

Company Research

You should perform strategic research on your market during all stages of your job search. Use the following strategies to perform quality research that will help you in your search.

The Benefits of Research

Developing a comprehensive understanding of your target companies, your industry, and your profession will give you a clear advantage over your competition. Research also:

- ✓ Helps you understand the challenges your industry/target company is facing
- ✓ Allows you to position yourself as the solution to those challenges
- ✓ Assists you in editing your job search materials (CV, cover letter, etc.) in a strategic way
- ✓ Helps you develop a winning application and interview strategy

General Research

As you begin your job search, conduct some general research into your industry and profession by searching the web. Explore:

- ✓ Current job listings and the qualifications they are requiring
- ✓ New trends, industry news, challenges and other general information
- ✓ Professional association websites and popular blogs focused on your specialty area and industry
- ✓ Thought leaders and best-selling books for your industry
- ✓ Upcoming speaking engagements or events related to your field

Competitive Research

Performing in-depth research on people in your profession can provide a great deal of insight. Identify those with similar backgrounds as yourself, or those with your “dream job.” You can:

- ✓ Use LinkedIn’s “Advanced People Search” function to identify professionals in your target area
- ✓ Examine their profiles to review the skills, education, professional development, and keywords others in your field have used to their advantage
- ✓ Discover what is listed on their profiles for professional associations, companies worked at, and LinkedIn groups that you could incorporate in your job search strategy
- ✓ Reach out and connect over the phone or for a 20 minute networking meeting or an informational interview to gain even deeper insights

Company Research

When you have a target company and you want to apply or begin to network your way in, more in-depth research is needed. Be sure to find information about the company on the following:

- ✓ Culture, Values and Goals
- ✓ Financial Information
- ✓ Employees
- ✓ Competition
- ✓ History and Recent News

- ✔ Strategic Direction
- ✔ Your Target Department
- ✔ Career Development Opportunities
- ✔ Salary Averages
- ✔ New Products and Services
- ✔ Your Target Job
- ✔ The Decision Maker(s)

Where to Research

There are a number of resources where you can find information online. Start with:

- ✔ **COMPANY WEBSITE** Check out the "about us" page and any bios or department descriptions
- ✔ **RECENT NEWS** Do a search for press releases and other recent news; set up a Google Alert for the company and its executive team to ensure that you stay up to date on any new happenings
- ✔ **SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES** This includes LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook; follow the companies themselves, as well as key staff and recruiters
- ✔ **GLASSDOOR PROFILE** Read company reviews, salary information, overview, and interview information
- ✔ **INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS** Find people in your network who work at the company and set up an informational interview with them (see networking section for more info)

Documenting Your Research & Keeping Organised

As you conduct your research, come up with a strategy to keep organised. You can use an Excel spreadsheet or even use LinkedIn. Keep track of your research and where you have applied. This will be valuable information and save you a great deal of time when you get invited for an interview.

NEXT STEPS

- » Perform general research on your role and industry
- » Research your competition in the job market
- » Identify and research your target companies for deeper insight