

Job Search Tips

1. Learn about the steps of the Job Search Process

Before you start applying to job postings, it is a good idea to complete a basic self-assessment regarding your short and long term career goals, financial needs, transportation options and your overall availability. Having a clear idea about your personal situation can help you to focus your job search on positions that you are more likely to be successful with. More information about the job search process can be found in the [Employment Resource Centre Job Search Strategies Handbook](#).

2. Assess your skills

The Government of Canada has identified nine essential skills needed to be successful in the workplace. These skills are used to varying degrees in every job and they provide the foundation for learning other more complex skills which enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change. Knowing what skills you have and how to effectively communicate these skills to others, through your documents and conversations with potential employers, is key to securing a new job. Ensure that you are able to describe both the 'soft skills' and 'hard skills' that you possess as well as examples of when you have demonstrated those skills in the past.

3. Think outside the box

Through volunteering, education, training, employment and personal experiences, many people acquire and develop skills that are transferrable to multiple fields of work. When you are job searching it is important to consider jobs with companies in industries that you may or may not have direct experience with. Complete some labour market research to identify growth industries that may be hiring more people now or in the near future.

4. Get to know the employer

Once you have identified an employment opportunity, some basic research on the company and the related industry can help you to target your resume and cover letter effectively. Prior to a job interview you can do some further research on the company to become familiar with their products and/or services, company history, size, location and competitors. The company website is the best place to start to gain this knowledge so you will be better prepared for questions during the interview and demonstrate your interest in the company.

5. Create targeted, professional looking documents

Whether it is online through a company website, by email or by fax, resumes and cover letters are the source of a potential employer's first impression of you. What you say in these documents and how you communicate it says a lot about you as a person and potential employee. There are lots of online resources and books available to assist you in creating documents that are not only professional looking, but strategic in communicating the most relevant qualifications you have to offer for a specific position. In most cases, if you are applying to different types of jobs, one version of your resume is not enough. Many people have multiple versions of their resume in order to present the most relevant information to each potential employer who might be reviewing their resume.

6. Network, network, network....

Networking is a term that is used quite often these days. Don't be intimidated by this, it is not a big corporate term and practice. Most of us all have groups of friends, acquaintances, previous co-workers and/or community groups that we are a part of. These are networks of people that could be instrumental in your current job search. Most people get their next job through their connections - people they know who let them know about potential job opportunities that may not be widely advertised. You can also build your own networks through various social media tools such as [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Keep in touch with people in your network; let them know your situation and what type of employment you are seeking.

7. Become a sales person

Whether you know it or not we can all be excellent sales people. Once you know the product or service inside and out you can effectively convince those around you to buy it. Well who knows YOU better than YOU. Think of it this way, essentially you are the product and the employer is the customer. It is your job to convince a potential employer, through your cover letter, resume, online profiles and/or job interview, that you are what they are looking for to meet their organization/company's goals.

8. References

When you reach the stage where you are meeting with an employer as part of the interview process reference information is often requested. An employer will ask for 1 - 3 names of people and their contact information who know you in a professional capacity either through previous employment or a volunteer position. Be prepared for this request and bring this information typed up on a piece of paper, with you to the job interview. Prior to your interview it is also a good idea to contact your references in advance to inform them of your upcoming interview as well as providing them with some details about the position that you are interviewing for. Connecting with your references at the beginning of your job search can be a great networking strategy to discover opportunities or job leads that your references might already know about.

9. Get organized

Being in between jobs can be really unsettling and uncomfortable if you are accustomed to a regular routine involving going to a job each day for 8 hours at a time. Most unemployed job seekers find it is beneficial to set up a routine or schedule for themselves to organize and structure their time to ensure they are doing an effective job search and not overworking themselves or wasting time. Make sure to include in your schedule time to reach out in person or by phone to people in your network, follow up with employers that you have already submitted applications to as well as seek out new job leads to apply to. If possible connect with other job seekers like yourself, virtually or in person to build a support

network for yourself to prevent burnout. Job seeking is hard work. Trying to find a job is a job in itself!

Organize your files and documents. Create folders on a portable flash drive or on your personal computer to track and save your job search related documents - resumes, cover letters and job postings. Prepare a portfolio of related documents such as certificates, copies of diplomas, degrees or licences that you can take to an interview if needed.