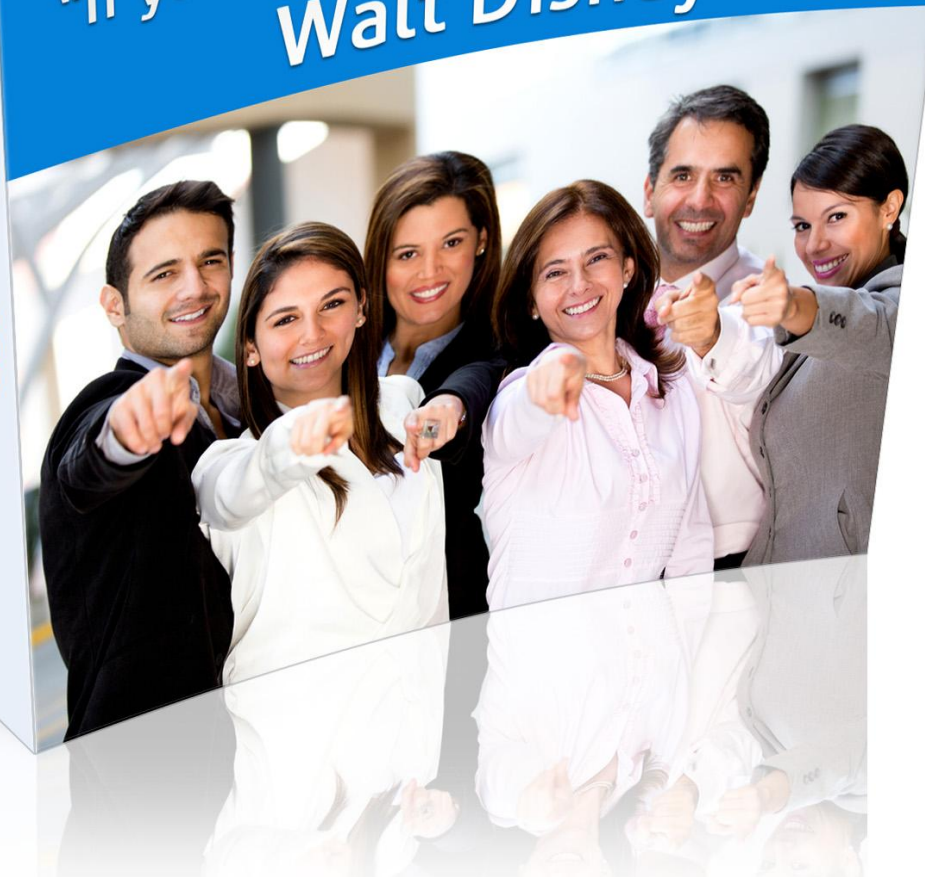


Career Success

"If you can dream it, you can do it"
Walt Disney

Career Success



Career Success

In order to succeed in your career field, you will want to make sure you know how to market your talents and find what jobs would best fit your needs. With this eBook, you will be able to have a greater chance of landing the job you want. A few of the things you will need to do include evaluating your skills and interests, and then knowing your limitations.

While some jobs you may be overly qualified for and others that are too demanding, many other jobs are available that you will have to compete for. The best way to win the job is to give them a good impression and be there early. Next, you will want to give them a resume that convinces the employer that you are the perfect candidate for the job. You will want to make sure that your resume is complete and a cover letter is included.

After you have prepared the documents you need, you are ready to search for jobs.

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Chapter 1: Looking for Jobs..... | 3 |
| Chapter 2: Thinking Positively..... | 4 |
| Chapter 3: Interviewing Skills..... | 5 |
| Chapter 4: Entry-Level Jobs..... | 7 |
| Chapter 5: Job Descriptions..... | 8 |
| Chapter 6: Must-Know Tips on Job Searches | 9 |
| Chapter 7: Online Job Searches | 10 |
| Chapter 8: Career Job Fairs..... | 11 |
| Chapter 9: Local Job Searches..... | 12 |
| Chapter 10: Identify Your Skills..... | 14 |
| Chapter 11: Ideal Resume | 16 |
| Chapter 12: Prepare for a Cold Call..... | 17 |
| Chapter 13: Being Invited | 19 |
| Chapter 14: How to Create Networking Contacts..... | 21 |
| Chapter 15: Follow Up & Network..... | 23 |

Chapter 1: Looking for Jobs

There are many locations to look for jobs, with the latest location being the Internet. Sites like HotJobs, CareerBuilder, and Monster are all locations that offer companies and candidates find each other.

If the Internet is not working for you, then there are paper sources that help. The classified ads in your local newspaper are the first step you can take. Several companies will also post ads on bulletin boards located in stores, apartment complexes, or other similar locations.

Some companies will not advertise their job openings, so you will need to make sure people know you are job hunting. When you know what your skills are, talk to your friends and relatives who may be aware of companies that are currently openings. Your college professors may know institutions that are looking for applicants but not be broadcasting it. Finally, your references are your strongest asset, so let them network for you by suggesting you to companies that may not realize they need a new employee.

The Internet can also be used to find jobs that are not advertised. Most companies have websites and many will have a section for people to find careers. Use these pages to find companies that may have jobs open and with it not being advertised, you will have a better chance of securing a position.

In summary, here is the checklist to run through until you are hired:

1. Identify experiences, skills, and qualifications
2. Identify prospective employers
3. Prepare all necessary documents
4. Schedule visits to various companies
5. Contact companies following application submission
6. Prepare for your interview
7. Follow up your interview
8. Take any necessary tests
9. Begin your new job

Chapter 2: Thinking Positively

Thinking outside the box is a phrase that means to come up with a creative way to solve a problem.

Use the following as an example:

Cut a cake into eight slices by using three cuts.

Many would look at the problem and decide it is impossible. It is possible, however, if you change your perspective. Here is a solution:

Cut 1 – Cut cake into two equal slices. Stack the slices.

Cut 2 – Cut the cake again into two equal slices. Stack the slices.

Cut 3 – Cut the cake again. You end up with eight equal pieces.

This example shows how vital it is to think creatively and positively. If you are going into the problem thinking it cannot be solved, you will have a hard time figuring out a possible solution. Before you jump to the immediate possible solution, consider all other solutions. This will help dazzle the company you are applying for, as long as you do not make it too far of a stretch.

The reason companies look at your ability to think outside the box is that they want to know you can help test new products and examine all possible job markets. Patterns may be great for finishing daily tasks, but they are not helpful when there is a problem in a company and all avenues have been explored.

One of the easiest ways to help yourself break patterns of thinking is with reversing the common solution. Take Henry Ford for example. He used to bring the people to work, but then he brought work to the people. This led to more revenue and that is what the company wants to see that you can do. Take a situation and look at it from all angles before coming up with a solution.

Do not think about the problem itself, as that will make thinking out of the box much harder. Consider people and use abstract information to help create a new solution or pattern. Never think that your possible solution is too crazy. If you are constantly judging, your thinking will prohibit your ability to think outside the box and reinvent patterns. It will also increase the stress you experience during the brainstorming period.

The best way to practice for possible tests is to practice with real life situations. The more you practice with friends and family members, the more likely it is that you will be rewarded with a highly profitable job. It can be difficult and take a lot of patience, but it is worth it in the end. You have the power to expand your knowledge. Thoughts and creativity comes within and it is not something that can be taught. You must spend the time to grow and form new habits that lead to an open-minded thought process.

Chapter 3: Interviewing Skills

Regardless of how technology savvy you are, or how much knowledge you have, there is no substitute for a good interview. You need to know how to present yourself and sell your assets to the company you are applying for. You have already impressed them with your resume and cover letter.

You will start with meeting the receptionist to schedule your interview. You are to be polite and make sure you listen to everything they say. They could be giving you information that will be asked about in the interview. When you show up for the interview, be on time (early is ideal) and carry yourself with confidence. Your first impression is a lasting one and it will factor into the rest of the interview.

There are seven steps on improving your interviewing skills. They are as follows:

Prepare for the Interview

Dress appropriately and walk with confidence. Make sure you are properly groomed and follow good hygiene habits. Keep your posture and do not act too casual. Make sure you practice courtesy, and address the interviewer by name if possible. Finally, make sure that all electronics are turned off prior to and during the interview.

Research

It is vital that you know about the company and their mission statements. You do not want to come across as not caring about the company you are applying for. When you are researching a company, learn about the hierarchy and company profile if possible.

Always think about possible questions that you want answered during the interview. If your questions are not answered during the interview, ask them the questions at the end. You want to rehearse your questions, but do not memorize them. You want to appear spontaneous, rather than scripted.

Remain Cool

Maintain eye contact with the interviewer and offer a firm handshake before being seated. Smile honestly and appear friendly, and make sure you offer a kind greeting. Begin the interview with a sign of gratitude for the time they are giving to you, especially since they are likely very busy.

Never Sell Yourself Short

Remain honest and answer the questions accurately. Never lie during an interview, as it will come back and cost you in the end. You want to show the company who you are and what you have to offer them. Keep a positive appearance and never paste your previous employer in a bad light.

Remember that everyone has a first job, and if this is yours, you will want to show an eagerness to learn and grow in the company. You may not have the experience, but you can show confidence in your ability to take the company further. Think about what the interviewer would want in an employee. Sell yourself without a sound of arrogance.

Ask Questions

Do not let difficult questions trip you up. Never be ashamed to ask for clarification or have questions the interviewer has yet to answer. You should be the one doing most of the talking because the company wants to know all about you.

Wrap It Up

When all of the questions have been asked, and the wrap up is beginning, it is time to talk about the salary and benefits. You want to make sure you plan enough time to discuss this aspect of the job at the end of the interview, but do not rush through. As you prepare to leave, review your strengths and positive traits. Finally, finish the interview by thanking your interviewer again.

Follow Up After the Interview

The final time you should thank the interviewer is with a follow up note. Make sure you let them know you are grateful for the opportunity they gave you and that you look forward to speaking with them again. To make sure the proper person receives the letter, talk to the receptionist following your interview.

Therefore, in conclusion, the interview process is as follows:

- Schedule the interview
- Arrive early to your interview
- Interview for the position
- Follow up

Chapter 4: Entry-Level Jobs

The most common job opening is for entry-level positions. They are the lowest in pay, but offer you the ability to grow in the industry. You will learn the basics and principles in obtaining work and building a reputation. You will learn how to work with a team and build a lasting relationship with your coworkers.

It may be difficult to accept that you have to start from the scratch and apply for jobs that require minimal skills. You will need no experience, but it will cost you in the pay and amount of work that will be required of you. It is also important to pre-plan because many positions run on minimum wage and do not include insurance.

Some key examples of an entry-level position include:

- Receptionist
- Apprentice
- Fast food employee
- Customer service
- Cashier

While these jobs often carry with them a negative feeling, they should not be ignored. These jobs will form the base of every other job you apply for. They are for those who are still in high school or just graduated from college. They may not have room for growth, but they give you the ability to know what is required out of higher-level positions. It is the first step to a successful career.

Four tips to keep in mind include:

1. Show enthusiasm, efficiency, love for the job, and care for the company
2. Master your skills while at work
3. Become an expert on customer service, as it will be required in all jobs
4. Know how to impress a customer who is looking for an employee

Chapter 5: Job Descriptions

Most people who are new to the work force will take jobs without reading the job description. While it is understandable, it can cause problems in the end. Most graduates and those who have been without a job for a while are just thankful they have a position. They do not want to push their luck by questioning when it comes to what is expected of them. In fact, many feel that it will appear negatively to their employer.

However, employers love employees who ask about their job and what it entails. They see the employee as a person who has a general interest in the company and what his or her responsibilities are to the company. There are many reasons why job descriptions are truly important, and a few of them include:

Knowledge of Duties

A job description offers you the list of responsibilities and duties of the position. This makes sure you know what you are expected to do, and what you are not to be doing. If you do not know what the duties are, then you will end up guessing and it will look bad on your report.

Prevent Being Taken Advantage Of

There are instances when an employer or coworker will request you to do something that is not in your job description. If you know the job description and you do not want to do the job, you are legally allowed to inform the person politely that you do not have to perform the duty. It is advisable to talk to the manager later about the duties you were requested to do to find out if it will fall under your job description and if there will be additional wages tacked on.

What Matters to Your Employer is Paper

So many times an employee will not understand why they have not received a bonus or acknowledgement of work performed. Unfortunately, this is because employers base job reports on the job description. When progress reports and performance records are tracked, it must make sense to the employer and they compare it to the job description that goes with the position.

Chapter 6: Must-Know Tips on Job Searches

Everyone wants to grow and advance in his or her career of choice. Advancement displays hard work that has been done and the promotion is earned. Entry-level jobs are easy to obtain, but if you are looking for executive jobs, you will need to factor in two other aspects.

Killer Looks

When you walk into an interview, you want all heads to turn. You want to have a grand aura that demands the attention of all in the room. Without this appearance, your looks can “kill” your job chances. Make sure your dress matches the position you are applying for.

Display Mastery

Employers want employees who are experts in the higher paying positions. You will want to display a great track record for employment and experience in the industry. The employer is not looking for someone who is good at everything; they are looking for someone who masters in the specific job. It can make job searching harder when you need to display the experience, but if you look the part and have the resume to prove it, the job can be yours.

Chapter 7: Online Job Searches

A few years back, the only way to find jobs was by searching the classifieds in a newspaper. However, the Internet has provided people the ability to find job opportunities around the world. Anyone with a computer and access to the Internet can search for a job and some search engines will even allow you to apply for the position at that moment.

Job search engines may require you to register by opening an account, filling out a profile, and putting a resume on file. If you are applying online, it is important to know that you may be required to put down your personal information, including your social security number. Make sure that you are positive the site is secure prior to filling out the documentation.

Some other information that you will need to fill out is on your educational background and employment history. Customize your resume to highlight the aspects of your life that show you are qualified for the positions you are applying for. Oftentimes, a section is available that gives you the opportunity to select the job field you are interested in. You can also set up email notifications so you are notified when new jobs are posted.

The best part about online job search engines is the fact they are free and many top name companies rely on them. Some of the more advance features are attached to a premium account with a fee. However, you can find temporary, part time, and full time jobs that you can then begin the application process.

With some companies, you can access their career's page and be able to find other positions that are open in the company. This gives you the ability to put different jobs down on your application. You are able to apply at many companies through the online search engines, which will improve your chances of securing a job quickly.

Chapter 8: Career Job Fairs

Career Job fairs are one of the hardest way to find a job. A job fair is at least a daylong affair where multiple companies have booths to find new employees. Dozens of people will show up at a fair in hopes to find a new position.

While they are the best place to secure a job, they are viewed in a negative light. This is often because people cannot handle the bustle of activities and the sheer number of people that show up. The best way to avoid problems with a fair, and make it a successful event, is to keep your cool and go in prepared. If you are unprepared, then you will not be able to find a fair successful.

Research in Advance

Job fairs will announce the companies that will be present days in advance, sometimes even weeks. You want to have the best success possible, so research the companies ahead of time. Find out what companies will be there, what positions they are looking for, and what the company expects from their employees. This will immediately give you an edge over others.

Carry Resumes

You can never have enough resumes on you when you attend a job fair. Make sure you have at least 25, but consider carrying double the number of companies you are looking at applying for. You want to be immediately prepared to apply for any position you feel you are qualified for and are hiring. The more applications you submit, the greater your odds are to find a position.

Dress for Success

First impressions are lasting, and when you are in a large group of other job seekers, you want to make sure you stand out. You will want to dress to impress the companies. Keep a professional look, and display both enthusiasm and determination for the job you desire. Make sure you also stay approachable and real.

Prepare For Interviews

It is common for companies to perform on the spot interviews. You will want to make sure that you have prepared yourself for these pop questions. It is possible that a company will decide that day to hire you based on the interview you give. Preparing for this type of situation is not easy, but is done by being confident and sure of your qualifications.

Keep a List

Make sure you document every company you leave an application and resume with. You will want to make sure you follow up on the resume. Take a portfolio with you so you have a place to put your resumes and a notebook where you can keep notes on companies. You can even star the companies you liked talking to and document the companies that gave you a pop interview.

Keeping these things in mind, you can make job fairs successful. If you are prepared, then you will not notice the extreme busyness of the event.

Chapter 9: Local Job Searches

Searching for a local job is not as hard as it may feel, even if you are unsure how to start. You simply need to know where to search and not to let unemployment numbers discourage you.

Finding Employers of Dream Jobs

Before you start your job hunt, you will want to know yourself. Discover what your skills and abilities are. Talk to friends who will help you determine what you are best at and then update your resume. Be ready to face the employment process with a wardrobe, resume, and interview practice. You are then ready to look for employment.

Job Centers

Job centers are locations that have contracts with numerous companies. They will have a list of vacancies and give out the information to employment seekers. The best reason to use job centers is that they will update their jobs frequently so you know what is still available.

While many job centers are looking for people who are 21 or younger, they do have some jobs for adults. The ones that work with the younger group of people will offer training and apprenticeships to help give the experience needed for higher paying jobs.

Newspapers

The most common location for finding job information is still available, and that is in newspapers. Local, national, and non-profit newspapers will all have a classified section listing jobs. You can also find advertisements in specialty magazines. You do not have to purchase a newspaper, as most libraries will have the daily paper for reading purpose only. Take a notebook so you can write down the possible jobs and the contact numbers for later reference.

Journals and Magazines

Every industry has their own journals and magazines. Companies use this media as a location for job openings and industry information. You can find magazines in newsstands or subscribe online. If you are looking at pursuing a specific career, it will pay off to have a subscription to a business magazine.

Agencies

Another location that is very good about finding positions for people searching for work is a temporary agency. Employment agencies can help find temporary positions and more. They cover multiple industries and companies have the ability to hire a person after a trial period. Job hunters can also be hired to locate job positions.

Local Offices

Do not discount the possibility that a company does not list any openings outside of the local office. These locations typically will post signs in the window that positions are open and applications can be picked up at customer service. Some common companies to use these tactics are grocery stores and food retailers.

Internet

The easiest way to find a mass amount of jobs at once is through the Internet. It is also the most cost-effective way to find local positions. Without having to drive all over time, you can search the different companies and job requirements to find the one that best suits your skills.

When looking for your ideal position, you will want to utilize multiple methods. The more methods of job hunting you implement, the better your chances are of finding a job that you will enjoy and will further your career.

Chapter 10: Identify Your Skills

The first step in finding a job is to identify what you are good at and what your weaknesses are. While everyone tries to ignore their weak points and boast about their strengths, it is better to know how you plan to address your weaknesses. Companies want to know how you are going to address both the good and the bad, so do not get over confident. Confidence is a very fickle trait and you do not want to topple into the arrogance side. Your interviewer is likely to label you as too cocky for the position and unfit for the job.

Identify Skill

While it may seem as basic as learning your alphabet, you must identify your skills. You want a job that can articulate your abilities and expertise as much as possible. It is very common for people to have trouble explaining what their skills, abilities, and experience is, mainly because it feels like bragging. It is vital that you portray your abilities so you can secure the job. You do not want to be condescending, arrogant, or sell yourself short. Be prepared to answer the question, “what sets you apart from everyone else?” Your strengths should also be highlighted on your resume that your interviewer will see prior to the interview.

Types of Skills

The two types of skills you will want to evaluate and cover are hard skills and soft skills. The hard skills are the ones that are tangible. Some examples of hard skills include:

- Knowing how to operate machinery
- Computer knowledge
- Typing speed
- Credentials
- Experience with different software

On the other hand, the soft skills are qualities that are obtained through experience. They speak to the nature of a person. Some examples include:

- Team player
- Independent worker
- Enthusiastic
- Organized
- Reliable and On-Time

Put it All Together

Once you have all of the lists put together, you are ready to put everything together and secure the job. The following is the process you want to follow.

Make a List

Make a list of all companies you have previously worked for and what you have learned from each job. You want to make sure that you include all activities and things you learned during performance reports. If you participated in any volunteer activities, list those as well. Ensure that you are listing both your hard and soft skills.

List Your Hobbies

Make a list of all of your hobbies. Your hobbies may seem odd to list for your potential employers, but they can show your personality. The debate team can display analytical skills and chess or scrabble players display ability to make critical decisions under pressure. Go through your routines and think outside the box on how your habits and hobbies can display who you are. What may seem normal to you could be the deciding factor to your future boss.

Deciding on a Career

Once you have listed your skills and hobbies, you can now begin to determine the career industry you want to work in. Once you have the career, you can tailor your lists to match the employment field. Consider each of the items on your list and decide whether it is relevant to the job that you are applying for. Some skills will not make it to the final cut, but you want to make sure you give the prospective employer a good view of why you stand out.

Stand By Your List

You want to be able to stand behind everything you put down and give to your potential employer. Be realistic about the experience you have had and your skill levels. You do not want to lie to appear better. If you claim you are organized, make sure you display it. Follow through everything you put down so they can see that it is true.

Chapter 11: Ideal Resume

When a person goes in for an interview, the potential employer rarely knows who the applicant is. Some people apply via an advertisement, others use agencies, many find the job online, while a select few got a direct referral from another employee.

The first impression you give the employers is your resume. While many people immediately believe their appearance at the interview is the first impression, you have to make it to the interview process first. Employers receive dozens of applications and resumes, so you need to make sure you grab their attention within the first 30 seconds. You want a document that is not wordy, grammatically correct, and well written.

With only a few words, you must tell everything you can about yourself and why you should be considered for the position. You will always start with your personal information, such as your name, address, and contact number. The details you want to add are the ones that the company will require in order to get in touch with you to schedule the interview.

The next section is your objective. This is where you want to explain to the company why you are applying for the position. You want to use only a few sentences but be able to explain your qualifications and desires with the company. Making statements that you see yourself growing in the company and taking them to the next level will help intrigue the interviewer to look at you closer.

Third, you will want to list those relevant skills and knowledge that you have obtained through previous employment and accomplishments. When you list each position, document what you have learned and experienced to show the potential employer your qualifications. You will also want to make sure you word it so that it shows what you can contribute to the company's growth.

Your educational background will be placed next. Many companies require a degree, but others prefer someone who is educated. If you have attended school and received a degree, certification, or a license, you will want to add it to this section. Even if it does not match the given industry, it will show the potential employer that following through is important and other skills you may have. In addition, it is an indicator of the training you have undergone.

Note: If you do not have a lot of experience (previous work), then highlight your education by listing it first. If you have a lot of experience but you did not obtain a degree, then make sure you highlight the experience.

The final section of your resume should be your hobbies and interests. Employers are looking for people who have the qualifications for the job, but also those who will fit with the current team. They want to know your social skills and personality. Some companies want you to provide your references up front, but if possible, leave it off until you actually go in for your interview. This will allow you the ability to tailor your references to the specific job. The resume you design will vary based on the job you apply for.

Chapter 12: Prepare for a Cold Call

Everyone knows Girl Scouts sell cookies, Boy Scouts sell popcorn, and school-aged children try to fundraise any way possible. They must go door to door and attempt to sell as much as possible, which is extremely intimidating. They understand that at least 75% of the people will shut the door on them, but it does not stop them.

The kids are driven by the hopes of raising money for specific activities or prizes from school. They thrive off the sales they make and push on. What people do not realize is this is actually exposure to cold calls they will likely encounter into adulthood. Butterflies will hit your stomach every time you have to make a call and you have to be able to see the end goal to push through.

A cold call does not have to be business related, as it is simply a call or a visit with a person you do not know well or at all. With business related calls, you are looking at selling something to someone. It can be an idea or a product, or set up an appointment. If you do know the person, but are unsure if they are interested in the product, it will also be considered a cold call. If you are having trouble making cold calls, start with someone you know well and then work towards more challenging calls.

The hardest part about cold calls is you will need to make a first impression repeatedly. You must sell yourself and your product over the phone or in person. To be tense every time is normal, it is also normal to have some calls that make you want to disappear. Because cold calls are so stressful, professionals (lawyers, contractors, and such) rely on referrals for the bulk of their business.

Many obstacles have kept people from mastering the cold call. It is hard to overcome the fear of being yelled at or saying the wrong thing during a sale. With training and practice, sales are a field that everyone can work in.

Tips on Cold Calls

Always Remain Positive

Cold calling is difficult and stressful, but it is a powerful strategy. Fill your mind with positive thinking. Your coworkers are experiencing the same stress you are so take a few deep breathes and prepare enthusiasm. Feel positive about what you are selling so your callers can feel it immediately.

Prepare to be Prepared

Never make a call without having all of the information ready. You want to make sure you have a list of whom you are supposed to be calling and/or visiting. You want to practice the introductions, learn what the prospects do, and make sure they can use your product/service. One of the most awkward situations that can arise is by showing up to a company that does not need or use your products. Preparations are how cold calls are turned into business ventures.

Be Yourself

When you are talking to someone that you do not know, it is easy to pretend you are someone you are not. However, it will end up making you more nervous in the end, and can cause them to lose trust in the company. Try not to sound nervous and offer a firm handshake. Instead of viewing the person as an unknown, imagine they are a customer and you want to build a friendship that lasts.

Relax and Calm Down

Unfortunately, you will experience rejections, so be prepared. It is hard to hear a person decline your offer and it is easy to take it personally. Do not let depression prevent you from future sales. You want to look back on the sale and see what went wrong. Learn from those mistakes, be patient, and push on. You will reap more sales than rejections once you become persistent with the techniques. You will also be able to develop a working strategy that you can use for years.

Art of Questioning

The art of questioning is the key to cold calls. People will not believe you upon opening the door and they will not just sign up when you give your spiel. However, you can use questions to gain their attention and move through your sale. The first question you can ask to open a conversation with is whether you can ask them a question. Starting with a question usually relaxes the atmosphere and speaks to a person's natural desire to help. Using the questions, you can find out some of their likes and dislikes that can then be tied into your sale of your good or service.

Set Clear Objectives

In order to reach a goal, you need to have an outline to reach the goal. This involves a process to streamline and analyzes your objectives. Never jump into the middle of the process, always start at the beginning and start small. Make an action plan and identify the expected results. You will then see a set of directions to make and the decisions after each step will be easy to see.

Chapter 13: Being Invited

No matter how prepared you are for interviews, you have to know how to be invited to the interview process. It obviously starts with sending in an application and resume to the prospective employer. The employer will often call several applicants and give a short phone interview to test communication skills. It is possible you will receive several calls so make sure you know whom you are talking to, the job they are calling about, and never let on that you are talking to other companies. Your resume and application will paint a picture of who you are, but your phone conversation will help the company see whether they should bring you in for a formal interview.

A few other tips that will help you land an interview invitation include:

- [The position that you are interested in should be placed at the start of your resume.](#) Your objective should be both focused and career oriented. You want to tell the employer that you know the job is a perfect career move for you.
- [One of the best ways to secure the attention of the potential employer is with powerful words.](#) Use a thesaurus and select words that are more directed and strong. An example of this would be writing that you were in charge of “x” instead of “x” was assigned to you. By using the words, “in charge of,” you are showing the company that you have strong leadership skills. This is vital if you are looking at a management position.
- [It cannot be said enough, use bullet points.](#) Bullets catch the eye of the employer and draw them directly to specific points. These should be used for listing skills, qualifications, career highlights, achievements, and recognitions. The bullets organize your resume and make it look neater to read. It is also easier to locate pertinent information.
- [Make sure that your resume is narrow and focused.](#) If you are looking at applying for different careers, then make multiple resumes. This will keep your resume focused on specific job interests and positions.
- [Ask a professional to look over your resume.](#) Experts know what companies are looking for and they can make sure your strengths are highlighted appropriately.

Aside from preparing an impressive resume, make sure you carefully read and follow all the instructions the job application may dictate. These are tests to see how well you can follow rules and directions. Applications must be neat and preferably written in black or blue ink. Keep all documentation crisp and ideally in a briefcase or portfolio.

Do not leave any boxes unanswered. If something does not apply to you, use N/A, but really try to put an answer down for something. If there are essay questions, answer in full and complete sentences to show that you have thought about each question. Make sure your answers are directed in a way that it relates to the job you are applying for. You want to show the potential employer why you are more qualified.

When selecting references, look for people who are honest and are qualified to answer the questions the potential employer will ask. Talk to your teachers, friends, coworkers, and previous employers to make sure they are willing to speak for you and let them know what job you have applied for. The information they will give must match the information you have on your resume, application, and interview. It is never a good idea to fudge any of the information because it will immediately put you in a bad light and will burn bridges.

Employers who use references prior to interviews will be using the reference as a basis on whether an interview should be considered. When you utilize positive strategies, you will be able to get the invitations to interview. The process you go through with each interview and application will help you in future job hunting experiences you are likely to encounter.

Chapter 14: How to Create Networking Contacts

Usually, when you are looking for a job, you will ask for help from your family and friends. You contact these people to ask for information on current job openings, business opportunities, and more. These people are considered your networking contact list. They are people you have a personal association with and have active communication going. Some other people who can be added to your warm contact list include a classmate, coworker, or neighbor.

Here is a list of possible people to add to your list:

Relatives and Friends

Your relatives and your friends are the ones who are always willing to help you in your search for a job or any business venture. They will be able to provide you information they have and refer you to trustworthy person who can help you further. They may be willing to introduce you to their contacts and provide honest information to the person who is looking at interviewing you.

Church Members/Political Party/Fraternity/Sorority

People who share faith, belief, or hobbies often bond together and they will help when needed. They may have a different career than what you are after, but they may know someone in the field. However, these groups of people need to be thought through before use. You want to make sure they know you well enough to feel comfortable assisting you. This may mean you need a strategy to approach them and ask for assistance.

People Who Sell You Things

You may think that your relationships with people who sell you things are based purely on trading services, but they are also sources of networking. They are experienced with meeting new people and selling themselves. They may have come across someone who is in the field you are looking into, and if their association has become solid enough, they can act as a referral. Maintaining a pleasant relationship is keep to having a stable business relationship. They also know that the more money you make, the better their chances are to sell you their goods or services. Finally, if they help you secure a position, and then your relationship is likely to tighten.

Former Colleagues, Employers, Co-Workers

Whenever possible, end a job on a positive note so you can maintain a positive relationship with the people working there. Having a relationship with colleagues and employers will show your potential employer that you work well with people and you do not have outstanding baggage that can cause disruptions in a new job venture. Even if you are battling personal problems with a business, try to get them all worked out prior to leaving the company.

The first reason for this is that your new job venture will need to call previous employers to review your work history. You want them to receive the information in a positive light instead of hearing negativity in the voice. Most companies want co-workers on the list of references because they can give first-hand knowledge on how you work. The information that these groups of references give can either win you an interview, or kill your chances with the company.

Members of a Professional Organization

If you belong to a professional organization, do not turn other members away when it comes to looking for references. If you are not currently a member of any organization, consider joining one. They offer much more than references, namely inside information on the company that you are looking into. Some of the information they can offer include company profiles, market trends, and career developments.

When you are making a networking contact list, you should have a good selection of people from all of these categories. The more rounded your list is, the more options you will have when you go in for a job interview. After you have made your list of contacts, make sure they are all aware that you are actively seeking a job and that you have used them as a reference. It will also help you find which contacts should not be kept on the list of references based on current relationships or connections.

Chapter 15: Follow Up & Network

The most important aspect of career success is following up. When you hand in an application and resume, plan to follow up after a few days and let them know you are interested in the position. While you do not want to seem too eager, you do not want to just sit and wait for the company to get back in touch with you. Just because you have sent your contact information out does not mean that it has gotten where it needs to be.

Consider a few scenarios. Two people are applying for a premium job at a large company. After the interview, the first application sits around waiting to hear from the prospective employer. The other applicant, however, gives his contact information to other people in the company that he met and then follows up the interview a few days later with a thank you note.

The first applicant relied on the “*we will call you*” routine and lost the job because he did not assert himself. He was forgotten quickly in the eyes of the employer, even if he was more qualified. It is easier to train a person on the skills than it is to have a memorable person.

Another scenario is submitting the application and waiting for the interview. Make sure you *ALWAYS* follow up on all of your contacts, even when just dropping off applications. You want to make sure that your name is known in the business field in order to expand your horizons. Some ways to follow up on your contacts include:

- [Send a thank you note a few days after your interview.](#) You are giving the interviewer a chance to hear from you again and let them know you are still interested in the position. If they decided not to hire you for the current position, you are more likely to have your file kept for future consideration because you made an impact.
- [Make sure you leave all current contact information with the prospective employers.](#) This includes home address, email address, mobile number, landline number (if you have one), and Skype (when applicable). This prevents the employer from having an excuse of not being able to get in touch with you.
- [Keep all communication accurate and grammatically correct.](#) You want to look professional and so make sure you have their name spelled correctly, and nothing is addressed to “whom it may concern.”
- [Inform your references that “x” company may be contacting them.](#) You do not want your character references caught off guard and sounding surprised when a prospective employer contacts them.
- [Always remain positive.](#) The world will not end if you are not selected for a particular job position. In fact, you might want to ask that company for referrals to other companies that are hiring. It is also a good idea to ask them to keep you in mind for other openings that may come available in the near future.

Whether you are currently working, just starting out, or looking to further your career, you want to follow up on important contacts. When you go to corporate events, distribute business cards but do not stop there. These contacts can bring business to your company so build a relationship with them.

If you need some tips on following up with these contacts, consider the following:

- [Send thank you notes to current and future customers.](#) This should be done even when you are not applying for jobs. You are reminding customers of the company they are dealing with and spreading your brand. It is also a polite way to keep business headed your direction.
- [Send follow-up messages.](#) If you are in sales, consider talking to your existing buyers who will purchase from you again. Personalize all correspondence so it gives the person the feeling that they know you on a deeper level. You will earn their trust and leave them feeling secure in their decisions or purchases. That trust will then be spread when others ask about you.
- [Make sure your follow-up is quickly and concise.](#) Reply as quickly as possible, even if you are not solving the problem immediately. People want to know that they are important to you. When you are responding to a letter or customer, let them know that their communication has been received and that you will get back to them as soon as possible so their situation can be properly handled.

These tips will take you further in life and business. You will develop solid references, referrals, and job opportunities.

