your individual job search. Within the chapters that follow are proven effective methods, strategies and creative ideas that have helped countless people just like you make their next career move a successful one.

This book is dedicated to each and every one of you! If you utilize the ideas in this book, you will soon be employed. Once this goal is met, you will hopefully share this book with someone else currently searching for an employment opportunity.

The information and ideas you will find here have proven to work for the following job seekers:

- Individuals currently unemployed
- Individuals employed but looking for a better opportunity
- Individuals seeking a career change

This book can help everyone who is caught somewhere between where they are now and where they know they deserve to be!

As previous readers readily attest, you are sure to be amazed by the results you will achieve. If you follow this process, you will actually have more than one offer to choose from!

Wishing you success in your job search and with warmest regards.

CHAPTER ONE – PROPER ATTITUDE

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

Your attitude is determined by: 10% on what HAPPENS to you; 90% on how you CHOOSE to react to what happens. You need to always remember you have 100% control over how you CHOOSE to react – or NOT react!

Most individuals involved in a job search are not sales professionals, which is why the process is usually uncomfortable. A job search requires you to sell your experience and skills to a future employer, something completely unnatural for most.

If you are not currently employed, your full-time job is your job search. You need to spend 40 hours a week working on your search. If you are currently employed, but seeking a job change, you need to dedicate at least 10 hours every week to your search. You need to become proactive and make things happen versus being reactive and waiting for things to happen for you.

Whether you think you will succeed or whether you think you won't succeed – you're right! What you think actually becomes your reality. What your mind can conceive and believe, your body will achieve.

There is a Law of Attraction that is extremely fair. It's not enough to want a new job; you have to expect it to happen! It's not an easy or even pleasant process at times. You can never have doubts about your ability to become the person you were put on this earth to become. You need to maintain a very positive attitude throughout the entire process.

Envision yourself already working in a job that would make you happy. Write down the following:

- What type of job are you doing?
- What are the functions of your job?
- What salary are you earning?
- What is your environment?
- What type of boss do you have?
- What are your advancement possibilities?

Now write down a Positive Affirmation you will read daily. Start this affirmation with the words, "I'm so happy because..." Write down the type of opportunity that would make you happy and read it several times each day, picturing yourself actually doing that job.

CHAPTER TWO – RESUMES ARE TICKETS TO INTERVIEWS

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

If your resume is a job description, you need to rewrite it!

Hundreds of books have been written on the ever-important topic of how to write a resume. When you are in a job search, you often hear the importance of having an effective resume, but what does that mean?

It's important for you to know that no one has ever secured a new job on the basis of a resume alone. The person who gets the job is the person who does the best job of selling themselves during the interview process. You have to convince a hiring authority that you are the best person for their job and that you will fit in with their company culture. No piece of paper will do that for you.

A resume cannot tell the entire story of your life, work experience, skills and work ethic. The most effective resumes are limited to one page (two pages max). Your resume needs to be a concise written summary of your work experience, education and most importantly your accomplishments. You need to highlight what sets you apart from your competition. The best way to do this is detail your accomplishments and the impact they had on your past employers.

Your resume is a Sales Presentation that ends up functioning as your "ticket to an interview." Resumes, if not written properly, can end up screening you out.

Every employer will request your resume at some point during the hiring process. For this reason, you need to write an effective resume. Your resume needs to be updated and comprehensive.

Your resume should contain current contact information, your education profile, your skills, experience and accomplishments. Your work experience should include the name, location and correct dates of every job you've held for at least the last ten years.

Your resume needs to be concise. Understand many large companies and job boards scan resumes for certain keywords. If you are applying for jobs on the Internet, you need to include keywords in a job objective listed on the top one-third of the first page of your resume. This is what most scanners read before automatically screening out a resume.

Resumes are Tickets to Interviews

Always remember, your resume is a sales tool. Make sure you illustrate your unique strengths. Indicate any unusual responsibilities you've been given or examples of how you've saved the company time, money, or how you helped the company grow. Include any special recognition of your abilities and keep your resume honest.

Never exaggerate, embellish or deceive. Tell the truth about your education, accomplishments and work history. Many companies run background checks which will confirm the information you have provided. If there are discrepancies, you will be eliminated from consideration.

Your resume should look professional and be typed up on resume paper. This is part of your "first impression," which is why you should also make sure your resume has been proofread and contains no errors. It amazes me how many resumes I've read with errors. This is why I strongly recommend that you have someone else read your resume, allowing another set of eyes to proofread the contents before your resume is printed.

Sample Resume 1

Name
Address
Phone Numbers (home/cell)
Email Address

Job Objective: (If you are conducting a focused search)

Education: (List school, year of graduation and degree)

Skills: (If you are applying for a position that requires certain skills, these should be listed)

Experience: List most current job FIRST! (Account for at least last 10 years)

Dates: Name of Company, Location
Job Title:
Duties:
(You should write two or three lines summarizing your primary areas of responsibilities)

Then you should list 2-3 accomplishments followed by the impact on the company

References: Provided upon Request

Sample Resume 2 – Unstable Work History

Same format as Sample Resume 1.

When you list Experience you may want to “combine” some jobs that are similar

EXAMPLE: If you have worked at various retail outlets

1/02 – Present

Various Retail Stores

Sales

Help customers make selections, quoted prices, and rang up purchases at cash register

- Top Sales Person – The Gap
- Streamlined closing procedures – KidsRUs

If there are gaps in employment – give a short reason on your resume. “Taking care of ill relative” “Stayed home with my young children”

Sample Resume 3 – You Have Not Worked in Several Years

Same format as Resume 1.

In your Job Objective you will state the skills you currently possess.

EXAMPLE JOB OBJECTIVE: Seeking a (fill in type of position) position that will utilize my organizational skills, strong communication skills, hard work ethic and positive attitude.

When you list your experience, list the period of time you have NOT been employed and explain what you were doing.

EXAMPLE:

3/01 – Present

For the past five years, I have been home raising my children while also handling our finances. In addition, my involvement with various organizations has fine tuned my leadership, organization, communication and negotiating abilities.

2/96 – 3/01

ABC Company, Chicago, IL

Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper

In this position... (three sentences outlining your duties)

- Accomplishment and Impact on your employer
- Accomplishment and Impact on your employer
- Accomplishment and Impact on your employer

Sample Resume 4 – Recent Graduate

Same format at Resume 1

It is important to list your GPA, extra-curricular activities, leadership roles you have held and volunteer work.

If you have a strong GPA, it's a good idea to attach your transcript.

Under Past Experience, list any and all experience you have had working part-time, in summers, etc.

Sample Resume 5 – Changing Professions

Same format as Resume 1

Your Job Objective needs to reflect your intended change of profession. You might be working as a Legal Secretary but want to pursue a Paralegal position. You went back to school and earned your Paralegal Certification to prepare yourself for this career change.

EXAMPLE:

Seeking a position as a Paralegal utilizing my education, paralegal certification, hard work ethic, attention to detail and resourcefulness. My experience has provided me with knowledge of the legal process, legal terminology, outstanding written and verbal communication, organizational skills and the ability to meet deadlines.

If your intention is to change your profession, you need to pay special attention to the skills you currently possess that will transfer to your new occupation. List those skills **FIRST** when you are describing your current and past positions.

Remember, your resume should be a sales tool! It represents your “ticket to an interview,” which is your goal when you are sending out resumes. It does not provide every detail about you. You want the person reviewing your resume to book an interview to ask you additional questions.

Resumes are Tickets to Interviews

The following are common mistakes that could cause your resume to be screened out vs. help you schedule an interview.

1. Resume is a job description that could be used by anyone who worked in the position.
2. Job objectives listed are too specific and will limit interviews.
3. Resume is too long – more than one page.
4. Information included that identifies your religious beliefs, political affiliations, etc.
5. Accomplishments are not listed for each job.
6. Resume contains errors: spelling, grammatical, dates, etc.
7. Resume was written before you thought out your targets.
8. Major skills are not listed.
9. First job is listed first versus the most recent position.

If you are applying for more than one type of position, you may want to write more than one resume. Make sure you write down which resume you sent. Your customized resumes should have different job objectives and the skills most valuable should be listed first in the past experience section of your resume.

Your cover letters should also reflect each targeted company, which will give you the best chance of them calling you for more information or to book an interview.

Your resumes and cover letters should be printed on either light beige or light gray resume paper. Put them in a handwritten envelope marked “PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL.” This is the only mail a secretary will not open. Remember, each day you need to send out a minimum of five resumes to a hiring authority to keep your search on track.

CHAPTER THREE – YOUR JOB SEARCH IS YOUR FULL-TIME JOB

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

The results you enjoy in your job search will be in direct correlation to the EFFORT you put into your search.

Thousands of job seekers are frustrated with the results of their job search. They are totally discouraged and don't know what to do next.

It is interesting to find out how inactive they had been in their job search. Looking for a job is a full-time job! If you are not working, you need to dedicate 40 hours a week to your job search.

There are five stages for every contact in your job search which are:

STAGE ONE:

Identification of the target and correct contact

STAGE TWO:

Mail cover letter and resume

STAGE THREE:

Follow up contacts

STAGE FOUR:

Schedule interview

STAGE FIVE:

Follow up process after interview

Forms for these Stages are located at the end of this book.

Each day you should accomplish the following:

1. Identify five new targets and contacts (not just answering classified or Internet ads)
2. Mail five resumes with cover letters
3. Follow up on the five resumes you sent out the prior week

You continue this process over and over again until you book enough face-to-face interviews to obtain multiple job offers. Your main goal in your job search is to schedule face-to-face interviews with decision makers.

Informational interviews are also an important part of your job search. This is a face-to-face meeting you schedule to find out more about your targeted position. You speak with individuals currently working in the field and the specific job you have targeted. They will often share with you how they landed their job and give you incredibly valuable advice. Often they have contacts in their field and can even possibly help you book interviews.

Copy the sheets at the end of this book and commit to making at least five new contacts every single day. If you accomplish the daily work schedule outlined in this chapter, you will start to see results.

Ask yourself the following questions about your current job search activities.

1. How many resumes do you send out a day?
2. How many face-to-face interviews have you had?
3. How much time are you spending researching companies?
4. How much time do you spend following up on your resumes?
5. When is the last time you changed your cover letter or resume?

If you are currently employed while involved in your job search, you should spend a minimum of ten hours on your search each week. It is important that you also only use communication methods that are confidential. You don't want to jeopardize your current job while looking for your next opportunity.

CHAPTER FOUR – HOW TO SET YOUR CAREER GOALS

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

The best person to manage your career is YOU!

Once a person has committed to making a job change, the first step is to set specific goals. This applies to the individuals currently in the job market as well as individuals who are employed, but open to new opportunities.

Most individuals want to find a job that will provide them with personal satisfaction, competitive compensation, benefits and the opportunity for growth. It is important to be realistic about current qualifications, as well as the specific type of work you want to do. A self-appraisal process can help you fine-tune your career objectives.

Write out your answers for the following questions. These answers will also help you answer some of the more difficult interviewing questions you will be asked.

Forms for these appraisals are located at the end of this book.

Personal Appraisal

1. Honestly describe the kind of person you are (e.g., a leader or follower, etc.). Write down a detailed description.
2. Write down how your friends would describe you.
3. What do you want to accomplish with your life?
4. What role does your job play in your life?
5. What impact do you have on other people?
6. What are your accomplishments to date? Are you satisfied with them?
7. What role does money play in your values?
8. Is your career the center of your life or just a part of it?

9. What are your main interests?
10. What do you enjoy most?
11. What displeases you most?

Job Appraisal

1. Start with your most recent employer and then work back toward your graduation. Describe in detail each job including your title, company, responsibilities, salary, accomplishments, successes, failures and your reason for leaving.
2. How would you change your job history?
3. In your career-to-date, what responsibilities have you enjoyed most? Why?
4. What kind of job do you think would be a perfect match for your talents and interests?
5. What responsibilities do you want to avoid?
6. How prepared are you for that type of responsibility?
7. If you want to advance in your career, are you prepared to pay the price? Longer hours? More pressure?
8. What have your superiors thought about you as an employee?
9. Can your work make you happier? Should it?
10. If you have been fired from any job, what was the reason?
11. What have you done to improve your weaknesses?
12. How long do you want to work before retirement?

How to Set Your Career Goals

Your answers to these highly personal questions should help you to see more clearly who you are, what you want, what your top talents are and what you realistically have to offer. They should also reveal what you don't want and what you can't do. It's important to evaluate any objective you're considering in light of your answers to these questions.

There is one more exercise I would suggest you complete. There is an 80/20 Rule you will want to use. Eighty percent of what you achieve is the result of 20% of your efforts. If your goals are to improve the quality of your life and the level of job you accept, figure out your best talents. What is the 20% of your actions that provides you with the 80% of your results?

Your goal should be to spend the majority of your time using those top talents. These are also the talents you want to market to a future employer.

The 80/20 Rule also works in your job search. Eighty percent of the results you achieve are directly connected to 20% of what you are currently doing as you job search. Determine what the most effective use of your time is. If you do more of the 20%, you will enjoy better results in your search, and will obviously book more interviews for yourself.

Take time to list your top talents (the 20% that gives you 80% of your results)

Top Talents

CHAPTER FIVE – RESEARCHING THE JOB MARKET TO IDENTIFY YOUR TARGETS

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

The research you conduct up front will provide you with quicker results and dramatically improve your chances of landing the job you want!

To a large extent, the success of your job search will depend on how well you do your homework. Once you've figured out what kind of job you want, you need to find out as much as you can about which specific companies might employ you. Your network of personal contacts can be an invaluable source of information about what jobs are available.

If you are contemplating a total career change (which is common in this job market), there are eight steps you need to take prior to identifying your targets.

1. Write five stories about accomplishments you've achieved – when you were the happiest
2. Research the possibility of turning your hobby into a job
3. Educate yourself on the skills needed (i.e., computer, writing, etc.) to do this
4. Interview ten people who are now doing this job
5. Be realistic – you may have to take a cut in wages
6. Watch trends, read newspapers, apply for positions within a growing industry
7. Fine-tune your interviewing techniques
8. Join job search groups/support group/find a mentor

Initially, interview anywhere and everywhere to fine-tune your interviewing skills and learn what companies are offering to new hires. Informational interviews will help tremendously when you are attempting to achieve a career change.

You want your search process to be organized and methodical. At the beginning of your search, you want to investigate as many job targets as possible. You will not necessarily conduct a thorough campaign for all of them, but these will serve as backup targets in case your top target does not work out.

Researching the Job Market to Identify Your Targets

You then want to select your top two job targets. Research these targets to determine whether or not they are worth a concerted effort. There is a tremendous wealth of information on the Internet that can assist you with this part of the process. The library is also filled with endless resources. Do you see jobs in your two targets advertised in the newspaper or on the Internet? Talk to individuals who are currently doing this job to help determine if it will lead you to your long-term career goals?

If you continue to network and research, other possibilities will surface that may uncover additional job targets for you. When you are attempting to compile a list of targets you need to determine the following:

1. Industry
2. Company Size
3. Your Position/Title
4. Geographic's

By identifying these four areas, you can now clearly list the targets that meet your criteria. You also need to consider the targeted company's culture, reputation and environment.

There are endless resources on the Internet and there are also great directories including Standard and Poor's Register of Corporations, which lists over 50,000 corporations; The Thomas Register of American Manufacturers, which allows you to look up a product or service and find every company that provides it; Moody's Corporate Index, which lists more than 20,000 Corporations; and The Million Dollar Directory (Dun and Bradstreet, Inc.), a listing of over 120,000 US businesses with a net worth of more than half a million dollars.

It is very important to note that for every 150 positions you target, you will schedule approximately seven interviews, which should result in one offer.

Now you can see the amount of work you will have to dedicate to your search.

If you are like most job seekers, your job search may be "in neutral." You're just hoping something will happen to get your search moving in the right direction.

Research is your answer and it is the most effective way to turn a mediocre job search into a powerful, effective job search campaign.

Let's discuss the two types of research - primary and secondary.

Researching the Job Market to Identify Your Targets

Primary research is actually talking to someone. Secondary research is reading materials already in print. You need to conduct both types of research. It is actually wiser to complete some secondary research before you start talking to people, so your questions are more intelligent and focused.

You will feel more empowered if you take the time to conduct research. Take the information you learn and use it in your conversations with people who can help you attain a job that is right for you.

When you are selecting your industry targets, make sure you research the following on the industry or position you are targeting:

1. Trends and future prospects in a specific industry
2. Areas of growth or decline in that industry
3. The challenges the industry faces that could utilize your skills
4. The culture of the industry
5. The top, medium and lower ranked companies in the industry

This will help you determine whether you are in sync with a particular industry and whether or not there is a place for you there.

You should also conduct research in The Encyclopedia of Associations. This encyclopedia lists over 22,000 associations that represent trade and industry groups. In Chicago, there is even an Association for Associations.

This is an incredible way to research your targets. The Encyclopedia of Associations also provides names of contacts, the number of members, and a membership list with contact information. The people listed within are usually very dedicated to their profession and normally are more than willing to provide you with advice and possibly even contacts.

These association leaders are also aware of publications read by their members. These publications are filled with endless leads for job opportunities. Don't only read the ads in the back of the publications, read the articles, and this will help you will uncover more leads. What's more, you will have the opportunity to get your resume in the hands of people who are not inundated with resumes because they ran an ad, increasing your chances of booking an interview!

CHAPTER SIX – CONTACT THE “RIGHT PERSON”

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

If you don't get your resume to the “Right Person,” you might as well NOT send it out at all!

One of the greatest mistakes job seekers make is to only send their resume to individuals who receive hundreds of resumes every week. These individuals are normally listed in classified ads, ads on the Internet, or have posted jobs on their websites. These methods put you against the largest numbers of competitors wanting the same job.

Often you will not even hear back from these companies because, quite frankly, they don't have time. As the owner of a Search Firm, I sent out a marketing letter to companies who had run classified ads. My letter was printed on our company letterhead, included a brochure, and my business card. My letter explained how much time I could save them in their attempt to identify top talent. I also explained how cost effective our services were and how our fees were a tax deduction. Obviously, there was NO RESUME in this mailing.

I received approximately 10-15 “ding” letters per week. They thanked me for submitting my resume (which I had not done), and told me they hired someone with more experience, but would keep my resume on file. What resume? I sent them an envelope filled with marketing materials that did not even resemble a resume.

The point I'm proving here is that you can't take rejection personal when you are conducting your job search. Half of the time your credentials were not reviewed due to the sheer numbers of individuals who applied for the same position. They did not reject YOU! They rejected your paperwork that they more than likely, did not even READ!

Would you like to learn a process guaranteed to give you better results? Of course you would!

You need to get your resume in the hands of people who normally do not receive resumes. So often an executive, manager or department head has someone on their team they would like to replace, but don't want to go through the hassle of interviewing. The Human Resource Department is not aware of this “weak link.” If your resume landed on the desk of one of these decision makers, do you think they would read your resume and possibly schedule an interview with you? The answer is YES.

If you sent your resume to the Human Resource Department, they would inform you that they do not have any current positions available.

Contact the “Right Person”

The way to identify the “RIGHT PERSON,” is to find the person within one of your targeted companies who would be either your boss or your boss’s boss! Let’s assume this person’s title is Accounting Manager because you are seeking an auditor’s position. You can find the names on the company website. If you don’t have the name, you call into the targeted company and ask for the “correct spelling” of their Accounting Manager’s name. When you ask for the “correct spelling” the receptionist assumes you already have the name, you are just clarifying the spelling and she spells their name. You also want to confirm their exact title. If this gatekeeper is being cooperative you might also ask for their direct line, so you have this information for your follow up call.

Often job seekers speak with an uncooperative gatekeeper who will not give out information. I’d like to share one important fact with you. Gatekeepers go to lunch normally between 1–2 p.m. During that time, there is an Administrative Assistant who is covering the front desk and is not happy to be there. Often they will give out the information without asking any questions. I actually had some receptionists email me their company directory to give me the information they felt I needed. Be nice to the gatekeeper and they will be more receptive to your call.

CHAPTER SEVEN – YOUR TWO-MINUTE COMMERCIAL

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

You never get a second chance at a first impression. Your two-minute commercial is the FOUNDATION for your job search.

Your two-minute commercial will be used in your cover letters and when you are networking. It will also prepare you to answer the dreaded question “Tell me about yourself.”

You need to write down more than one - keeping in mind the following:

- Who you are addressing
- What is important to this person
- Who your competitors are
- What do you offer that others do not

You are not trying to tell your life story. You are stressing the benefits you can offer this person, while including a call to action.

If you are currently in a job search, not working and attending a networking event, an appropriate commercial would be:

“I’m a free agent in the job market and bring ten years of top performance sales skills to the table. If you know anyone interested in networking with a high achiever, I would certainly appreciate a referral. Here is my business card.”

Yes, you need to have business cards printed up at any printing shop where you can get 500 for under \$20. On your card, put your name. Under your name, simply list “Free Agent in the Job Market” as your title. Next, list your home phone, cell phone, home address and email address. Make sure you have a professional message on your home voicemail, as well as your cell phone voicemail.

If you are in front of a prospective employer, an appropriate commercial would be:

“I have spent the last five years as the top sales representative out of twenty-five reps for a leading technology company. I will bring my ability to generate revenue and profits to your company. I’m extremely confident in my sales abilities and have a very high level of interest in working for you and your company!”

Your Two-Minute Commercial

You can see these commercials are stressing benefits to the person hearing them. It's not giving great detail about what you have done; your commercial stresses what you can offer to someone else!

Once you have established an interest in what you are saying, you then need to talk about accomplishments you have achieved and the benefits to your employer.

Example:

"I have been able to provide my past employers with an instant return on investment and will do the same for your company."

"My entire work history has proven my ability to break sales records and I would bring that same ambition and hard work ethic to your company."

"My career has proven my ability to take over a territory rated last and within a relatively short period of time, took the territory to Number One in the company for sales and profits."

Write your two-minute commercial for a networking event:

Write your two-minute commercial for a hiring authority:

Your Two-Minute Commercial

Write your two-minute commercial that is appropriate for your cover letter:

Your two-minute commercial should answer these questions:

- Tell me about yourself?
- What are you doing these days?
- Where do you work?
- What kind of job are you looking for?

It should also accomplish the following:

- Great ice breaker at a networking event.
- Great ice breaker during an interview.
- It lets everyone know you are in a job search.
- Instantly relaxes you.

Forces you to learn how to “SELL YOURSELF!”

CHAPTER EIGHT – PLANNING IS ESSENTIAL

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

If you are not planning for “Success,” you are planning for “Failure.” If you take the time to plan your job search, you have dramatically increased your chance at landing your dream job.

Most individuals spend more time planning their vacations than planning their job search. Think for a minute about all the planning you do prior to a vacation.

You research various destinations; informed decisions are reached; cost is negotiated; time is set aside; appropriate attire is purchased; dates are set and reservations are confirmed. If a decision is reached to drive to the destination, obviously directions are then obtained. If an individual drives from New York to Los Angeles with no directions, they may arrive but the trip would be filled with delays, mistakes, and the time involved during the journey would be dramatically increased.

The same holds true for a job search.

Simply put: If you don't know where you're going, you're never going to get there!" Too often, individuals wait for opportunities to present themselves rather than conduct an ongoing plan to advance their own careers. Often a job search is initiated by the loss of a job which was not anticipated by the individual. There are many horror stories of individuals being out of work for three months, six months or longer.

So often this long-term unemployment is the result of not having a plan, coupled with a resume that is not a sales tool, and interviewing/auditioning skills that are not mastered. An effective plan should be written down with deadlines and dates and is the result of extensive research. Writing a plan is not an easy exercise, but will make the job search process more effective.

Applying to positions advertised in the classified ads and on the Internet are two of the easiest ways to get your resume out, but are also two of the less effective techniques to secure employment. So often, resumes are not read or acknowledged due to the volume of responses. The goal of any job search is to get in front of decision makers. If you don't date, you'll never get married. If you don't interview, you won't secure a new job. Your goal is to book interviews, not focus only on the number of resumes you send out.

Planning Is Essential

Finding a new opportunity is a full-time job! An individual who is not employed should spend 40 hours every week working on their job search. Someone currently employed should plan on spending at least 10 hours per week on his or her search.

To prepare for your job search, I would suggest you do the following:

1. Invest in a three ring binder
2. Purchase a ream of white paper
3. Invest in a set of six dividers

Put these tabs on the dividers:

Assessment Sheets - company target/research

Mail cover letter and resume

Scheduled interview

Follow up contacts

Copies of ads

Samples of the forms you will place behind these dividers are located at the back of this book.

Planning out your job search and maintaining a binder with all your information will prevent important details and follow ups from slipping through the cracks.

After you accept a position, this binder is filled with important names, contact information and details that could help you when you decide to make your next career move. When you think of all the work that goes into your job search – you want to retain this information.

CHAPTER NINE – WHAT TO DO IF MONEY IS TIGHT

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

If you are not getting the results you want, you need to change the methods you are using in your job search. The definition of INSANITY is doing things the SAME way and expecting DIFFERENT results.

Any job search takes time. Even if you are able to conduct your search full-time, it can take on average up to three months. If you are working full-time and not able to focus on your search, it can take longer.

When you are feeling financial pressures, the first thing you need to do is review your liquid assets and short-term liabilities. Liquid assets could include:

- Insurance loans
- Second mortgage
- Unemployment compensation
- Severance pay
- Accrued vacation pay
- Personal loan sources (family and friends)
- Sales of personal property (car, boat, stamp collection, etc.)

Ask yourself how much cash you can expect to receive during the next three months from these sources. Then you list what bills must absolutely be paid. Many of your creditors can be stalled or might be willing to make arrangements to forgo principle as long as interest payments are made. It is important to talk to your creditors vs. ignoring them. For example, a company may waive a car payment and add that payment to the end of your loan.

The final step is easy, but can be painful. You compare the amount of money you have on hand or expect to receive with the amount you know you'll have to spend in the next three months. The difference is your current financial status.

Many individuals feel it's better to be unemployed than under-employed. If you can afford it, it may be wise not to take a part-time or temporary position. The more time you spend looking for a good full-time position, the sooner you're likely to succeed. However, if your bills are higher than the cash coming in, you need to supplement your income any way legally possible during your job search. You need to provide for yourself!

What to Do If Money Is Tight

There are usually telemarketing positions available that pay anywhere from minimum wage up to \$15/hour in some states. You need to sell yourself when you call these potential employers. Show them the sales skills you would use if they hired you to sell a product for them.

You also want to find part-time or temporary work that leaves you as free as possible to interview during the day, especially during your lunch hour. Many job seekers decide to work nights or evenings in retail or restaurants because that leaves the daytime hours open for interviewing.

If possible, it is best if you can locate part-time work in your chosen field. The salary will be more attractive and you can continue to develop your network of contacts.

You could also consider offering your services as a freelance worker. An administrative assistant for example, might be able to find part-time work in a law firm at night. An accountant might be able to do taxes on a part-time basis and still gain access to new referrals.

The best advice you could follow is to deal with your financial situation early in the process. You don't want to get two months behind in all of your bills and then realize you need to do something!

Review your income and expenses and then decide if your search is your full-time endeavor, or if you need to work part-time or on a temp assignment in order to increase your income.

Keep in mind that many temp positions end up being temp-to-hire. The temp firm places you with one of their clients, who subsequently is impressed by your work and decides to offer you a full-time job. Many employers like to "try before they buy," so be open to temporary or contract opportunities. Finally, it is a good idea to apply at Staffing Firms who specialize in the type of work you are seeking.

Analyze your situation and then take action!

CHAPTER TEN – SECRETS THAT WILL HELP YOU ACE ANY JOB INTERVIEW

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

It is not always the most qualified person who gets the job offer. It is the person who had the best interviewing skills, the person who conducts the best “AUDITION!”

Sooner or later, everyone must face the daunting task of interviewing for a job. Interviewing is a sales process which is not necessarily comfortable for most individuals.

If the truth be known, it is more important for you to learn how to audition versus interview. The word interview infers a series of questions and answers. The greatest mistake an individual can make is viewing an interview as a “fact finding mission.”

Whether the job market is strong or weak, there is always competition when seeking a new opportunity. These auditioning methods will work for the following job seekers:

- Individuals currently unemployed
- Individuals employed, but looking for a better opportunity
- Individuals seeking a career change

The following tips will give you the skills to ace any job interview! Remember: interviewing is a process you need to learn and then implement. If you follow these auditioning tips, you will receive more job offers! You will also learn how to overcome any objections, explain possible red flags on your resume and ask questions that will impress the interviewer. The more you practice these techniques, the more you will master your interviewing abilities. This process is critical to your career.

TIP 1 – RESEARCH THE COMPANY

You need to research your targeted company prior to an interview. There is a wealth of information on the Internet. You should review their entire website. Make sure you read any recent news releases or articles published about them. You may also want to identify their SIC (Standard Industry Code) and research information on their main competitors.

If you were an actor or actress scheduled to audition for a role with a studio, you would want to research their culture, history, the movies they had produced, and who was chosen to star in those movies. You would also research how successful their movie releases have been in the past.

TIP 2 – RESEARCH THE OPPORTUNITY

It is critical that you know the requirements of every job you target. Most jobs are listed on the website of each company under Career Opportunities. You want to tie in your experience and skills to the specific requirements of your prospective employer. Most actors and actresses get a copy of the script before their screen test; therefore, they understand the role they are auditioning for in the movie. You must understand the requirements of the job so you can prepare how you will present yourself in your interview. In a job interview you sell the skills, experience and attitude you bring to the table that coincides with their opportunity. Thus, the interviewer actually starts to “see you in the role.”

TIP 3 – RESEARCH THE INDIVIDUAL

It is very helpful to learn as much as you can about the person who will be conducting your interview. Their name and even some information about them may be listed on the company website, or you might try to search their name on the Internet to see what information you will find. Later in this chapter, you will learn how to reveal this person’s priorities through questions you ask.

Remember, the individual who is hired is a reflection on this person’s ability to identify the perfect match for their opportunity. The interviewer wants to hire the candidate who will make him/her look good. The hiring authority’s reputation is on the back of everyone who is hired by their company. Hiring someone who does not work out is an expense to the company and causes a negative reflection on the hiring authority. If they feel you will make them look good, you will get hired!

TIP 4 – ARRIVE PREPARED

Many times you have several versions of your resume. Make sure you take copies of the same resume you originally sent to them, to your interview. Bring copies for everyone involved in the interviewing process. **Never assume they have the copy you originally sent.**

You want to provide each person in the interview a folder containing this information. Print your name and contact information on the tab of your folders. This will position you above the candidates who do not bring their resume to their interview.

In addition you will want to bring:

- List of references (3 past supervisors, 1 personal). The list should include their work and home phone numbers, cell phone if available and email address.
- Reference letters (if you have them)
- Performance reviews (if they are stellar)
- Grade transcript (if you are a recent student)
- Writing sample (if written communication skills are a requirement of the position)
- Portfolio (if the position is “creative”)

One additional tip

Take a pocket calendar to the interview. When you are inquiring about the next step in the process, you take out the calendar and write down the date. This will impress the interviewer and they will note that you are organized.

TIP 5 – DRESS APPROPRIATELY

Employers assume that the best they will ever see you dressed is during your interview. If you are interviewing for a local position, you should drive to the company and watch the employees as they leave. You want to dress better than the employees.

Even if they tell you to dress casual, it is best not to arrive in jeans. You don't get a second chance at a first impression! When you take the time to dress appropriately, it sends a message to the employer that you care enough to present yourself professionally.

Let me share some “inappropriate attire” examples that have screened qualified candidates out.

WOMEN NEED TO AVOID

Wrinkled clothing, blouses that are too small and expose a bra, clothes with spots, stiletto high heels, sandals, boots, runs in nylons, BIG jewelry, BIG hair, makeup not appropriate for daytime, too much perfume, sexy attire, clothing that is too tight or too short, blouses unbuttoned too low, exposed tattoos, unusual piercings or anything that draws attention to what you are “wearing” versus what you are “saying!”

MEN NEED TO AVOID

Wrinkled clothing, clothes with spots, clothes that are too tight, boots, or sandals vs. shoes, socks that don't match, facial hair that is not groomed, shirts unbuttoned too low, too much aftershave or cologne, exposed tattoos, unusual piercings and clothes that are too casual for an interview. You are trying to impress the interviewer, and taking the time to dress professionally sends a positive message to this decision maker.

TIP 6 – APPROPRIATE ACTIONS

Confidence

You cannot enter into an interview with a “defeatist attitude.” You need to sell your abilities. The best way to display confidence is to focus on your accomplishments. You should follow up each accomplishment with the impact it had on your employer! Ask yourself the question, “What did I do different, better, faster, more efficiently in my job than the person who had the job previous to me?” You need to let the interviewer know you are confident in your abilities to do the job they are offering.

Positive Attitude

During your interview, you need to maintain a positive attitude both in the things you say and in your appearance. You need to smile, come across very pleasant and even if you hear something that you don't agree with, don't look disgruntled. You can always ask questions later in your interview to clarify all facts.

Eye Contact

Keeping eye contact throughout your entire interview is vitally important. Most individuals look up or to the side when they are “thinking” which is fine. However, the minute you start to answer a question, look right into the eyes of the interviewer! Looking away or down often gives the impression of dishonesty or disinterest.

Body Language

Experienced interviewers will watch how you react to questions during your interview. Your body language can project information that you are not verbalizing.

Following is a list of body language to avoid:

- Avoid fidgeting – it shows a lack of self-confidence
- Avoid “over the top” hand gestures – they are distracting
- Avoid biting your lips – it gives the impression of making things up
- Avoid crossing your arms – it appears you are defensive
- Avoid shrugging your shoulders – it appears you don’t know the answer
- Avoid nods and head shaking – use words to answer questions
- Avoid yawning – it appears you are bored

TIP 7 – YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION

You never get a second chance to make a first impression! There are several things you can do to put your best foot forward.

- You can never be too polite to anyone you come in contact with before, during and after your interview.
- Treat the receptionist with respect and never act as if you are impatient or bored, it sends a negative message. Some interviewers will keep you waiting to see how you handle yourself. Others will ask the receptionist how you treated them.
- Greet your interviewer with a firm (but not hand-breaking) handshake and a smile.
- Dress appropriately – appearance is a large part of a first impression.
- Arrive prepared and organized.
- While waiting, do not eat or drink anything.
- Turn your cell phone off – no exceptions!

TIP 8 – YOUR RESUME

Your resume is your “ticket to the interview.” We outlined how to write an effective resume in Chapter 2. Again, make sure you take clean copies of the original resume you sent to this interviewer. Take enough copies for everyone involved in the hiring process.

TIP 9 – INTERVIEW DO’S and DON’TS

DO’s	DON’Ts
Arrive 10 minutes early	Be overly aggressive or egotistical
Refer to the interviewer by their name	Bring up questions about salary
Smile and use a firm handshake	Act uninterested in the opportunity
Be alert and act interested	Act defensively when questioned about anything
Maintain eye contact	Allow your thoughts to “drift”
Make comments in a positive manner	Answer questions with only YES or NO
Speak clearly	Lie about ANYTHING
Accept refreshments offered	Ask for refreshments
Promote your strengths	Discuss your weaknesses
Give positive reasons for leaving prior jobs	Speak badly about past employers
Audition for the job	Try to determine your level of interest during the interview

TIP 10 – ACE THE INTERVIEW

Remember the interview is not a fact-finding mission. You are auditioning for the “role” they have available. Your mission is to get to the next step in the auditioning process, or get a job offer!

The greatest mistake is trying to determine if you are interested in the job during the interview. You do not yet have an offer and there is nothing to determine until you do get an offer. The purpose of the interview is to put everything on the table you can offer this company, so they do make you an offer. It is at that time you determine if you are interested.

So often the first interview is a “screening process.” You want to get in front of the individual who will actually be your boss – which is usually later in the interviewing process. During the interview, you need to find out what is most important to this person so they will pass you on to the next person in the process.

You do not interview for a living and mastering your interviewing skills will take practice. You need to role play with your friends or family members to answer the most common interview questions.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Most interviews start out with “Tell Me About Yourself.” Often your answer can make or break your interview. Utilize the personal commercial you have already created.

Other common questions...

- Tell me about yourself?
- What is your greatest strength?
- What is your greatest weakness?
- What are you looking for in your next company/position?
- What is the most difficult situation you’ve ever had to deal with, and how did you handle it?
- Who had the most influence on your life? Why?
- Why are you interested in this position?
- Why are you interested in working for our company?
- What are your most outstanding accomplishments?
- Why should I hire you over someone else with similar experience?

School Questions – for Recent Graduates

- How did your education prepare you for this position?
- What led you to choose your major?
- Do you think your grades are a good indication of your potential?
- What did you learn from extracurricular activities?
- Did you participate in sports?
- What lessons did competition teach you?
- How would your teachers describe you?
- Did you work when you were attending school?
- Describe a typical day’s routine for me?
- Describe your favorite professor/teacher.

Job Related Questions

- Tell me about your current/past positions?
- What did you like most? Why?
- What did you like least? Why?
- How would your co-workers describe you?
- How would your supervisors describe you?
- How would you describe yourself?
- Can you handle pressure and deadlines?
- Why did you choose your particular career?

- Why should we hire you?
- Describe your most rewarding experience?
- What were the highest priorities of your last job?
- Give me an example of a time when a supervisor complimented you?
- Give me an example of a time when a supervisor criticized you?
- Tell me about your toughest problem at work. How did you solve it?
- Do you have a geographic preference?
- How would you evaluate the company you were with last?
- Tell me what you know about us?

Interpersonal Questions

- Describe your method of influencing people?
- Do you prefer to work alone or as part of a team?
- Tell me about your relationships with customers?
- Tell me about your relationships with supervisors?
- Tell me about your relationships with co-workers?
- How do you get things done by deadlines?
- Tell me about the person you admire most. Why?
- Describe the supervisor you had that impressed you the most?

Personal Characteristics Questions

- How would you describe yourself at work?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- What factors in your past career, education or other activities do you feel will contribute to your success?
- Describe the accomplishment that was most significant in your career?
- Tell me about an unusual problem you solved at work?
- What makes you special?
- Describe the perfect job for you?
- Tell me about one really smart decision you made in the past year?

Expectation Questions

- What are the most important rewards you expect in your career?
- What made you decide to make a career change?
- What are your career goals? Do you have a contingency plan?
- How do you know you'll be successful?

Other Popular Questions

- If you were a dog, what type would you be?
- If you were a tree, what type would you be?
- Why should I hire you over someone else?
- How do you feel about your progress to date?
- What do you believe would be most helpful to your continued growth?

TIPS 11 – PREPARE YOUR QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE

When the interviewer is asking you questions, they are in control of the interview. When you ask questions – you are in control. You should accomplish two things during your questions:

1. Uncover the priorities of this particular interviewer.
2. Sell yourself and stress skills that may not have surfaced so far in the interviewing process.
 - Can you tell me what skills are most important to you, for this position? (Obviously, you show them how you have those skills.)
 - What will the top priority be for the person you hire?
 - How do I compare with the candidates you have interviewed so far?
 - If you could add one skill to your current department, what would that be?

One of the best questions you can ask...

“Do I have the experience and skills you’re looking for in this position?”

You then listen carefully to the response. If they say the word “BUT,” whatever follows that word could be a reason for them to screen you OUT! You need to overcome any and all concerns if you are to be considered for this job.

TIP 12 – CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

What you do at the end of the interview is just as important as what you do at the beginning! You need to ask some closing questions before the interviewer stands up indicating your interview is done.

Sample closing questions:

1. What is your target date to hire someone for this position?
2. Would you describe your interviewing process?
3. When are you planning to set up second interviews?
4. When should I follow up with you?

You also need to send a thank you note (not an email) to everyone you met, thanking them for their time, showing the confidence you have in your ability to do the job and expressing a high level of interest in working for their company! Make sure your thank you note is checked for proper spelling and grammar.

TIP 13 – WHAT EMPLOYERS WANT

When an employer decides to conduct an interview with you, there are certain things that are important to them. Employers are evaluating you during an interview on the following areas:

Enthusiasm

Employers want to know that you are willing and eager to be a part of their company. Your in-depth knowledge of their company is a great way to show your enthusiasm.

Ability to Speak Clearly

You need to speak clearly, pronounce each word correctly and refrain from using any slang terms during your interview. Verbal communication skills impact almost every hiring decision.

Teamwork Skills

Most opportunities look for an individual who can interact with other people. Give specific examples during your interview of your ability to work effectively as a member of a team.

Leadership Skills

Leadership does not only refer to supervisory or management positions. Hiring authorities look for leaders in most positions. What sets you above your co-workers? What skills can they build on for your future growth with their company?

Problem Solving

Employers need to know that you can handle yourself when a problem arises. They want to hire individuals who instantly become part of the solution versus someone who dwells on the problem.

Work Related Experience

If you have related experience, you need to give specific examples so the employer realizes there will not be much of a learning curve.

Community Involvement

Most employers are impressed by volunteer work. This shows you take pride in your community and also displays team player abilities.

Company Knowledge

Employers like to hear that you have done your research regarding their company. It proves that your interest in working for their company is sincere.

Flexibility

Employers want to know that you are able to “go with the flow.” It proves that they will be able to depend on you later, no matter what changes they implement.

Ambition and Motivation

Ambitious people are generally motivated enough to make great improvements in the company.

People Skills

Your ability to get along with others is key to any employer.

Professional Appearance

You are a representative of the company you work for and employers don't want to be embarrassed.

Multi-Task

Most employers will expect you to work on several projects simultaneously. You must be successful at switching tasks quickly as well.

Computer Proficiency

Most companies utilize technology to help them run more efficiently. You need to be comfortable working on a computer and in many jobs; you will be required to continually upgrade those skills. Technology and the Internet are not going away.

Reliability

Employers want dependable and reliable people to work for them. Your ability to arrive on time is a good place to start when trying to prove that you possess this quality.

Take the time to read this chapter several times and then implement the many ideas. If you learn these skills you will ACE YOUR INTERVIEWS!

CHAPTER ELEVEN – NETWORKING IS KEY

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

It is important to let anybody and everybody know that you are very actively seeking employment. You also need to follow up on 100% of the leads you receive. A job search is networking!

A successful job search doesn't happen by accident. It is the result of careful planning. You don't want to rush out unprepared attempting to book your first interview. It's important to establish a networking strategy.

Statistics also reveal the older you are and the more money you earn, the longer it will take to find what you're looking for. It could take up to four months for people over 40 years old earning more than \$50,000. Job seekers under 40 years old in the \$20,000 - \$49,999 bracket averaged from one to three months.

Your line of work also affects the length of your search. Usually, the easier it is to demonstrate tangible bottom-line results, the faster you can find your next job opportunity. Sales people have a much easier time finding a job that a Human Resource professional would because that job is considered part of the overhead vs. a revenue generating position.

Effective Networking will dramatically increase the number of referrals you obtain which is the quickest way to secure a new opportunity. When you are referred by someone else – there is an inferred recommendation and level of trust that would normally take weeks to establish. All people like to buy on the approval of others, employers like to hire on the approval of others as well!

Most individuals do not obtain referrals for one main reason – they don't ask for them. When you find yourself in a job search you need to inform everyone you know. It is impossible to predict who can provide you with a lead that will result in your next job.

FIRST STEP

You need to have business cards printed up at the most reasonable printer in your city or town. The card will list your name, contact information including cell phone and email address as well as the title "Free Agent in the Job market" You should pass these cards out to everyone you meet, letting them know the type of referral you would most appreciate. Follow your request up by asking them if there is anything you could do for them.

SECOND STEP

Start your networking efforts with a letter to your Holiday Card List which includes your family and friends.

SAMPLE LETTER TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Hi Everyone:

I'm writing to you today to update you on an important development in my career. I am currently a "Free Agent in the Job Market" which translated means... I'm looking for a new job opportunity!

You are the people in my life who know me better than anyone else, and I was hoping you might know someone who could use my talents. I'm enclosing three copies of my resume.

If you know anyone I should network with, I would greatly appreciate any and all referrals. I'm most interested in (state the types of jobs that represent your current interests).

I hope everything is going great in your life. Thank you in advance for your help!

Sign your name

Enclosure: Resume (enclose three copies of your resume and business cards)

The purpose of your job search is not to network, it is to book interviews with Decision Makers. Always keep the end in mind throughout your entire job search as you continue to network.

THIRD STEP

Identify the following: (using your local library or Internet)

1. Networking groups/events
2. Job fairs
3. Associations in your chosen profession
4. Publications read by individuals in your profession
5. Non-profit organizations

NETWORKING GROUPS/EVENTS

There are two types of networking groups and events. There are the groups focused on assisting job seekers find employment and then there are business networking events sponsored by organizations like the local Chamber of Commerce. These events are often called “business after hours.”

Career Networking Groups

The purpose of these groups is to assist you in finding your next job opportunity. Most of them are free (check that out in advance) and can connect you with individuals who can assist you in your search. You will also meet other job seekers who can provide you with leads.

Networking Events

You can often attend networking events sponsored by business organizations like your local Chamber of Commerce. These events are attended predominantly by business owners and company executives. Many of these individuals are also hiring authorities. It’s amazing how many contacts you can make at a Chamber function. Of course, you would bring your business cards and pass them out to everyone.

JOB FAIRS

Job fairs can often provide you with great contacts and job leads. On the other hand the wrong job fair can be a total waste of your time. You need to find out who the job fair is targeting.

If you are an accountant and you attend a job fair targeting hourly employees, you have wasted your time. If this does happen to you, I would talk to the company representatives and ask if they know anyone who would be interested in speaking with an experienced accountant.

The better idea is to attend a job fair that is targeting finance and accounting candidates! These companies are participating because they are looking for individuals that have your credentials. Your odds of obtaining job leads greatly increases when you attend functions that you have pre-qualified. You don’t want to waste your valuable time.

ASSOCIATIONS

Step number one is to identify all associations within your profession. There is an association for everything! Most of them are listed on the Internet and many have a free job posting service for their membership. You can often access these job postings on their website.

Individuals who join their professional association are normally people who are successful and want to give back. They join to network and learn from other members, but many of them are also willing to mentor and assist members with less experience.

Many of these groups will let you attend their meeting as a guest. When you introduce yourself you give your two-minute commercial letting them know you are in the market for a new opportunity. You will be amazed at the results you can achieve by this type of networking effort.

PUBLICATIONS READ BY YOUR PROFESSION

Most professionals read publications aimed at their career. You need to find the names of these publications and read them on-line or invest in a subscription to these publications. There are more job leads in the articles than there are listed in the classified ads - usually in the back of most job-specific publications. Reading these publications also keeps your knowledge current, which is very helpful during interviews.

Additionally, you can contact individuals who are featured in these publications and refer to the article. This is an easy icebreaker and often leads to interviews and job offers.

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

You may be a little confused by this suggestion, so let me explain. Most business executives reach a certain level of success when they realize they have to give back. At this time, many top executives become philanthropic and join various non-profit organizations.

CHAPTER TWELVE – SOCIAL NETWORKING CAN ENHANCE YOUR JOB SEARCH

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

The research you conduct up front will provide you with quicker results and dramatically improve your chances of landing the job you want!

Many employers are using Social Networks like LinkedIn to find passive job candidates. These Social Networks also help companies leverage the networks of their employees. Referrals from employees are highly valued because they typically have a higher success rate.

There are too many Social Networks to even attempt to list them all. This chapter will provide an overview of several sites with more detail on two sites - LinkedIn and Facebook. It's important to note that LinkedIn has reached a point where it's almost unprofessional not to be on LinkedIn. There are members from all 500 of the Fortune 500 companies. LinkedIn members represent over 130 different industries and 130,000+ recruiters.

CAUTION: It is important to realize that the information you place in your profile can be viewed by prospective employers. Many employers check your Social Network profiles as part of their recruiting and reference check process. You need to ensure that the information you include in your profile is appropriate for the eyes of a prospective employer.

Before you make a decision to participate on a Social Network, you should consider the following criteria:

THE PURPOSE OF THE NETWORK

Most Social Networks could fall into one of the following three categories:

- Business
- Special Interest
- Fun

There are not many networks dedicated to business or job searching. Most are dedicated to special interest groups (go to Ning.com and search on any interest). The fun sites are filled with teenagers and get the most press. When you are in a job search, you should limit your participation to networks that have a business purpose.

DOES THE NETWORK HAVE ANY TRACTION

It is not effective to be one of the first people to join a new network. You want to join a network where there is no limit on the connections you can make.

IS THERE SUFFICIENT ACTIVITY

Start by going to a Ning network. Look for a network in your own profession or industry and check out the activity. There is a very impressive network for recruiters called RecruitingBlogs.com. This group represents over 10,000 recruiters and many of them actively participate. If you join a network where there is little or no activity, no one will see your efforts.

There are some networks that are more effective for job seekers than others. You also need to realize that you may not enjoy instant gratification for your efforts on these Social Networks. Your profile and network will continue to be a work in progress throughout your career.

Below is a quick overview of five primary Networks

LinkedIn:

LinkedIn is the network to join if you are a professional. More detail on this network is included later in this chapter.

Facebook:

Many contacts on Facebook are older, out-of-school professionals who are often hiring managers, recruiters and decision makers. Considering this demographic, posting a professional profile on Facebook is a good strategy. This is a social environment with poor search functionality, but this network is four times the size of LinkedIn.

Twitter:

Twitter is referred to most commonly as “micro-blogging.” As you grow your network, twitter can help people understand what you have to offer and what referrals you seek. If you are in marketing or social media, Twitter is an essential career tool.

Ning.com:

RecruitingBlogs.com is one example of a successful and valuable Ning network. Go to Ning.com and search for keywords in your profession or industry and identify networks you should join. When you join a Ning network, realize others involved have great contacts and would be happy to introduce you. People involved in industry networks normally represent the leaders of the profession which is why you need to have a strategy when you participate.

Yahoo! Groups:

There are many successful groups in Yahoo. One example is YoungPRPros that represents over 4,000 PR Professionals from throughout the world. There are job leads and contact leads which are valuable for someone in a job search. The participants also share professional experiences. Find a network in your niche and realize these networks can help you anticipate trends and remain cutting edge in our profession.

Since you are reading Don't Interview-Audition and are in a current job search, you should focus on industry or profession oriented sites or LinkedIn and Facebook.

LINKEDIN IS ONE OF THE MOST WIDELY USED SOCIAL NETWORKS FOR JOB SEEKERS AND HIRING AUTHORITIES.

Take a few minutes to search LinkedIn and I'm sure you'll find lots of contacts from your current and prior employers, clients, vendor and schools. These contacts have the potential to help you grow your career or find a new job. In addition, it can be a good source of employment references, as well as reference checking. Individuals with more than twenty-five connections are thirty times more likely to be approached with a job opportunity than a person with less than five contacts.

8 steps to properly utilize LinkedIn to find a job or have a job find you

STEP ONE - Create a Profile - Create a detailed profile on LinkedIn, including employment (current and past), education, industry and web sites.

STEP TWO - Consider a Photo - You can add a photo (a headshot is recommended or upload a larger photo and edit it) to your LinkedIn profile. Note that it must be a small photo - no larger than 80x80 pixels.

STEP THREE - Keywords and Skills - Include all your resume keywords and skills in your profile, so your profile will be found.

STEP FOUR - Build Your Network - Connect with other members and build your network. The more connections you have, the more opportunities you have, with one caveat from Kay Luo, "Connect to people you know and trust or have a business relationship with, no need to go crazy and connect with everyone."

STEP FIVE - Get Recommendations - Recommendations from people you have worked with carry a lot of weight.

STEP SIX - Search Jobs - Use the job search section to find job listings.

STEP SEVEN - Use Answers. The Answers section of LinkedIn is a good way to increase your visibility. Respond to questions and ask a question if you need information or assistance.

STEP EIGHT - Stay Connected. Use LinkedIn Mobile (m.linkedin.com) to view profiles, invite new connections, and access to LinkedIn Answers from your phone.

OTHER BENEFITS OF LinkedIn:

Increase the Relevancy of Your Job Search

You can utilize the advanced search in LinkedIn to find people with educational and work experience that is similar to yours. You then see where they have worked and these companies can become targets for your search.

Learn Important Facts About Hiring Authorities

It is important to prepare for your interview. It is important to utilize Social Networks to search profiles on the individuals involved in your interview process. It's important to identify any common denominators you may have and helps tremendously with small talk.

Learn About the Turnover of Your Prospective Employer

If you perform an advanced search for a company and uncheck the current companies only box, you can scrutinize the rate of turnover. It will indicate whether key executives have left during a certain timeframe. Former employees usually give more candid opinions about a company than a current employee.

Gauge the Health of a Specific Industry

If you are thinking about changing your career and want to work a different industry, use LinkedIn to find people who have worked in your targeted industry. Try to locate past employees of a company who may have failed in the industry you are targeting. You can gain inside information on an industry before you invest your time targeting prospective employers or the expense of attaining the additional education needed.

Insight into Startups

You can see individuals in your network who are initiating new startups by conducting an advance search for a range of keywords like “new startup.” Apply the “sort by” filter to “degrees away from you” in order to see the people closest to you first.

Ask for Advice

LinkedIn Answers allows you to broadcast any business-related questions to your network and the greater LinkedIn Network. You obtain more valid responses from the people in your network than you often receive on open forums.

Increase Your Visibility

Each time you add connections to your site, you increase the likelihood that prospective employers will see your profile first when they’re searching for someone to hire. When you appear at the top of search results, there is a good chance this employer could know someone who knows you. This helps expedite trust and confidence in your abilities.

Improve Your Connectability

When you initially set up your profile, make sure to list more than your current company. This will severely limit your ability to connect with other people. Fill out your profile like an executive bio including past companies, education, affiliations and activities.

You should also include a link to your profile as part of your email signature. This enables people to see your credentials.

Improve your Google PageRank

LinkedIn allows you to make your profile information available for search engines to index; LinkedIn profiles receive a fairly high PageRank in Google. This is an excellent way to influence what people see when they search for you.

To accomplish this, create a public profile and select “Full View.” Instead of using the default URL, customize your public profile’s URL to be your actual name. To strengthen the visibility of this page in search engines, use this link in various locations on the web. If you comment on a BLOG, include a link to your profile in your signature.

Enhance Your Search Engine Results

In addition to your name, you can also promote your blog or website to search engines like Google and Yahoo. Your LinkedIn profile allows you to publicize websites. There are a few preselected categories like “my website” or “my company.” If you select “other” you can modify the name of the link. If you’re linking to your personal blog, include your name or descriptive terms in the link and instantly you have search-engine optimization for your site. To make this work, be sure your public profile setting is set to “full view.”

Perform Blind, Reverse, and Company Reference Checks

The LinkedIn’s reference check tool is utilized to input a company name and the years the person worked at the company. Your search will locate the people who worked at this company during the same timeframe. This is a great way to get objective data.

Companies check your references before hiring you. Have you ever considered checking a reference on your prospective manager? Utilizing the tools in LinkedIn, you have the opportunity to actually obtain this information confidentially.

You can check on the company by finding individuals who had the job you’re currently seeking. Do this by searching for job title and company, but be sure to uncheck “current titles only.” By contacting people who held this position, you obtain inside information on the job, manager and growth potential.

Scope Out The Competition

It has always been a good business practice to check out your competition. You can utilize LinkedIn to scope out the competition of your prospective employer. This knowledge provides you with a competitive edge as you progress through the interview process.

NOW FOR FACEBOOK

Most individuals view Facebook as a site for kids in school or as a way to keep in touch with family and friends. This is rapidly changing and many professionals from entrepreneurs to executives are connecting utilizing Facebook. Often these individuals are involved in the interviewing and hiring decisions of their companies.

For those of you who have utilized Facebook and a way to socialize and share pictures of your last party, you may want to think twice about the information you post. Are your pictures and messages appropriate for a prospective employer to read?

Facebook is not LinkedIn and you won't utilize this tool in the same way. Facebook can be useful in your job search because it does offer a significant amount of networking. Also, if one of the skill sets required is networking, not being on Facebook could be a mistake.

For Recent College Grads

Jobster launched a new Facebook application with 230 partner employers. This allows you to connect directly with hiring managers at the companies you have targeted.

When adding the application, you select names from a list of "Talent Networks." These are the companies you've targeted. This information is passed along to those hiring teams who use Jobster's Employer Sourcing Tools. Jobster then connects the two parties so the interested Facebook users can be notified about job opportunities, recruiting events and other noteworthy items. Other features of the application include Jobster job search and the ability to convert your Facebook profile to a Jobster resume. The concept is good, but this could turn into a glorified mailing list. The results of this application are not yet available.

Social Network Is Only One Way To Network!

It's very important to realize that social networking is only one way to network. You need to utilize many resources when you are in an active job search. It is easier to participate in a social network than to conduct research, send out a resume and make follow up calls. It is important to commit to minimum activity standards throughout your entire job search. If you utilize all tools including Social Networks, the result should be multiple job offers.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN – COVER LETTERS THAT WORK!

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

Your cover letter should address the WIIFM (What's In It for Me) of the person reading it.

A cover letter is also part of your first impression. Often a hiring authority will read the cover letter prior to your resume. If they are not impressed by the contents of the cover letter, you could be screened out before they read the first word on your resume.

However, many cover letters are read and thrown away, so you don't want to include vital information that is not also included on your resume. The purpose of the cover letter is to entice this person to read your resume. The purpose of your resume is to entice this person enough that they schedule an interview to get additional information.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER 1 - Answering An Ad

Dear _____: (make sure spelling of their name is accurate)

First paragraph:

This is in response to the ad you recently ran in (name of the paper), on (date of the ad) for (title of the job). I am confident that my abilities match the requirements of this position and I'm very interested in working for your company. (If you know any facts about their company, you can also include a sentence about WHY their company is great!)

Second paragraph:

You then look at the requirements of the ad and RESTATE them as your strengths. If the ad asked for a degreed accountant with auditing experience your second paragraph would start out with...

As my resume outlines, I am a degreed accountant with _____ years of auditing experience. You then list two or three accomplishments that set you apart from other individuals who have done your job. List what you did and the positive impact on your company!

Third paragraph:

Thank you for your consideration. I will follow up in a few days, to hopefully schedule a face-to-face interview. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Contact Information

attachment: Resume

SAMPLE COVER LETTER 2 – Cold Mailing (Never talked to this person)

Dear _____:

First paragraph:

This letter is being directed to you in hope that your organization may currently be in need of an overachiever with a proven track record and strong work ethic, who is currently a free agent in the job market. What I bring to the table is a stable, successful track record that includes: (List your three best accomplishments and the impact they had).

Second paragraph:

I've conducted extensive research on your company, and was very impressed by (list some of the positive things you have learned). That is the reason I have identified your company as one of my primary job targets. I would be most interested in a position (describe the type of position or department).

Third paragraph:

Thank you for your consideration. I will follow up in a few days, to hopefully schedule a convenient time for us to meet. I look forward to our conversation.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Contact Information

Attachment: Resume

SAMPLE COVER LETTER 3 – You Know They Have A Position Open

Dear _____:

First paragraph:

Enclosed you will find my resume outlining my experience, skills and hard work ethic. I was recently informed that your company has an opening for a (list the position), which is exactly the type of opportunity I would be interested in pursuing.

Second paragraph:

Tie this paragraph into the skill sets they would require. Also, list your accomplishments and the positive impact on your past employers. You want to inform this person of what you bring to the table.

Third paragraph:

I'm confident in my abilities to do this job and very interested in working for your company. I will be contacting you within the next few days to hopefully schedule an interview. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Contact Information

Attachment: Resume

The cover letters should be typed, proofread and be an example of your written and communication skills. I suggest you handwrite the envelope and write "Personal and Confidential" on the left hand lower corner of the envelope, so the person you've addressed this to will actually open the envelope.

Secretaries will open all mail for their employers with the exception of handwritten envelopes marked "personal and confidential." If a secretary opens an envelope and sees a resume, she will either send it to the Human Resource Department or sometimes even discard the resume.

You want your cover letter to enhance your chances of an interview, so spend time learning how to write effective ones. Take time right now to write a cover letter to one of your targeted companies.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN – THE IMPORTANCE OF CHANGE

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

If you have not been getting the RESULTS you want, you need to CHANGE the way you are handling your job search. Continuing to do the same things in your job search will provide the same results. Think about this again for just a moment: “INSANITY IS doing things the SAME way and expecting DIFFERENT results.”

Change is the one certainty in life. Think for a moment how many changes you have had to deal with in your life. Some have been positive changes that you have enjoyed. Others may have caused some of the challenges in your life.

We are all creatures of habit. When you woke up this morning, your morning routine had a sequence. Did you brush your teeth first? Make coffee? Take a shower? You even have a set routine when you are in the shower. When you get dressed, you normally have a set routine on what items you put on first, second, third, etc.

Most people are on “automatic pilot” when they wake up in the morning. Think for a moment how uncomfortable your morning would be if you tried to reverse your normal routine. It takes twenty-one days of repetition before you develop a new habit.

It is not going to be easy to change the habits you have developed in your job search, but it will be rewarding. Remember, if you keep doing things the same way, you will get the same results. If you are not happy with the results of your job search, it is necessary to change what you are doing.

Please answer the following questions:

1. How old were you ten years ago?
2. How old will you be in ten years?
3. How fast did the last ten years go by?

If you don't commit to changing the way you are currently doing things, ten years will pass and you will be in the same position you are in today!

Before you start to implement the ideas in this book, I want you to evaluate where your job search is today.

The Importance of Change

In order to do this, you need to write down the answers to the following questions:

1. What to CONTINUE doing:

(List the actions you are taking that have provided you with RESULTS.)

2. What to STOP doing:

(List the actions you are taking that are NOT working. This is difficult to do, but you need to STOP doing what doesn't work.)

3. What to START doing:

(Many of these ideas are found within this book)

The Importance of Change

Great leaders, great sports figures, and even the world's most successful people all make changes. They all hire coaches to get them to their next level of performance or success. In order for you to have the time to start doing new things, you need to stop doing everything that does not work. You need to stop doing those things today!

One great example was Michael Jordan. He put a rubber band around his wrist each time he was changing the way he shot the ball. He understood it and took time to develop new habits. If it worked for Michael Jordan, it can work for you.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE: Do you realize Michael Jordan also missed more shots than he made? When you think of Michael you think of the greatest basketball player of all times, you don't think of his missed shots. Successful people try more so they fail more, but they learn from their failures and keep going. There is a very important lesson to learn from them.

You don't judge a person's success by the number of their successes, but rather by the failures they overcome. Walt Disney declared bankruptcy six times. If he didn't overcome his failures, there would be no Disneyland or Mickey Mouse!

When you decide on a change you will make in your job search efforts, put a rubber band around your wrist for 21 days until this change becomes your newest habit.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN – OVERCOME OBJECTIONS

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

Objections are buying signs; they are a request for more information. Interviewing is a sales process. In sales you must overcome at least three objections from every prospect!

The greatest challenge you will face in your job search is rejection. Interviewing is sales and rejection is part of the process. It is important you do not take rejection personally. Learn from each experience and fine tune your job search skills.

It is important to know objections are buying signs, a request for more information. There are four kinds of objections:

1. Personal (your personality, attitude)
2. Postponement (delay tactic)
3. Price (salary/benefit issues)
4. Service (your skills/experience)

If you know what kind of objection you are given, you can easily overcome the objection. If you've received objections that you have not been able to overcome in the past, write down what type of objection you received.

Examples of objections:

Number 1 - "I need someone with a higher energy level"

This is a PERSONAL OBJECTION – you are coming across too laid back.

Number 2 - "I will get back to you when we have interviewed all candidates"

This is a POSTPONEMENT OBJECTION – to delay a decision.

Number 3 - "I'm not sure we can meet your salary requirements"

This is a PRICE OBJECTION – they can't meet your salary demands.

Number 4 - "I'm looking for someone with more experience"

This is a SERVICE OBJECTION – they are questioning your skills.

When you get an objection, this person wants you to overcome their objection and give them a reason to hire you. They are requesting you to give them more information. Let's use the four objections just outlined as examples.

OBJECTION Number 1

“I need someone with a higher energy level”

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

- That is why I was so valuable to my past employers. My performance reviews and references all refer to my high energy level.
- I don't have much interviewing experience and I think my nerves might be masking my high energy level and hard work ethic.
- If you asked my past co-workers to describe me, they would say I was highly energetic.
- I may not come across as a person with high energy, but I've always been able to outperform my co-workers because of my focus and hard work ethic.

OBJECTION Number 2

“I will get back to you when we have interviewed all candidates”

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

- Can you tell me how I rank among the candidates you have interviewed?
- Do I have the skills and experience you feel would qualify me for this position?
- When would it be appropriate for me to follow up with you?
- What is your target date to hire?

You then build off the answers to these questions to sell yourself.

OBJECTION Number 3

“I'm not sure we can meet your salary requirements”

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

- I'm going to look at the entire package, salary, benefits, etc.
- I listed my salary as negotiable. What is the salary range for this position?
- I'm extremely interested in working for your company and my salary requirements are flexible.
- Do I have the skills and experience you need?

Overcome Objections

OBJECTION Number 4

I'm looking for someone with more experience”

SUGGESTED ANSWERS

- I have been able to obtain 5 years of experience in my 3 years because of the additional responsibilities placed on me very early in my career.
- Do I have the skills and attitude you need?
- I am very interested in working for your company, and I'm extremely confident in my abilities to perform the tasks of your opportunity.

When you overcome objections, you have greatly increased the possibility of you getting a job offer. Remember, objections are requests for more information.

Take a moment to write down objections you have received in past interviews and then write down an effective statement that will overcome those objections.

OBJECTION	TYPE OF OBJECTION	ANSWER
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

CHAPTER SIXTEEN – FOLLOW UP IS CRITICAL

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

Hiring authorities view strong follow-up as an indicator of the level of interest of the job seeker. Following-up is mandatory, not optional!

Employers like to hire individuals who are confident in their ability to do the job and are also sincerely interested in working for them! If it comes down to a difficult decision of who to hire, they will go with the person who they feel really wants to work for them! How do you become that person? You become that person with your follow up process.

The following is a list of the various times when you need to establish a follow up system.

1. After you send a resume to a prospective employer. In your cover letter, you should state you will follow up by phone within a week. Make sure you do exactly that!
2. If a phone or face-to-face interview is scheduled, you want to call the evening before the interview to confirm the interview. This shows your prospective employer that you are organized and thorough.
3. After your interview, you want to send a thank you letter to each individual you met. Ask everyone for their business cards so you have the correct spelling, title and address.
4. If you are utilizing a search or staffing firm, you also want to thank them for scheduling your interview.
5. If you received this job lead from someone else, you want to keep them informed of your progress and also thank them for their referral.
6. You need to follow up after each interview, to keep the process moving forward.
7. When you provide a list of references, make sure you follow up with each reference so they will be expecting the call.
8. When you get a job offer, you want to send a thank you note expressing your enthusiasm about their offer.

Follow Up Is Critical

I want to stress the fact that a follow up system is not stalking. You don't want to constantly call individuals for a status report! Often employers have a difficult time telling you that you're out. They just don't return your calls.

Understand time kills deals! If you have been pending for a much longer time than anticipated, chances are they have screened you out and are still interviewing to find a better fit. Most employers won't tell you that you have been screened out until they hire someone for the job. Often, they forget to let you know when the position is filled.

On the other hand, when an employer feels someone is a great fit, the interviewing process often shortens. There is a fine line here and a set system will keep you informed, keep the interviewing process moving forward and will put you in the best position to find your new job!

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN – PROS AND CONS OF THE INTERNET

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

The Internet will not FIND your next career opportunity for you. This is merely one source you will want to utilize in your job search.

You will utilize the Internet throughout your entire search process. If you don't own a computer, find a friend who does and establish an email account on their computer for your job search efforts. Many companies will only accept resumes and communication with potential employees through use of email.

You will utilize the Internet in your job search for the following:

- Research – companies and positions
- Cover letters and resumes via email
- Corresponding with hiring authorities
- Completing on-line application forms
- Follow up
- Job boards

RESEARCH

The research activities outlined in this book can be completed on the Internet or at the library. The greatest benefit of the Internet is you can conduct your research from home on your computer.

Limit your Internet research to no more than 30% of the time you are spending on your search. Obtaining mountains of information off the Internet is not going to help you find a job, unless you start utilizing the information.

Write down the information you need to obtain, and focus 100% of your efforts on those sites alone. Don't get distracted by other sites.

COVER LETTERS AND RESUMES VIA EMAIL

You will often receive requests to email this paperwork to employers. Make sure your SUBJECT LINE is filled in. Many systems screen out emails with no subject line. The best entry to put on the subject line is the following: **"Paperwork You Requested"**

Also make sure you have your resume saved as a Word Document. The majority of hiring authorities prefer Word Documents. Too often resumes that are part of a ZIP FILE or saved in other software are not reviewed because they can be difficult to open.

CORRESPONDING WITH HIRING AUTHORITIES

Often hiring authorities prefer to conduct some of their communications with you via email. This is done often to review your written communication skills. Therefore, review everything you send for content and accuracy.

COMPLETING ON-LINE APPLICATION FORMS

Filling out on-line application forms is easy, but you need to understand this could be a tool utilized to screen you out. Your answers need to be precise and accurate. You don't want to share any information that would cause concern. When they ask you to list your salary, list your most recent salary and add plus signs behind the dollar amount. When they ask you about the plus signs on your application form – you explain they represent your entire package including bonuses, benefits, etc. For Desired Salary – you always want to list either negotiable or open.

FOLLOW UP

Email is one way to communicate following your interview. Another option is to handwrite your thank you notes. You do not want to communicate 100% through emails because you cannot develop rapport.

JOB BOARDS

There are hundreds of job boards on the Internet. You must keep in mind that many of the positions listed have already been filled. This is also one of the most difficult ways to secure employment because there is a high level of competition.

If you are currently employed while you are conducting a job search, there is also the issue of confidentiality. Hundreds of individuals have lost their jobs when their current employer finds out they are conducting a job search. Obviously, any email sent should be done from your home computer and personal email account.

The Internet is merely one tool to help you secure your next opportunity. If you do not have a computer and have been avoiding technology, it would be very wise for you to register for a beginning Word or Outlook course at your local high school.

Technology is HERE TO STAY and if you are to remain competitive and marketable in today's workforce, you need to at least learn the basics. Remember, your only job security is to update the skills you offer a future employer!

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN – WORKFORCE/WORKPLACE TRENDS

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

It is up to you to become a free agent in the open job market. Once you understand the Workforce/Workplace realities you can attain your personal career goals.

Change is occurring at lightning speed in the job market, due to the three drivers of change: people, technology and information. The day of working 40 years at the same company and retiring with a gold watch is non-existent.

Today's market is all about the Power of Now! Conventional practice is gone. It's time to rethink priorities and to shift emphasis. The attitudes and values of the workforce have shifted and competition is tougher than ever before.

Let's discuss some workforce/workplace realities:

- The average individual changes jobs every 4 years.
- No longer is there job security within a company. Job security comes from you keeping your skills and knowledge current.
- Embrace technology – it is here to stay!
- The new workplace is hiring individuals who embrace change! Work on becoming flexible, adaptable and a change maker.

The better you anticipate trends, the more you can personally take advantage of them. The following are some current trends you must understand:

TREND ONE:

Competition for top talent will increase. This is due to the aging Baby Boomers who are retiring at a rate of one every eight seconds, which is great news for job seekers.

TREND TWO:

Benefits will make or break offers. The cost of benefits continues to escalate and individuals are placing a high premium on the benefit package offered by prospective employers. Companies are also becoming very creative offering benefits that don't cost the company money. You need to understand benefits prior to accepting an offer.

Examples:

- Casual attire
- Summer hours
- Flexible working schedules
- Pre-tax deductions
- Flexible spending accounts that give employees options
- Time off bonuses
- Working virtual

It is very important to understand what costs and deductibles you will pay. Research if the company is offering family coverage, if in fact you need that type of coverage.

If you have a pre-existing condition you need to target much larger companies who have a better chance of providing insurance for you.

TREND THREE:

Many training programs are delivered on-line. You need to become computer literate or you will be left behind. Whether you hire companies who provide this type of training, attend an adult education program at a local high school or learn from younger children in your family – you **MUST** become computer literate for most career opportunities.

TREND FOUR:

Working virtual is a trend that will continue to grow. Many responsibilities can be accomplished utilizing virtual workers. Again, you must be extremely computer literate to be considered for this type of work arrangement.

TREND FIVE:

With the aging Baby Boomers, 7 out of 10 jobs will have some connection to medical positions or firms that sell to people providing medical services. How can you position yourself to take advantage of this aging population?

TREND SIX:

Many individuals will make money utilizing the Internet versus accepting the traditional 40 hour work week.

TREND SEVEN:

Job seekers will often work temp, contract, part-time or have two part-time jobs versus one full-time position. This will provide them with more flexibility and help them gain more skills and experience.

TREND EIGHT:

You need to embrace personal technology such as an iPod or learning on an MP3 Player, the Blackberry, Treo and other tools now utilized by Corporate America who like to keep in touch with their employees 24/7. You must stay ahead of these trends and welcome these tools as a way of becoming more efficient.

TREND NINE:

Many individuals will take their passion and turn it into their own business. Many people are entering the ranks of the entrepreneur and opening their own businesses, to truly control their destiny.

CHAPTER NINETEEN – A JOB OFFER IS MORE THAN A SALARY AND START DATE

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

You need to view your job offer as a package which includes salary, start date, benefits (cost and deductibles), vacations and other perks offered.

The job offer is your reward for a job well done during your interviewing process! It is extremely important to realize that an offer IS more than just a salary and a start date.

When you accept an offer, you need to completely understand the following:

1. STARTING SALARY

This is your official base salary.

2. YOUR HOURS

If you accept a position working 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. with a one hour lunch, you are only working 35 vs. 40 hours per week. If your salary was quoted as an hourly rate; you need to take the hourly rate times 35 hours per week, times 52 weeks, to make sure you understand what you will earn annually.

3. OVERTIME POLICY

Most companies pay time and a half after 40 hours per week, unless you are an exempt employee – where there is no overtime.

4. BENEFIT PACKAGE

This includes health insurance, vacation time, retirement program, 401K, life insurance, sick days, short and long-term disability policy, PTO (paid time off) and other perks.

Health Insurance

You need to know the amount of the deductibles you will need to pay out of pocket. Prescription coverage is also very valuable! You need to know the exact cost for the coverage for you and for your family.

Vacation Time

You need to know how many days you have off, and when you qualify to take your vacation. Often there is either a six or twelve month waiting period until you accrue vacation time.

Retirement Programs

As you mature, this type of benefit obviously becomes more important. Often, there is a waiting period of one year for this type of coverage. If you have a current program, you may want to check if you can transfer over your funds to your new employer's program.

401K

This type of benefit can be very attractive, especially if your employer matches any percentage of your contribution.

Life Insurance

Many health insurance policies also offer life insurance coverage. The most common policy is one times your annual salary. If you are offered coverage, you need to find out who pays for this coverage.

Sick Days

Most firms have sick days or personal day policies. If your employer has this coverage, how many days?

PTO

This refers to Paid Time Off and is becoming more popular. Rather than separate vacation, personal and sick days, many companies just offer a certain amount of days off each year for any of the above. If you're not sick, you can use the days as vacation time.

5. ADDITIONAL PERKS

Many firms offer benefits that are customized for their company exclusively. These can include: free parking, free lunches or an employee cafeteria, casual dress code, daycare, transportation reimbursements, summer hours, flexible schedules and much more.

You need to get a copy of your employer's benefit package to make sure you have the benefits you need. If your company does not offer benefits, they often will pay a flat amount toward the cost of your benefits.

A Job Offer Is MORE than A Salary and Start Date

If benefits are not provided, then you need to consider the impact of this on your future. It is extremely important that you have medical insurance to protect you against any future health issues.

6. RELOCATION

If you are relocating, you need to find out the exact amount of the relocation package. Will they purchase your house? Will they cover 100% of your moving expenses? Will they provide temporary housing? Will they pay for you to come home and visit prior to your family moving? Will they help you find a realtor?

7. COMPANY CAR, EXPENSE ACCOUNT, LAPTOP

These perks are available for higher level positions and again you must get details. Can you use the car for personal use? Are insurance, license plates and gas paid for by the company? What types of expenses are paid?

When you have been in a job search for a period of time, it is so enticing to jump at the first offer you receive. However, now you know the importance of getting the details on the complete offer which does involve much more than a start date and salary.

CHAPTER TWENTY – THERE IS NO JOB SECURITY

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

There is NO job security. The only job security you have is to keep your skills and marketability current. Take additional courses, learn technology, earn your degree, do whatever you need to do to increase your value to a future employer.

The average individual will make seven job changes with three career changes in their lifetime. This is only one reason why it is important to master the skills of auditioning.

There is NO job security! In the past it was assumed that if a person worked for a large Fortune 500 Company, their future was secure as long as they performed. The façade was eliminated by such companies as ENRON, Arthur Anderson, and Ford Motors just to mention a few.

The only job security existing today is for an individual to keep themselves marketable. This involves maintaining computer literacy, utilizing technology to increase effectiveness and becoming an expert within their chosen profession. The individual themselves is their only job security – not their affiliation with a particular employer.

The job seeker must adapt to the same type of transitions as an actor or actress. An actor must excel in each role in order to secure their next role. They read through many scripts, go through screen tests and decide which opportunity will enhance their worth. When this actor reads the script they want, they must still audition in order to earn the role. Some roles cause them to learn new skills, accents and often pushes them out of their comfort zones. Once an actor has an established reputation, the auditioning process becomes much easier and they are sought out for roles written explicitly for them.

Think of the analogy of this process to your job search. The job seeker must determine which positions will benefit their careers. They must then audition for the part to prove to the decision makers why they are the best person for the job. Individuals should always be in a passive job search, allowing them to make the best career choices to enhance their marketability and worth.

There Is No Job Security

It is also interesting that even in times of high unemployment, most employers want to hire someone who is currently employed. They hire individuals who are successful in their career, but are open to look at a new challenge if it represents their next logical career move. Your ultimate goal is to continue to improve your marketability and job history so you become one of those candidates that are sought out by employers in your field.

Employers know that your past work history is a window into your future performance with their firm. You need to review your past work history and write down the experience and skills you have achieved. Often skills you utilized two or three jobs ago can become marketable skills in your current job search.

TYPE OF COMPANY	TITLE	SKILLS

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE – SELF-TALK, CREATES SELF-IMAGE, WHICH CONTROLS REAL PERFORMANCE

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

Whether you think you CAN, or you think you CAN'T, you're right!

We all possess a Self-Esteem Cycle and it is 100% controlled by how we talk to ourselves. Self-Talk is the constant conversation that you have with yourself about what consciously and subconsciously happens to you. You constantly judge and interpret your own experience by talking to yourself in either a positive or negative manner.

Let's relate this to your job search. If your job search is not going the way you had planned, or how you had anticipated, you should not use self-talk statements like the following examples:

- How could I be so stupid?
- There I go again
- I know I'm not going to get an interview
- Why do I always...
- It happens every time
- I just can't seem to do anything right
- I wonder if I'm taking on more than I can do?
- This is going to be one of those days
- What is wrong with me?
- If only I would have...

Do some of these sound familiar?

List the negative self-talk statements that you find yourself saying right now as you are in the process of your job search.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Self-Talk, Creates Self-Image Which Controls Real Performance

6.

7.

8.

9.

You now have an assignment to complete. For the next 21 days, deliberately control your self-talk and do NOT allow any negative thoughts. No cynical statements, no snide remarks, no sarcasm and no cut-downs, not even in jest. Remember, your subconscious cannot differentiate between the truth and a joke. It accepts literally what you say to yourself or accept from experts. If you slip, and put yourself or somebody down, silently affirm:

“That is not like me... I always find ways to put a positive light on what happens to me as well as others”

Your daily self-talk and visualizations are really nothing more than habits that we have acquired over the years. Unfortunately, they have a definite way of controlling our self-esteem and lives! Controlling your self-talk and your imagination is absolutely necessary in building sound self-esteem. After you have consciously controlled your self-talk for the first 24 hours ask yourself these questions:

1. Isn't it enlightening to become aware of how negative your self-talk has become?
2. Isn't it amazing how negative the world can be?
3. List areas where you noticed negative self-talk?

You need to consider the conversation you had, the conversations you heard, the statements you say out loud to yourself, the TV, the newspapers and your own subconscious put-downs to yourself.

Did you notice yourself or others actually predicting their day with their self talk?

Consider statements like:

“I was up late last night. I bet I won't have any energy today.”

“The market is down. I know no one will want me to call them today.”

“Hiring authorities never listen anyway, why bring it up?”

“It’s going to be one of those days.”

The energy you put out represents the results that will actually come into your life. It’s the Law of Attraction!

Take time right now to make a list of negative self-talk statements you have made in the past week that actually predicted or controlled your day, or negative statements you heard from those around you. (I like to refer to these negative statements as the “NOISE” in your life)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Now make a list of positive self-talk statements that actually predicated or controlled your day this past week.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Self-Talk, Creates Self-Image Which Controls Real Performance

When your performance or life in general does not live up to your expectations, instead of criticizing yourself and diminishing your self-image, you need to take negative self-talk and turn it into positive affirmations!

“That’s not like me, the next time I’ll...”

“That’s not like me, I intend to...”

What you are doing with these statements is providing positive and immediate feedback to your subconscious. Instead of a negative picture, you trigger the picture of the desired performance you want.

The key to reinforcing a good self-image or modifying a self-image for the better is to picture what you want your life to be. Stop picturing what you don’t want or are trying to avoid. Never complete a negative statement or thought – always reverse them and put them in a positive self-talk statement.

Individuals who want to lose weight need to focus on their healthy lifestyle versus focusing on the fear of gaining weight. Individuals who are ill need to focus on being healthy versus focusing on the fear of getting sicker or death. Individuals, who want to gain wealth, need to focus on money coming into their life easy versus focusing on the fear of poverty. In your job search, you need to focus on working in your dream job versus focusing on the fear of rejection.

When your performance or life pleases you and you feel good about it, you should use positive self-talk to reinforce this positive picture. You should affirm to yourself:

“I did that very well”

“I’m proud I was able to accomplish that”

Positive self-talk statements are the best way to either maintain or build-up your own self-esteem. They deliberately lock-out the negative put-downs that we and other people try to make us accept.

Although our attitudes cannot be totally erased because they are stored in the subconscious, they can be displaced or substituted through our self-talk. You can displace old negative attitudes with new success attitudes by consciously controlling your self-talk and not accepting the negative opinions and attitudes of those around us. You need to build your own self-image with your own self-talk. You must deliberately control your self-talk or it will control you.

List how you will displace some of your old negative attitudes with success attitudes through positive self-talk.

SELF ESTEEM EVALUATION

Score as follows:

3–TRUE, 2–LARGELY TRUE, 1-SOMEWHAT TRUE, 0–NOT TRUE

POINTS

STATEMENT OF YOUR PRESENT ACTIONS

1. I do my own thinking and make my own decisions
2. I often justify or rationalize my mistakes
3. I rarely experience envy, jealousy or suspicion
4. Losing causes me to feel “less than”
5. I normally let others be “wrong” without attempting to correct them
6. I am overly concerned about what others think of me
7. I am free of guilt, shame or remorse
8. I feel vulnerable to others’ opinions, attitudes and comments
9. I am not prejudice toward religious, racial or ethnic groups
10. I tend to downplay my own achievements and talents
11. I willingly accept consequence of my actions
12. I often exaggerate and lie to maintain a desired image
13. I normally feel warm and friendly toward people
14. I usually feel inadequate to handle a new or changing situation
15. I freely express love, hostility or anger
16. I am very often critical of others
17. I am normally poised and comfortable when meeting new people

POINTS

STATEMENT OF YOUR PRESENT ACTIONS

18. I try hard to please people
19. I speak up for my own convictions
20. I have a strong need for recognition and approval
21. I anticipate new endeavors with a positive expectancy and confidence
22. I often brag about my achievements and myself
23. I accept my own authority and do what I think is right
24. I am often embarrassed by the actions of my family or friends.

TO SCORE THE SELF-ESTEEM EVALUATION:

1. Add up the total number of points for the ODD numbered questions
2. Do the same for the EVEN numbered questions
3. Subtract the EVEN total from the ODD total
4. Your score could range from (minus) -36 to (plus) +39
5. Perfect self-esteem would mean straight 3's on the odd and straight 0's on the even

Your score is not as important as your awareness of areas that may need growth:

Review the ODD questions where you scored 0 or 1
Review the EVEN questions where you scored 2 or 3
(These are the areas you need to improve)

If you evaluate your current level of self-esteem and work to improve areas that need attention, you will present yourself much more effectively in an interview.

Improved self-esteem means an improved job search!

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO – UTILIZE PROFESSIONAL SEARCH, STAFFING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

Having your resume in the hands of a recruiter is the best passive way to be open to outstanding opportunities in your profession.

If you understand how search firms work, your expectations will be more realistic and you will better understand how to approach them. The work recruiters do can be compared to the work of a realtor. Recruiters represent positions that need to be filled (the equivalent of houses for sale). They recruit qualified people to fill those positions (house buyers). They match their job opportunities with their qualified candidates, just as realtors match house seekers with houses. In both fields, possibilities are sometimes presented as “once in a lifetime” opportunities.

There are many professional and reputable search firms! However, recruiters are looking to represent individuals who are marketable (individuals who have a stable work history, experience and skills). Therefore the more marketable you are, the more likely you will have a positive experience with search firms.

Here are 10 benefits of why you want to work with a search firm:

1. Recruiters have access to many positions that are not advertised.
2. Recruiters can provide tremendous insight into the companies they represent when preparing you for your interviews.
3. When top corporations need the best person for a specific position, they turn to recruiters for their expertise and network!
4. Working with a recruiter is the best way to conduct a passive job search.
5. The process is extremely confidential.
6. You are able to test your marketability without risking your current job.
7. Small to mid-size companies are growing rapidly. It is typically those companies that utilize search firms.
8. Recruiters are always educated and aware of market trends. They can talk with you about current trends and predicted future trends.
9. If your recruiter knows what your long-term goals are, they can help you find positions that will enable you to attain your goals!
10. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain! Unless you feel it is your next logical career move, there is no obligation on your part to accept any position.

There are 4 types of search firms:

1. Direct placement – (Contingency) – This means that there is absolutely no cost to you to work with a recruiter. The client companies pay your recruiter to find them top talent.
2. Direct placement – (Retained) - The recruiter receives an exclusive contract to fill a position and gets paid whether or not they find top talent to fill the position.
3. Temporary & Contract – Staffing Firm – These firms offer opportunities that are flexible. You become an employee of the staffing firm. They find opportunities with numerous corporations. These assignments can be as short as one day or may continue for years! Sometimes a Temp/Contract position can turn into a Direct placement. This means you become an employee of that corporation.
4. Blended Firm – Many firms are set up to combine any of the types of placement listed above.

Here are 7 tips on how to successfully work with a recruiter:

1. Do your homework! You need to research which firms specialize in your career field. If you are changing careers, then you should contact firms that specialize in your desired career area. Ask the receptionist to define their firm's specialty. If it is your career area, ask to please speak with a recruiter. If not, ask them for a referral to other firms that do handle your career area.
2. When you get a recruiter on the phone, offer to send them your resume and cover letter. Recruiters like to see your experience before they actually interview you! Usually, a recruiter has a good idea whether or not they can represent you. A good recruiter will be honest with you either way. Neither of you wants to waste any time.

When you send your information to a recruiter you should:

- a. Summarize your marketable characteristics in your cover letter.
- b. Clearly state your target market (geographic, area, industry and position) and your salary range.
- c. State your key selling points, your summary and most importantly your accomplishments! Recruiters will sell your accomplishments to their clients.

- d. Attach a list of professional references. You should include 1 or 2 personal references, but you should have at least 4 professional references. Also, don't list an HR Department as one of your references. They are restricted legally on what they can say, and will often only verify dates of employment and if you are eligible for re-hire. You need to go to the person who was your direct boss and ask them to be one of your listed references. If you left that position on good terms, most people want to help you with your job search. Many recruiters will use your references to book interviews for you or to remove any concerns a client may have about you or your experience.
3. Be honest! Search firms will check your professional references. Your recruiter will find out if you have something in your past, (e.g., getting let go on bad terms). If you have not been honest, your recruiter won't trust you and your working relationship will often end at this point. If you are honest with them, they will try to help you handle it in the most positive way. A recruiter's reputation is at stake with every single candidate they choose to represent!
4. This may come as a surprise, but don't call your recruiter on a regular basis! Follow up is great in most situations. With a recruiter, follow up calls prevent them from being on their phones searching for your next career move. I suggest that you send them a short e-mail message every two weeks. Please do not take it personal if a recruiter does not get back to you. Be confident that they are doing everything possible to find you a job!
5. The ideal situation is to seek out a recruiter that is professional, represents reputable corporations, has tenure with their firm, is honest with you and most importantly, someone you can trust with your career! You want to find an agent/recruiter that you can build a relationship with and feel confident that they have your best interest at heart.
6. Make sure that your recruiter has all of your contact information! With today's technology, you should be reachable immediately following your interview. Recruiters expect you to be accessible at all times, in case they get a last minute interview for you.

7. Make yourself readily available for interviews! If a recruiter books an interview with one of their clients, make it happen! Clients are busy and do not like to work around your schedule! Never cancel an interview! If you cancel, that is the client's first impression of you. Make sure you have good communication with your recruiter to prevent negative situations.

A search firm is an excellent way to find your next opportunity! With your recruiter, you are working as a team, not as an individual! If you take the time to research your search firms and find a recruiter that you like and trust, this method of job searching can be very effective. Not only will a recruiter help you find your next opportunity, they will also keep in mind your future and long-term goals. In time, you can view your Recruiter as your LIFETIME AGENT!

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE - FORMS TO HELP YOU

WHAT I KNOW TO BE TRUE...

It is important to organize your job search and these forms will help you do exactly that! You don't want important contacts or details to slip through the cracks.

Chapter 3 – Your Job search is Your Full-time Job

Forms provided for the Five Stages for every Contact in your job search

- Stage 1 – Identification of Targets and Correct Contacts
- Stage 2 – Mail Cover Letter and Resume
- Stage 3 – Follow Up Contacts
- Stage 4 – Scheduled Interview
- Stage 5 – Follow Up Process After Interview

Chapter 4 – How to Set Your Career Goals

Forms provided are: Personal Appraisal
Job Appraisal

Chapter 8 – Planning is Essential

Forms provided are: Assessment Sheet - company targets/ research
Mail Cover Letter and Resume
Scheduled Interview
Follow Up Contacts
Copies of Ads

MAIL COVER LETTER AND RESUME
Stage 2

Company Name	Address	Contact Name	Date Mailed	Cover Letter

FOLLOW UP CONTACTS
Stage 3

Company Name:	
----------------------	--

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

**SCHEDULED INTERVIEW
Stage 4**

Company Name:	
----------------------	--

Contact's Name:	
Date of Interview:	
Address:	
Directions:	

Contact's Name:	
Date of Interview:	
Address:	
Directions:	

Contact's Name:	
Date of Interview:	
Address:	
Directions:	

FOLLOW UP PROCESS AFTER INTERVIEWS
Stage 5

Company Name:	
----------------------	--

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date of Interview:	
Date to Follow Up:	
Notes:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date of Interview:	
Date to Follow Up:	
Notes:	

PERSONAL APPRAISAL

- **Honestly describe the kind of person you are (leader or follower, etc.) and write down a detailed description.**

- **Write down how your friends would describe you.**

- **What do you want to accomplish with your life?**

- **What role does your job play in your life?**

- **What impact do you have on other people?**

- **What are your accomplishments to date? Are you satisfied with them?**

PERSONAL APPRAISAL (Continued)

- **What role does money play in your values?**

- **Is your career the center of your life of just a part of it?**

- **What are your main interests?**

- **What do you enjoy most?**

- **What displeases you most?**

JOB APPRAISAL

- **Start with your most recent employer and then work back toward your graduation. Describe in detail each job including your title, company, responsibilities, salary, accomplishments, successes, failures and your reason for leaving.**

- **How would you change your job history?**

- **In your career to date, what responsibilities have you enjoyed most? Why?**

- **What kind of job do you think would be a perfect match for your talents and interests?**

JOB APPRAISAL (Continued)

- **What responsibilities do you want to avoid?**

- **How prepared are you for that type of responsibility?**

- **If you want to advance in your career, are you prepared to pay the price?
Longer hours? More Pressure?**

- **What have your superiors thought about you as an employee?**

- **Can your work make you happier? Should it?**

JOB APPRAISAL (Continued)

- **If you have been fired from any job, what was the reason?**

- **What have you done to improve your weaknesses?**

- **How long do you want to work before retirement?**

ASSESSMENT SHEET
Target/Research

Target Number:	
-----------------------	--

Number of Companies in Target Market:	
Number of Probable Suitable Positions:	
Geographic Area:	
Industry Company Size:	
Position/Function:	

Company Name	Contact and Title

MAIL COVER LETTER AND RESUME

Company Name	Address	Contact Name	Date Mailed	Cover Letter

SCHEDULED INTERVIEW

Company Name:	
----------------------	--

Contact's Name:	
Date of Interview:	
Address:	
Directions:	

Contact's Name:	
Date of Interview:	
Address:	
Directions:	

Contact's Name:	
Date of Interview:	
Address:	
Directions:	

FOLLOW UP CONTACTS

Company Name:	
----------------------	--

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

Contact's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date Called:	

COPIES OF ADS

Position:	Title:
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