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Lesson Proper for Week 4

Introduction

Finding work that you can do well, that has meaning, and, yes, that you can enjoy is very important. Consider that, once you get a job, you might be spending eight or more hours a day doing it. That's a big chunk of your life! You'll want to make the most of it. The following is a short guide to starting in the world of work. There are three basic things you need to know:

- The benefits you can provide an employer
- How to communicate these benefits to employers,
- How to find the right fit – an employer who wants the benefits you provide and who can meet your most important needs.

Know the Benefits You Provide

To find and get the best job there are some important things you'll want to know. First, consider that you present an opportunity for many employers even if you have no job experience. Discover Your Skills gives you important information about how you can get a good fit job, a job where you will do well, even with no experience! The importance of knowing how you can provide an important service to employers cannot be understated. Otherwise, it's easy to get in the situation of being a job beggar. Job begging is not fun, and it's not effective either. Once you know you have something to offer, the job search can become more enjoyable and meaningful. It will also help you land a job where you will be more effective and have more opportunities for even better jobs in the future.

Communicate Your Benefits

Once you know what you have to offer, the next step is to understand how to get your skills, especially your motivated skills, across to employers that need those skills. Cover letters, job applications, resumes, job interviews, and even thank you letters serve as important means to communicate how you can help an employer. You may not need to use all the tools above. However, the skills of speaking and

writing about how you can help employers (or customers) will serve you throughout your life. They are worth practicing.

Find the Right Fit

So, now that you know what you can offer, you may need to go out and find employers that will be interested. Volunteering, Finding Hidden Jobs, Job Ads, Networking, Employer Research, and Approaching Employers In-Person all provide ways to find employers that offer a good match for what you offer.

Here are some steps on how to search and get a job.

1. Identify your values

Your job search should begin with what you want and need. The best job for you is one that makes the most of your talent and skill. The best company for you is one whose values align with your own. What you want out of your career may change with time, so whether this is your first job search or fifth, check in with yourself on what matters now.

2. Take inventory of what you have to offer a potential employer

No matter where you are in your career, take inventory of what you have to offer a potential employer. This will inform your resume and your job search.

Are you operationally minded and excel at creating efficient systems? Do you have excellent customer service skills? Are you a mentor to younger employees? Do you have an extensive network of contacts the company might be interested in tapping?

Companies look for candidates with both soft skills and concrete skills to add to their workforce. Take a moment to make a list of what you bring to the table.

If you're considering a career change, take detailed inventory of your transferable skills, like critical thinking, communication (both verbal and written), technical skills (like programming, software, modeling, or processes), team management, and creativity.

3. Build a resume

There's no rule to how long your resume should be as long as what you've included is relevant. Sheer number of pages will not get you noticed unless you are able to fill those pages with relevant information. For example, if you're eight years into your career as a product manager, college internships or study abroad programs are no longer relevant.

Recruiters and hiring managers review hundreds of resumes, so readability is key. Show your resume to a trusted friend who will be honest with you. Aside from professional experience and education, what should your resume include?

Resume tips: If you're looking for a new job

- Put your work into numbers: revenue generated, relationships managed, money or time saved, deals closed, people managed, etc.
- Highlight processes you have created or managed and point to time or money saved by this processes.
- List relevant projects or initiatives you've led, committees you've served on.
- List relevant experience outside of your professional life, like volunteer positions, freelance work, or consulting.
- Include hard skills, programming languages, software programs, or organizational systems you know.
- Include spoken languages you use with fluency.
- List industries or communities in which you've built an active network.
- Are you an expert in your field? Show the potential employer any relevant press you've received. Have you been quoted in the media or been given a byline? List those.
- If you're changing careers, include an objective statement that highlights this.

Resume tips: If you've never had a job before

- Show specific projects or coursework that highlight your skills and achievements.
- List jobs you held while in school, both during the school year and during the school year.
- Include spoken languages you use with fluency.
- Include study abroad or summer fellowship programs.
- Include extracurricular activities, like relevant clubs, organizations, and community service.
- List academic or departmental honors.

4. Check your social media presence

Before you hit the job market, take a careful look at your social media presence. Roughly 70 percent of employers say they have looked up potential employees on social media. There is no need to purge all social channels or set everything to private. In fact, social media can be used to help you get a great job, and 57 percent of hiring managers say they're less likely to hire someone they can't find on social media.

Clear out anything you consider questionable or borderline. If you've ever complained about an employer or coworkers, delete those posts. Pull down photos of that wild trip to Cabo on your last spring break. Use your best judgement on posts with salty language.

Tips for using social media to get a job

- List your field or title in your profile.

- Put your email address in the contact line.
- Post examples of your recent work.
- Engage with others in your field (or the company you're interested in) by following, sharing, and commenting.
- Depending on your field, consider creating a website or portfolio with more information and links to projects. List the link in your profile.

5. Use your network

Whether you're a recent grad, an experienced veteran in your field, or seeking a career change, you have a network you can tap in your job search. So start talking.

Talk to friends, colleagues (exercise discretion here if you feel it may jeopardize your current position), fellow alumni, professors, the staff in your alma mater's career center, the woman sitting next to you at your child's soccer game. Check out networking events and alumni networks for potential contacts; find professional organizations in your area. Let them know that you're looking for a new job.

6. Submit your applications

Finding a great job is not a volume game. If you approach the job hunt as a statistical problem that will lead to a job if only you submit enough applications, you will be disappointed.

Take the time to tailor your applications to the position you're applying for. This includes both your resume and cover letter.

Your resume is all about you. Where you've been, what you've accomplished. Use it to list professional experience, education, volunteer experience, awards and accolades, qualifications and certifications, and specific accomplishments.

Your cover letter is not about you. Your cover letter is about the company you're applying to. Employers love flattery. Use your cover letter to illustrate what you love about the company, why their mission or products or organization excite you. Identify common values, areas where you feel you could add value, or a client or project of theirs you feel passionate about.

7. The Interview

Research is key. Research the product or service. Regardless of your role, you need to understand the main products, what the company is offering, and what's happening within the industry. Highlight your extensive knowledge of these things as it will put you streaks ahead of everyone else.

Research the role and job description. Know what the job is asking from you. The job description is essentially your checklist of the qualifications, qualities, and background the employer is looking for in an ideal candidate. Be sure to align yourself with these, showing that you know the requirements and responsibilities expected of you.

Research the company culture. Most companies will have social media accounts, writing blogs, and shared articles on LinkedIn and most likely have a company section on their website. Check these out, as it will help you gauge the company's tone, values, and personality. It's important to show you are on the same page as them culture-wise.

Be prepared for common questions

- Why are you the right person for this role? Have a good understanding of how you're qualified, why you're interested in the opportunity, and what you are going to bring to the table, giving examples of where you have shown these skills in the past.
- Why do you want to work here? Learn about the products, services, mission, history and culture of the company and align them with your career goals. Be sure to sound passionate about what they do and make it clear why you have chosen their company.
- What are your strengths and weaknesses? This is your chance to show off both your technical and soft skills. Make sure to share qualities and personal traits that relate back to the role for which you are interviewing for.
- Where do you see yourself in two years' time? They want to know you have goals and ambitions so jump on the opportunity to show them that. Remember to highlight how the role you are applying for will help you get to where you want to be.

Practice makes perfect

- For a face-to-face interview. The best way to practice is through role-play or mock interviews. Get a friend or family member to stand in as an interviewer and give it a go performing to them and tightening up how you portray yourself and your answers. You can even practice in front of a mirror.
- For an online interview. Open up the video platform they want to use and practice talking into a screen. Recording yourself is a great way of listening back and seeing where you can improve.

Work out the logistics

For a face-to-face interview:

- Leave early. Anything could go wrong – traffic, cancellations, small obstacles. By leaving enough time there is room for error whilst still arriving on time.
- Save the interviewer's contact information. Sometimes things are beyond your control. This way you can drop them a call or email to keep them updated that you are running a little late.
- Know where you are going. Work out your route, whether there is parking, how long it takes you, and the office number and floor you are headed to.

For an online interview:

- Live. Do they want to use Google Hangouts or do you need to download software such as Zoom? It's important to know which one it is ahead of time so you are familiar with it. Once this is clear, be sure to test your video and sound quality. Remember, keep your screen name professional, fluffybunnies637 isn't going to leave the best impression.

- Video Q&A. You will normally get a test question to practice, where you can adjust the camera, sound, and lighting. Following that, for the real thing, you will have one question to answer at a time, and you may be given different time limits for different questions. Find a quiet spot and make sure there are no interruptions on the day.

Give off your best impression

- Dress to impress. It's always better to be overdressed than underdressed. Show that you have made an effort, even if it's an online interview and you have pajamas on under the table. If you dress smart, you will think smart.
- It's all in the body language. 55 percent of communication is based on what others see. A big SMILE and good eye contact shows confidence and is a great way to connect with the interviewer. Whether it's face-to-face or an online interview, people respond to confidence, and by being friendly you will leave a lasting impression.

8. Be Patient

Finding a job may take time, and that's okay. It's better to patiently pursue the right job for you than to make a hasty leap. The right job at a company that supports your skills and growth is worth the wait.

If the search is taking longer than you had hoped, consider taking on freelance projects or consulting work for companies you're interested in. This could help move the needle on your relationship.

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