

JOB SEARCH PLAN and RESOURCE GUIDE

JOB SEARCH PLAN

I. ASSESS and EVALUATE Before Applying for a Position:

1. Conduct a critical assessment or self evaluation of your transferable skills. Ask yourself 'what type of skill set can I bring to an employer?'
2. Think outside the box in terms of jobs or careers NOT originally thought of but could use your skills. Entertain opportunities in alternative career fields that may never have crossed your mind.
3. Consider all options in gaining necessary skills and experiences (furthering education, volunteer service, internships, temp work, job shares, public service, freelancing, working abroad, etc.).
4. READ (to extend the value of your degree) for self-knowledge of your chosen profession. Gather as much information about it as you can (especially the economy's impact on its future).
5. Think of the type of industry and/or organization for which you would like to work (even nontraditional or outside the box) and then do some research (being mindful that economic uncertainty has a way of limiting one's preferences) regarding:
 - a. Size
 - b. Culture
 - c. Profit vs. Nonprofit; Private vs. Public
 - d. Geographic Location
 - e. Growth Potential
 - f. Pay, Benefit, and Promotional Structure
 - g. Experiences and Skills Attainment
 - h. Workplace Diversity

II. PREPARE by Developing a Job Search Plan:

1. Recognize the uncertain economic realities facing jobseekers but remain POSITIVE in attitude.
2. Develop an overall job search plan that leaves no stone unturned (including considering working at any number of organizations that fit your interests such as gyms, hobby centers, entertainment establishments, religious organizations, and so on.). Consider joining professional associations as well -- many of which may provide helpful career advice.
3. Network. Utilize various forms of communication to contact family, friends (even acquaintances), and former employers for job leads and references. Keep good, up-dated records of your actions (i.e., check and confirm your references periodically for effectiveness). All communication should be reviewed so that a favorable impression is left on any potential employer browsing an applicant's web page, email address, answering machine message, and so on. Also, all communication should be polite and professional. This includes all household members!
4. Research extensively on those organizations you wish to pursue (i.e. study the firm's web site, past annual reports, know what they do and how they do it, get contact information...).
5. Make use of FREE career resources (for developing interviewing skills, resume and cover letter writing, job searches, and so on) either online or in person at such service outlets as college placement offices or local workforce centers. Allow professionals and trusted friends to critique your interviewing skills and resume periodically. Be honest in developing your resume and focus on your achievements and strengths.
6. Identify job/career ad placement resources (print, online, mail, job fairs, business visits, etc.). Online searches can be made by job, company, industry, location, and so on. Cold calling, or face-to-face visits, may give you an extra edge over the competition.
7. Be vigilant and do not give up! Spend every day working on some aspect of landing a job: checking messages and job sites daily, cold-calling, writing and reviewing documents, and so on.
8. Budget. Be cost-effective and efficient during your search. By cutting out unnecessary expenses (i.e., eating out too often) and prioritizing your workload (i.e., planning days to visit as many places of work as possible and starting early in the a.m.) you will discover skills adaptable to the workplace.
9. Be thorough and detail-oriented! Make sure all written communication materials have been proofread for accuracy. And, use quality paper!
10. DECIDE that you want the job whole heartedly before applying.

III. ACT on your Plan:

1. Start prospecting and making contact with employers by selling yourself through various communication channels (mail, phone, in-person, online, etc.).
2. Repeat again and again. Customize each form of communication (Duplications are frowned upon).
3. Be proactive in your search and follow up on targeted firms by learning their hiring procedures, time lines, and so on. Ask for action. And for the interview!
4. Practice good hygiene and appropriate dress for the interview (Go conservative as a rule of thumb and bring along a professional notebook and calendar as well.). Be well rested and alert, check body language to make a good first impression (you only get one chance!), and, however difficult, try to get into your comfort zone by smiling and asking pertinent questions (beforehand practice sessions are advised). DO NOT appear DESPERATE!
5. Write thank you notes as a follow-up to your interview. Always.

RESOURCE GUIDE

Job Search and Career Resource Websites:

State

Iowa Workforce Development
www.iowaworkforce.org

Iowa Jobs
www.iowajobs.org

State of Iowa Jobs
www.das.iowa.gov

Iowa: The Smart Career Move
www.smartcareermove.com

Job Iowa
www.jobiowa.com

Federal

Federal Jobs Digest
www.jobsfed.com

Federal Job Search
www.federaljobsearch.com

Job Central
www.jobcentral.com

Federal Job Opportunities
www.usajobs.opm.gov

Careers in Government
www.careersingovernment.com

Career

O*Net
<http://online.onetcenter.org>

Career One Stop
www.careeronestop.org

Career Builder
www.careerbuilder.com

Iowa Workforce Information Network
<http://iwin.iwd.state.ia.us/iowa/>

Career Zone
www.careerzone.org

Career.com
www.career.com

America's Career Info Net
www.acinet.org

Public Service Employees Network
www.pse-net.com

Career Voyages
www.careervoyages.gov

IPTV School to Careers
<http://careers.iptv.org>

Other

Monster
www.monster.com

Better Hawkeye Jobs
www.betterhawkeyejobs.com

Dice
www.dice.com

Employment Guide
www.employmentguide.com/

Job Shadow
www.jobshadow.org

Summer Jobs
www.summerjobs.com

Job.com
www.job.com

Indeed
www.indeed.com

All Star Jobs
www.allstarjobs.com

Wetfeet
www.wetfeet.com

This publication was produced by the Labor Market and Workforce Information Division of Iowa Workforce Development. Inquiries may be directed to Brent Paulson at 515.281.3439. Visit <http://iwin.iowaworkforce.org/> to obtain the latest workforce data and trends including this document under the **Careers** and **Jobs** tabs. June 2009.