

1. Title: New

Job Application

May 13, 2024

Your Career Countdown - How to Craft a Professional (and Personal!) Life Worth Living

Your career "memento mori" is an unavoidable indicator that time is precious. Every minute, hour, and day counts, especially when it comes to finding your next job opportunity. Not just any opportunity, however -your memento mori is a reminder that your career is already ticking and your goal is to pursue a life of meaningful work. An ineffective search, lacking in strategy and direction, can waste precious time and result in lost opportunities. Fantastic, satisfying, growth-driving opportunities that contribute to a career journey with fewer regrets. In this article, we'll explore how you can put energy into your job search to shape your career memento mori precisely as you envision it.

More ?

Content: Imagine that you have a lifespan of approximately 80 years. How many weeks have passed so far, and how many weeks do you still have left?

It's not a thought many of us like to ponder.

But by now, you're well into your professional and personal journey. How's it going for you so far?

Are you satisfied with where you're at in life? Or do you yearn for something more?

Probably you're leaning towards the latter, if you're like many of the job seekers we coach.

Your Career Memento Mori

Here's an exercise we often do in our career coaching sessions. Imagine this is your life calendar:

Today, we're giving it a career-centric twist.

Your career life calendar, or career "memento mori", is an unavoidable indicator that time is precious. Every minute, hour, and day counts, especially when it comes to finding your next job opportunity. Because an ineffective search, lacking in strategy and direction, can waste precious time and result in lost opportunities. Fantastic, satisfying, growth-driven opportunities.

In this article, we'll explore how you can put energy into your job search to shape your career memento mori precisely as you envision it.

#1 Ensure Your Job Search is Purposeful

When you're stuck in a job that doesn't fulfill you, each day can feel like a burden. The repetitive cycle of work can sap your energy and leave you longing desperately for something more meaningful. Every moment spent in this state is a moment you'll never get back. So, how can you invest your time purposefully to quickly find a job that you truly desire?

Self-Reflection

Before diving any further into your job hunt, take a step back and reflect. What are your passions, strengths, and long-term goals? What kind of work environment do you truly thrive in? What do you really want out of your career? Being consciously aware of what will make you happy is the first step towards a purposeful career path. This investment of time in self-reflection will help you to focus on opportunities genuinely aligned with your values and ambitions.

Build Your Professional Brand

Don't just start applying desperately to anything and everything. First, take time to rethink your professional brand. Which means, updating your resume and LinkedIn profile to showcase your skills, experiences, and career objectives accurately. Review your digital footprint – what can be found about you online, for example on social media – to ensure it promotes a positive image. These form the first impression that potential employers will have of you, so make it count.

#2 Proactively Seek Opportunities

Investing time in your job search isn't just about escaping an unfulfilling job; it's about unlocking the door to new possibilities in ways other than just checking out job boards. Here are two methods that are almost guaranteed to unlock great (often unadvertised) opportunities:

Networking

Never underestimate the power of networking. With over 80% of jobs being unadvertised, your personal and professional network is almost certainly the key to that amazing job opportunity. How can you actively network? Attend industry events, get in touch with contacts in your desired company or field, put a post up on LinkedIn about being open to opportunities, and connect with professionals who share your interests through online forums, webinars, and so on. These interactions can provide insights, mentorship, and job referrals. But remember: networking isn't about quantity - it's about the quality of relationships you build.

Active Job Searching

Don't wait for the perfect job to fall into your lap. It almost never happens that way. Instead, actively seek out opportunities yourself. Aside from job boards, check out company websites (after all, they may not be advertising on the job boards you typically visit). Or reach out to recruiters and headhunters in your field (jobsleads.com has hundreds of listings). A proactive approach ensures you are less likely to miss fantastic opportunities.

#3 Build Confidence

Investing in your job search is also an investment in your self-confidence. The process can be challenging, but every challenge is an opportunity to grow. Here's how to build confidence along the way:

Skill Enhancement

Take advantage of your job searching time to acquire new skills or enhance existing ones. Review ideal job postings to see if particular skills are mentioned that you currently lack. Online courses, workshops, and certifications can help you gain needed skills and helps you to boost your resume keywords.

Advance Interview Preparation

You may get lucky and land interviews as soon as you start applying. Don't wait until then to brush up your interviewing skills. Take a JobLeads digital masterclass in interviewing to help you master these. Get into the habit of researching the company and practicing common interview questions for

that type of role before attending an interview. Prepare thoroughly so you don't lose out by making a less-than-awesome impression.

#4 Time Management

It may sound boring or obvious, but time management ? or lack of ? can make all the difference in finding that amazing job opportunity. Making every minute count in your job search requires really effective time management. Especially if you're juggling family, job, or learning commitments at the same time. Here are two tried-and-tested, easy to implement strategies to invest your time wisely:

Set Clear Goals

Establish clear job search goals and prioritize them. Whether it's updating your resume, sending out applications, or networking, having specific objectives helps you stay on track. Keep a to-do list or job search spreadsheet to keep on top of goals, milestones, responses, and action points.

Create a Schedule

It might seem easier to go with the flow, but devoting dedicated time to your job search can help you take it seriously and ensure goals are achieved in a timely manner. We recommend setting aside blocks of time each day or week to focus on different aspects, such as researching companies, writing cover letters, or networking.

#5 Embrace the Journey

Finally, remember that your career is a significant part of your life memento mori. The effort you put into your job search isn't just about escaping a bad job or boss - it's about supporting an amazing life journey with fewer regrets. Here's how to positively get through to the other side of your search:

Stay Resilient

Remember, rejection is a part of the job search process. It's nothing personal. Sometimes, a slightly more ideal candidate comes along. One day soon, you'll be that ideal candidate, and someone else less so. Instead of dwelling on setbacks, consider rejection as bringing you one step closer to finding the right fit.

Celebrate Small Wins

Last but not least, celebrate small victories along the way. Whether it's landing an interview,

receiving positive feedback, or simply sending out a well-prepared application, give yourself a pat on the back. Reward yourself with a hike, a bit of quiet time, or a glass of wine. Be your own champion! In the grand scheme of things, your career memento mori is a powerful reminder that your work life is finite. However, don't feel overwhelmed by it. Instead, be empowered.

So, embrace the journey, invest in your career, and remember that your future is worth every moment you spend securing it. Your career memento mori is a clear reminder that you have the power to shape a future filled with fulfillment and purpose.

Key takeaways:

If you're feeling trapped in an unfulfilling job, invest time in self-reflection to identify your passions and strengths. Update your professional brand, including your resume and LinkedIn profile, to ensure a polished impression when you start applying.

Don't wait for the perfect job to come to you (it almost never drops in your lap). Instead, actively network and build quality relationships. Attend industry events, connect with professionals in your field, and explore company websites for hidden opportunities.

Use this time to develop new skills and enhance existing ones. Prepare thoroughly for interviews. Invest in resources like digital masterclasses to boost your confidence.

Prioritize clear job search goals and create a schedule to ensure you make the most of your time. Keep track of milestones and action points to stay on course.

Rejection is part of the process. Stay resilient and view setbacks as stepping stones to finding the right fit. Celebrate small wins along the way to stay motivated and positive.

Your career memento mori serves as a reminder that your work time is finite. Use it as motivation to shape a fulfilling future.

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10 Things That Recruiters Really, Really Want Job Seekers to Know

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May 6, 2024

10 Things That Recruiters Really, Really Want Job Seekers to Know

Ever wondered what hiring specialists REALLY think about your job application? Well, it's time to find out! We asked 10 recruiters your most commonly-asked questions. From their thoughts on AI cover letters to the LinkedIn Open to Work banner, get the scoop on their green flags and dealbreakers.

More ?

Content: Ever wondered what advice a hiring specialist would give if you had the opportunity to sit down with one? Well, consider this your backstage pass!

We shared some of your most-asked questions, and invited hiring managers, recruiters, and headhunters in all sorts of industries to give it to us straight.

From using AI to speed up your job applications through to what they're really thinking when they see that Open to Work banner on your LinkedIn profile, we've got the inside scoop on their green flags and dealbreakers!

Your Questions Answered

#1 Can you tell if my cover letter is AI-generated?

?I'm a recruiter and in all honesty I don't understand why cover letters are still a thing. I care even less if you've used AI. I usually go straight to the resume, because that tells me a lot more about you. A huge number of applications are poorly put together. So if I do look at the cover letter and guess it's done with AI, I make a mental note that the person has actually made an extra effort to get it right.? Head of People, Online Travel Agency

#2 Why don't agency recruiters tell you what the job is before the phone call?

If we tell you the company beforehand, you'll go and apply directly before we can submit you. If you apply before we submit you, then we have no ownership, don't get paid, and can't support you. Aside from that, companies usually come to recruiters when they have trouble filling the job themselves. There's often a reason for that. Good recruiters pre-vet companies. They'll ensure your details aren't submitted to businesses with a poor reputation. They'll make sure you're put forward for good positions. ? Recruitment Consultant, Sales & Marketing

#3 If a hiring manager or recruiter asks, "Have you applied anywhere else?", is there any advantage to answering a particular way?

As a recruiter I always appreciate when candidates mention if they're currently involved in other processes. It just helps me prioritize them when it comes to interview timeslots and potentially speed up the process with the line manager. ? Internal Recruiter, Pharmaceutical Industry

#4 Why do I keep getting rejected for being "overqualified"?

The general concern is that if you're "too" experienced, you're more likely to get bored and leave sooner. And of course, the more experience you have, the more compensation you can ask for. So from the recruiter's perspective, it's easier to reject you than take a risk. If you're applying to a job you have "too much" experience for, a simple hack is to lop off some of your earlier experiences on your resume. It's easier to get past the fear factor once you're face-to-face in an interview. ? Talent Specialist, Retail Industry

#5 Is it a good idea to reach out to recruiters over LinkedIn?

I'm a recruiter for a well-known company. I don't mind at all if job seekers reach out to me, as long as their experience is relevant and they're professional in their approach. If they don't include a message with their connection request, I ignore it. I also ignore generic "Hey, I need a job!" messages. And like with anyone, I only have an issue when the individual is pushy and rude. ? Technical Recruitment Specialist, FMCG Industry

#6 Why don't recruiters respond to candidates? Would they charge for feedback?

When 1000+ people apply for a job and recruiters have 10-40 openings at a time, could you

imagine how much time we'd lose if we offered feedback and called every single rejected candidate? It's not a sign of inefficiency or lack of professionalism. It's just not feasible, as much as we'd like to. And no, no legitimate recruiter will ever charge for feedback. ? Recruiter, Banking & Finance

#7 Recruiters, as a job seeker, what would you like me to do?

?Best piece of advice? Be a proper fit for the job. Seriously. We're only trying to sell a product - you. The best way to do that is to have a good product. Make sure your resume and LinkedIn profile are complete, specific, and reflect your accomplishments as well as your responsibilities. ? Recruitment Consultant, Accounting

#8 Do recruiters think less of people who have the green ?Open to Work? banner on their LinkedIn profile? I've heard it makes job seekers look desperate.

?Seriously, I've never heard of a recruiter getting upset or post publicly about someone having an Open to Work banner. Why would we? It helps us do our jobs faster because then we are easily able to figure out who is actually open to work immediately. ? Talent Coordinator, Video Game Company

#9: ?How do you recruiters feel about a skills section at the top of the resume, under the summary?

?Frankly, we love it. It makes it easy to tell right away if you have the key skills I'm looking for. I don't want to waste time looking through your resume, only to discover you're not a great fit. A good skills section is a big plus for me. ? Senior Recruiter, Global eCommerce Platform

#10 ?I see a lot of conflicting opinions about resumes being 1 page or 2 pages. What should it be?

?Honestly, if you're a good fit, I don't care. But the general rule is 1 page is best if you don't have much experience. Tech roles that are reliant on specific skills sets rather than how much experience you have, can also be 1 page. If you have a bit of experience, let's say 5 or 6 years plus, then 2 pages gives you enough space to share your story. ? Hiring Specialist, Management Consultancy

So there you have it. Getting job application advice directly from recruiters offers valuable insights into the hiring process and employer expectations. Because they understand precisely what decision makers are looking for, their tips can significantly boost your chances of getting a foot in the

interview door!

If you'd like to learn more about any aspect of finding a new job, hop on over to www.jobleads.com. As well as our cutting-edge global jobs platform, you'll find a wealth of trainings, guides, video tips, and headhunter listings to elevate your job search today.

Key takeaways:

Recruiters prioritize resumes over cover letters but appreciate the effort when candidates use AI tools to craft them effectively

Recruiters withhold company names to maintain control over the application process and ensure candidates are suited for the position

Mentioning involvement in other job processes can help recruiters prioritize candidates and expedite the interview process

Hiring specialists may reject overqualified candidates due to concerns about retention and compensation demands, but trimming earlier experiences from resumes can mitigate this.

Reaching out to recruiters on LinkedIn is acceptable if done professionally and with relevant experience highlighted in the message.

Feedback can't be provided to every rejected candidate due to time constraints (and no, no reputable recruiter would ever charge for feedback)

Complete, tailored resumes and LinkedIn profiles that highlight accomplishments and responsibilities are more likely to attract recruiters than generic, unfocused ones

Recruiters find Open to Work banners on LinkedIn helpful for identifying candidates actively seeking employment

Including a skills section on resumes helps hiring specialist to quickly assess suitability for the position

One-page resumes are great for less experienced candidates or roles emphasizing specific skill sets, while two-page resumes are great for candidates with more extensive experience.

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Applicant Tracking Systems ? Your Best Friend or Worst Enemy?

3. Title: Job Search

Apr 29, 2024

10 Unconventional (But Cool!) Jobs to Inspire Your Career Pivot

Ready to shake up your career? Explore 10 unconventional (yet totally cool!) jobs that might just inspire your next big career pivot! From drone operators soaring to new heights to virtual reality therapists delving into the future of mental health, there's something for everyone looking to blend passion with profession. Dive into the post-pandemic surge of career twists, where individuals are redefining professional fulfillment on their own terms. Click the blog link now to discover how you can turn your passions into purposeful professions!

More ?

Content: Do you have the feeling that there are other jobs out there that would bring you more joy?

Well, there are!

The post-pandemic era has led to a surge of career pivots and twists due to job loss, economic uncertainty, and the remote work explosion. Many of us also took advantage of the time for self-reflection, exploring new industries, and pursuing long-held passions amidst industry fluxes and adaptations.

What's awesome is that for the most part, these transitions don't necessitate returning to university or starting from scratch. Instead, by building upon your existing skill set, experience, and interests, you can explore a wide range of intriguing opportunities.

From former engineers becoming artisanal cheesemakers to corporate executives turning yoga instructors, these career shifts are redefining the notion of what it means to pursue one's dreams in the workforce.

In this blog post, we sneak a peek at 10 career pivot jobs that not only allow individuals to follow their hearts, but also capitalize on their years of knowledge acquired in their previous professions.

Whether it's leveraging a love for technology to dive into sustainable farming or harnessing your

business acumen to venture into event planning, these unconventional career paths showcase the power of embracing change - and daring to pursue a fulfilling life and career on your own terms.

Drone Operator

Are you a drone enthusiast? Did you know that you can actually turn that interest into a part-time job - or even a fresh career? With the widening applications of this technology, drone operator pilots are being hired for tasks such as photography, surveying, and inspection in a huge variety of sectors.

Aside from drone operation proficiency, essential skills include knowledge of airspace regulations and the ability to quickly troubleshoot technical issues or real-time flight challenges. Experience in areas such as photography, videography, agriculture, construction, infrastructure inspection (e.g. bridges, pipelines, buildings), real estate, environmental monitoring, search and rescue, disaster management, filmmaking, or aerial mapping and surveying are also a plus, alongside strong communication skills.

Depending on the job, drone operators can pursue specialized training in areas such as aerial photography or mapping. Required qualifications vary, but in many places, certification or licensing is necessary for commercial operation. For instance, in the US, a Remote Pilot Certificate is essential.

Virtual Reality Therapist

A virtual reality therapist? Yes! Welcome to the future. A VR therapist utilizes immersive virtual reality technology to deliver therapeutic interventions for mental health issues such as anxiety, eating disorders, grief and loss, phobias, addiction, PTSD, and stress. They guide their clients through simulated scenarios designed to address specific therapeutic goals, while providing support and feedback throughout the process.

Virtual reality therapists must possess strong interpersonal skills, empathy, and a deep understanding of psychological principles to effectively leverage this therapeutic modality for the benefit of their clients' mental well-being.

As well as specialized training in virtual reality therapy techniques, this career path is especially suited to those with a psychology or counselling degree. Depending on the jurisdiction, a license or

certification as a mental health professional may also be required.

Ethical Hacker

Can hackers be principled and moral? Absolutely! An ethical hacker, also known as a white hat hacker or penetration tester, is a cybersecurity pro who (legally and ethically!) exploits vulnerabilities in computer systems, networks, and software to identify and fix security weaknesses. Their primary goal is to assess the security of an organization and prevent their non-ethical counterparts from exploiting these weaknesses.

Successful ethical hackers must have excellent collaboration, interpersonal, communication, and problem-solving skills, alongside empathy and adaptability.

As well as a background in cybersecurity, ethical hackers should have knowledge of programming languages, and ideally certifications such as Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) or Offensive Security Certified Professional (OSCP). Additionally, ethical hackers must adhere to strict ethical guidelines and legal boundaries, ensuring that their actions are conducted with permission and do not cause harm to the systems or data they're testing.

Disaster Recovery Specialist

Do you want to be the hero that develops and implements strategies to ensure an organization's critical systems and data can be quickly restored in the event of a disaster or disruption? As a Disaster Recovery Specialist, you'll create and maintain disaster recovery plans, conduct risk assessments, and establish backup and recovery procedures. During a crisis, you'll coordinate response efforts, oversee data recovery operations, and assess the impact of the disaster on business operations. Sound intriguing?

It's important to note that strong analytical skills, attention to detail, and the ability to work under intense pressure are essential for this role, as disaster recovery specialists play a critical role in ensuring business continuity and minimizing downtime during emergencies.

This may be a great career pivot if you have a degree in information technology, computer science, or a related field, and are willing to pursue certifications such as Certified Business Continuity Professional (CBCP) or Disaster Recovery Certified Specialist (DRCS) to solidify your expertise.

Medical Illustrator

A medical illustrator creates visual representations of complex medical and scientific concepts for educational, research, and communication purposes. They produce detailed illustrations, diagrams, and animations that accurately depict anatomical structures, surgical procedures, medical devices, and disease processes. These visuals are used in medical textbooks, journals, patient education materials, presentations, and multimedia projects. A modern day Leonardo da Vinci, if you will.

Strong artistic skills, attention to detail, and a deep understanding of medical science are a must. On top of that, proficiency in digital illustration software and the ability to collaborate effectively with healthcare professionals are important qualities for success as a medical illustrator.

Medical illustrators typically have a degree major in art and a minor in the biological sciences, or a major in science with a minor in art, often supplemented by specialized training in anatomy, physiology, and medical terminology.

Cryptocurrency Analyst

According to a recent study by security.org, at least 40% of Americans own crypto. Which means big business and an explosion in crypto career opportunities. One of these is a cryptocurrency analyst, who analyzes trends, market data, and news related to cryptocurrencies to provide insights and recommendations for investors, traders, and financial institutions. They study price movements, trading volumes, and market sentiment to forecast future price movements and assess the potential risks and opportunities of different cryptocurrencies.

Proficiency in data analysis tools and a deep understanding of blockchain technology are valuable skills for cryptocurrency analysts. Does this sound like you? Then read on.

While qualifications for Crypto Analysts vary, a strong background in finance, economics, mathematics, or computer science is usually preferred. Certifications such as Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) or Certified Bitcoin Professional (CBP) are a huge plus for potential employers.

Virtual Event Planner

A virtual event planner develops and steers online events, for example conferences, trade shows, webinars, and virtual meetings. They conceptualize experience themes, coordinate speakers and

presenters, handle event logistics, and oversee technical aspects such as live streaming and virtual platforms.

If you have strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and creativity, then keep reading! Proficiency in virtual event platforms and online marketing strategies, and the ability to adapt to new technologies, are valuable assets in this line of work.

And how about qualifications? None are strictly needed for Virtual Event Planners, but a degree in event management, hospitality, marketing, or similar fields (plus relevant experience in event planning and coordination of course!) will go a long way.

Adventure Therapist

Here's a job that sounds like a blast! How does adventure therapy work? Well, these types of therapists leverage outdoor and adventure-based activities as therapeutic interventions to promote personal growth, development, and healing. These are typically aimed at groups and families, as well as individual clients, and can be adapted for all levels of expertise. Activities include hiking, rock climbing, wilderness expeditions, and challenge courses, integrating these experiences with traditional therapy techniques to address mental health challenges, behavioral issues, and substance abuse. The aim is to facilitate reflection, goal-setting, and problem-solving in natural settings, harnessing the benefits of outdoor experiences for emotional and psychological well-being. Aside from being physically fit and a proficient outdoors person, adventure therapists must be driven by a passion for helping others.

If you have a degree in psychology, counseling, or a related field, this might be a career direction for you. You would also need to complete specialized training in adventure therapy techniques and outdoor leadership. Some jurisdictions require you to be a licensed therapist or counsellor, too.

Animal Behaviourist

Are you the next César Millán or Steve Irwin? As the title implies, an animal behaviorist studies the behavior of animals to understand their natural instincts, social interactions, and responses to stimuli. They analyze factors such as genetics, environment, and past experiences to assess and modify problematic behaviors in pets, livestock, zoo animals, or wildlife. Animal behaviorists often

work closely with pet owners, trainers, veterinarians, or wildlife conservationists to develop behavior modification plans and provide recommendations for improving animal welfare.

In addition to an abundance of patience and empathy, animal behaviorists need fantastic interpersonal, communication, risk assessment, and motivational skills. Much of this work is dealing with humans as well as animals, with a strong educational and influence element.

Ideal degrees for this type of work include animal behavior, psychology, biology, veterinary science, or related fields, with courses in ethology, learning theory, and behavioral research methods. However, there are animal behaviorists who practice with no degree or with qualifications in different fields. In such cases, extensive practical experience working with animals, such as qualified dog trainers, is a good starting point (given the nature of the role, seeking specialized training on top of this, alongside membership of industry organizations, are wise next steps).

Renovation Consultant

A renovation consultant advises clients on remodeling and renovating their properties to improve functionality, aesthetics, and resale value. They assess the client's needs, budget, and goals, then develop renovation plans, including design concepts, material selections, and project timelines. Renovation consultants can also liaise with architects, contractors, and other building professionals to ensure that the project meets quality standards and regulatory requirements.

Practical experience in renovation projects, excellent communication skills, a keen eye for detail, being unafraid to challenge clients' wishes if necessary, and detailed knowledge of building codes and regulations are essential for success as a renovation consultant.

While formal qualifications are not required, a background in interior design, architecture, construction management, or similar is highly beneficial.

Conclusion

These ten unconventional jobs are just drops in the ocean of limitless possibilities for career pivots that draw on passion, talent, and existing expertise. And in many cases, it's entirely doable to pursue new paths without restarting your career or qualifications from scratch.

Whether it's leveraging existing skills in fresh ways, or venturing into entirely novel territories, the

potential for meaningful career pivots is limited only by your imagination and determination!

Key takeaways

The surge in career pivots during the post-pandemic era reflects a trend of people reassessing their career goals and priorities, exploring new industries, and pursuing long-held passions amidst industry changes and adaptations

Discover 10 unconventional career paths that showcase the intriguing possibilities for career pivots, leveraging a blend of passion, talent, and existing expertise

These off-the-beaten track career paths encompass a diverse range of fields, from adventure therapy to virtual event planning, highlighting truly unique opportunities to carve out meaningful and rewarding careers beyond traditional trajectories

By harnessing existing skills in innovative ways and daring to venture into new territories, you can unlock the potential for fulfilling and rewarding career pivots limited only by your imagination and determination!

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Apr 22, 2024

8 fabulous freelance websites to kick-start your solo career

From escaping the 9-5 grind to finding your dream projects, discover why freelancing could be your ticket to flexibility, autonomy, and higher earnings! We've rounded up 8 top freelance websites to kick-start your solo career. Whether you're a seasoned freelancer or just curious about the freelance lifestyle, our freelance site lowdown has you covered. Read the blog post now to uncover the secrets of successful freelancing!

More ?

Content: ?When freelance first came into English in the early 1800s, it was used to refer to a medieval mercenary who would fight for whichever nation or person paid them the most.? ?

Merriam-Webster Dictionary

While the modern equivalents are not exactly sword-wielding mercenaries, more and more people are choosing freelance pursuits for flexibility in schedule, autonomy in choosing projects, pursuit of passions, broader skill development, and ? you guessed it - higher earning potential.

To cater to the demand, freelance websites have sprung up around the globe. And it's not only job seekers who are turning to these sites. Organizations such as Microsoft, Airbnb, Wise, Bloomberg, Indeed, Adobe, and even Duolingo source top talent from freelancing platforms, as they enable greater access to specialized skills, scalability, cost-effectiveness, faster project completion, geographic flexibility, and risk mitigation to achieve their business objectives more efficiently.

In other words, it's a reciprocal victory.

So today's blog post is for all those people at the other end of the keyboard searching for freelance opportunities, and anyone else pondering a move away from the traditional 9-5 office routine.

Aside from JobLeads, there are literally hundreds of websites and job portals dedicated to this type of work. But no one wants to waste time searching dozens of sources. That's why we've compiled

a list of

8 trusted sites dedicated exclusively to freelancing opportunities (you're welcome).

Upwork (www.upwork.com)

Upwork is one of the world's largest freelancing platforms. Freelancers on Upwork offer expertise in fields such as accounting, consulting, web development, admin support, customer service, graphic design, content writing, marketing, and more. Businesses of all sizes, from startups to Fortune 500 companies, use Upwork to find talent for short-term or ongoing projects. The platform offers benefits such as access to a global pool of talent, flexibility in project scalability, cost-effectiveness, communication and project management tools, and the ability to hire for specific skills on-demand. Upwork charges freelancers a 10% fee on all projects.

Fiverr (www.fiverr.com)

Fiverr is a popular online marketplace where freelancers offer a wide range of digital services, known as "gigs", starting at \$5. Services on Fiverr span categories like graphic design, programming, video and animation, content writing, translation, consulting, and more. It's utilized by individuals, entrepreneurs, small businesses, and even large corporations seeking quick and affordable solutions. Fiverr's main benefits include access to a diverse pool of freelancers worldwide, fast delivery times for services, transparent pricing, secure payment processing, and a user-friendly platform with tools for communication and project management. Fiverr charges a 20% fee on freelancer projects.

Freelancer (Freelancer.com)

Freelancer offers a wide array of categories such as programming, photography, administration, data entry, and web development. It's utilized by individuals, startups, SMBs, and enterprises seeking to outsource tasks or find freelance talent for one-time projects or ongoing work. The main benefits of Freelancer.com include access to global projects, competitive pricing through bidding systems, secure payment processing, streamlined communication tools, and project management features. The site charges an introduction fee of 10% of the agreement's value or \$5, whichever is higher.

Toptal (www.toptal.com)

Toptal is an elite talent marketplace catering to companies in need of top-tier freelance software developers, designers, finance experts, and project managers. Renowned for its rigorous screening process, Toptal handpicks only the top 3% of applicants, ensuring exceptional quality and expertise. Typically, startups, scale-ups, and enterprises seeking premium talent for high-impact projects utilize Toptal. Its main benefits include access to a highly curated network of vetted professionals, flexible engagement models, seamless project management tools, and personalized matching services. Toptal handles all overheads and payment processing for freelancers, who are free to set their own rate. Toptal takes no commission from freelancers; clients are charged directly by Toptal for the freelancer's services and add their fee to this.

PeoplePerHour (www.peopleperhour.com)

PeoplePerHour connects businesses with freelance professionals offering services in areas such as social media, technology & programming, digital marketing, and writing & translation. It caters to startups, SMEs, and entrepreneurs seeking cost-effective solutions. PeoplePerHour's main benefits include a user-friendly interface, payment processing services, and clear pricing. Its unique feature is the ability for freelancers to offer services in fixed-price packages or hourly rates, providing flexibility for both clients and freelancers. The site charges a 20% fee + VAT for amounts below £250, 7.5% + VAT from £250-£5,000 and 3.5% + VAT for projects over £5,000.

ZipRecruiter (www.ziprecruiter.com)

ZipRecruiter is an online employment marketplace catering to businesses of all sizes, including startups, SMEs, and large corporations, across most industries. The platform streamlines the hiring process by allowing employers to post job listings, search for candidates, and manage applications from a single interface. Its main benefits include a large and diverse pool of job seekers, advanced candidate matching algorithms, automated candidate screening tools, and seamless communication features. ZipRecruiter facilitates efficient recruitment, helping businesses find qualified candidates quickly and effectively, ultimately saving time and resources in the hiring process. There are no fees for job seekers (instead, companies are charged for the services they utilize).

Guru (www.guru.com)

Guru connects businesses with skilled freelancers offering services in areas such as education & training, legal, engineering & architecture, sales & marketing, and administration. It caters to individuals and organizations seeking talent for one-time projects or ongoing work. Its unique feature is the SafePay system, which ensures payment protection for both clients and freelancers. Fees range from 9% - 5% depending on membership type.

FlexJobs (www.flexjobs.com)

FlexJobs is a low-cost subscription service offering job seekers access to projects in areas such as sales, accounting, administration, marketing, content writing, recruitment, nursing, and client services. The platform ensures that users receive curated job listings free from scams or low-quality postings. FlexJobs caters to individuals seeking remote work, flexible schedules, or alternative employment arrangements. By offering a subscription model, FlexJobs can provide job seekers with a reliable resource for finding reputable opportunities. FlexJobs is a subscription model, with pricing currently \$9.95 (1-week plan), \$24.95 (1-month plan), \$39.95 (3-month plan) and \$59.95 (1-year plan).

Conclusion

A freelance career offers many benefits, including flexibility in work schedule, autonomy in choosing projects, and potentially higher earnings. Freelancers can work from anywhere, pursue their passions, and develop a diverse skill set through a wide variety of projects. Not only that, freelancing facilitates an escape from the constraints of traditional employment and the ability to enjoy a better work-life balance.

Freelance websites are fantastic sources of quality opportunities due to their vast networks of clients and talent, streamlined communication and project management tools, and rigorous screening processes. If you want to work with reputable clients seeking specialized skills, freelancing sites are the way to go.

Key Takeaways

? The term ?freelance? originally referred to medieval mercenaries; today, it signifies a modern

pursuit for flexibility, autonomy, higher earnings, and skill development

? Freelance websites have proliferated globally to meet the rising demand, benefiting both job seekers and organizations like Microsoft, Airbnb, and Bloomberg seeking top talent

? Top freelancing platforms include Upwork, Fiverr, Freelancer, Toptal, PeoplePerHour, ZipRecruiter, Guru, and FlexJobs, all offering many opportunities and resources for freelancers and organizations alike

? Freelance websites are valuable resources, connecting freelancers with reputable clients, streamlining communication, and ensuring quality matches through rigorous screening processes

? Overall, embracing freelance opportunities through these platforms can lead to fulfilling careers and successful project outcomes for both freelancers and organizations

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Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

Applicant Tracking Systems ? Your Best Friend or Worst Enemy?

5. Title: Job Search

Apr 20, 2024

Why JobLeads is Your Career Services Netflix

Do you know why JobLeads is dubbed the "Netflix of Career Services"? It's because our platform goes beyond job listings, offering a comprehensive suite of services, from personalized job search companionship and resume support to cutting-edge technology, career development trainings, and career coaching. Discover how JobLeads tackles job hunting stress, invests in your technological edge, and provides a flexible subscription model akin to your favorite streaming service. Click on the blog link now and unlock the secrets of your next professional chapter!

More ?

Content: "What's the value of JobLeads?"

"Why should I pay to access some of your services?"

"What's it in for me?"

These are just some of the queries we get from potential subscribers. And they're fair questions. Why would anyone want to pay for advice and services that are available all over the internet for free?

Let's admit it: JobLeads isn't the only job listings aggregator out there. We're not the only resume service. And we're not the only career development training provider.

So ? what's the value of JobLeads, then?

It's simple. Where else can you find an entire suite of high-quality, easily accessible career services solutions, all on one platform? From jobs and digital learning to headhunter connections, career coaching, resume services, and more, JobLeads is a complete solution for your entire job search and beyond. We're continually evolving and offering ever-more innovative and meaningful services. Nearly two decades ago, JobLeads was born of the frustration of its founders at being unable to find a one-stop solution for all their job search needs. Just like the 700,000 people who turn to JobLeads

every month.

Since then, JobLeads has grown into a global platform offering a broad range of services that are actually helpful, relevant, and time saving.

If you're tired of the exhausting, often fruitless job search process, spending hours jumping from one platform to another, then it's time to learn how JobLeads will get you there faster.

(And we'll get back to that Netflix analogy shortly. Stick around.)

#1 We Do Away With Job Hunting Stress

Jumping into the job hunt can be a tough task, no doubt about it. Especially when it involves bouncing between job sites and YouTube videos and AI application crafting tools and company sites as you put together your resume, search out jobs, begin applying, and then having to brush up on your interviewing and negotiation skills.

The whole process seems to demand investing much more time and effort than it should realistically take. Which leaves job seekers feeling demoralized and like they're being taken advantage of by all these players on the market.

That's where JobLeads steps in. Our overriding goal is to meaningfully streamline your job search process and put you in the driving seat.

By providing a single comprehensive platform for all your job search needs, you no longer have to flick from site to site for all the resources required to land that dream job.

Which means, a lot less job hunting stress.

#2 Beyond Job Aggregation: We're Investing in Technology for YOU

Yes, JobLeads is a subscription service with premium services only available to members.

You sign up when you need us, and cancel once you've found your next job (or beyond: a high percentage of members stick around to take advantage of our ever-evolving suite of online on-demand training videos, webinars, and other career services).

But here's the wonderful thing. You're not just paying for access to job listings (that we've collated from hundreds of job boards globally, so you don't have to search them out for yourself). You're investing in advanced technology + the crème de la crème of technology specialists.

Our cutting-edge technology aggregates job opportunities from all around the world, faster and more reliably than the vast majority of our competition.

The goal is to ensure our users do not miss out on potentially great opportunities due to the limitations of individual searches or low-tech aggregation solutions. We invest in that, so you don't have to.

#3 Your Personalized Job Search Companion

JobLeads takes job searching a step further by positioning itself as your personalized job search companion vs a faceless job board.

Our technology analyzes the market 24/7, tailoring opportunities to our users' criteria and delivering them all in one place.

The global team of faces behind it all comprises career coaches, former recruiters, learning & development specialists, AI gurus, and technology experts. Together, we provide value-adds such as a carefully curated global headhunter directory, career coaching, resume reviews, and an on-demand video learning library.

The benefit of all this? You, the subscriber, gain a holistic and personalized approach to job hunting, backed by a team of experts, ensuring you receive tailored solutions to meaningfully enhance your career prospects.

Users have access to a wealth of fabulous personalized resources, enabling them to enhance their skills, knowledge, and overall employability at a fraction of what it would cost ordinarily.

That's pretty cool.

#4 The Reason Why We're a Subscription-Based Service

Going back to a question we're often asked by potential subscribers: "Why should I pay for services that are available for free elsewhere?"

Yes, you can find the same job listing for free on each company's website. What we do is identify, collate, and present them to you in one place.

Yes, you can find online trainings elsewhere. But can you be sure it's designed by career experts, based on the latest industry trends and guidance?

And yes, there are other companies offering resume writing and career coaching.

Why not take advantage of it all in one place?

Subscribing to JobLeads means investing in and accessing a swathe of tools and resources that significantly enhance your overall job search experience.

And subscription pricing benefits everyone by offering them affordable, high-quality services that continually evolve.

Think of it this way. You pay Netflix a small monthly subscription fee for their services. Sure, you can go ahead and find streamed content elsewhere. But the reason you pay Netflix? It's because they bring it all to you, in high quality, and invest in innovative content to maximize their subscribers' investment and faith in them.

That's why JobLeads is the Netflix of the job-hunting world.

#5 Freedom and Flexibility

Last but not least, JobLeads provides users with the freedom and flexibility to choose how they engage with the platform.

Because it's not about us, it's about YOU.

If you choose to unsubscribe after securing an amazing job, or if you want to continue as a member to access ongoing career development resources, we're here for you either way. We make subscribing or unsubscribing as simple as possible. And whenever you have queries, we're always available to help.

This flexibility ensures that each and every user has control over their investment, aligning with their individual career goals.

Conclusion

JobLeads goes beyond being 'just' a job aggregator: we're a comprehensive career companion that streamlines the entire job search process from start to finish and beyond. We partner with you to help you achieve and exceed your professional goals.

Joining the JobLeads member community is about transforming your job search journey into a seamless and successful career advancement experience.

And, dare we say, a more enjoyable and meaningful one.

All the best for your job search! We are here to help you land a better job faster.

Jan Hendrik von Ahlen

Co-Founder jobleads.com

Key takeaways:

JobLeads simplifies the job search process by offering a single platform that encompasses a wide range of high-quality career services, including job listings, digital learning, headhunter connections, career coaching, and more

As a subscription service, JobLeads not only provides access to job listings, but also invests in cutting-edge technology and specialists. This ensures faster and more reliable aggregation of job opportunities globally, enhancing users' chances of finding great opportunities

JobLeads is a personalized job search companion rather than a faceless job board. With continuous market analysis and a team of experts, including career coaches and AI specialists, users receive tailored solutions, a curated headhunter directory, and valuable resources for skill enhancement

The subscription model offers a consolidated and cost-effective approach to accessing various career services in one place

JobLeads emphasizes user freedom and flexibility, allowing individuals to choose their level of engagement with the platform. Whether unsubscribing after securing a job or continuing for ongoing career development, JobLeads ensures simplicity and availability to address user queries

Job hunting is stressful. JobLeads alleviates this by providing a unified platform. By offering a comprehensive set of resources, including resume services, job search tools, and interview preparation, JobLeads aims to reduce the time and effort invested in the job search process

Beyond being a job aggregator, JobLeads is a holistic career companion that supports users from the beginning of the job search process through career advancement

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Applicant Tracking Systems ? Your Best Friend or Worst Enemy?

6. Title: Team Building

Apr 8, 2024

Escape Room Training ? Ditch the Dull Teambuilding Activities!

Ready to ditch the dull and dive into dynamic team building? Say goodbye to trust boring falls and hello to exciting escape room training! Unlock the power of collaboration, problem-solving, and communication with immersive experiences that bring out the best in your team. From enhanced teamwork to smoother conflict resolution, escape rooms offer more than just entertainment ? they're a powerful and enthralling key to fostering a positive office culture and boosting employee engagement. Elevate your team building game and invest in the future of your organization with escape room training! Read the blog to find out how.

More ?

Content: Trust falls. Icebreaker games. Problem-solving challenges. Do you hear the words ?team building? and have to resist the urge to run the other way?

It?s not uncommon for employees to secretly dislike team building activities because they feel forced into participation. They can perceive them as irrelevant to their job, a waste of time, and even uncomfortable if pushed to engage just for the sake of it with colleagues they don?t get along with.

Which rather belies the entire point of ?team building?, don?t you think?

Well, we?ve got a slightly unconventional idea that will toss ?boring? and ?ineffective? out the window.

Next time your boss says it?s time to do a teambuilding activity, you?re going to be putting up your hand and begging them to do this.

Escape room training.

An activity where you?re literally stuck in a room with your colleagues?

Absolutely!

In this blog post, we?ll explain what an escape room is, and why employees at any level should

push for this engaging and transformative training method in the workplace.

What's an Escape Room?

Escape room training was originally designed to be something entertaining for families and friends. But it turns out that escape rooms are a powerful tool for developing teamwork, enhancing problem-solving abilities, and promoting effective communication.

An escape room is a real-life adventure game where participants are immersed in a themed environment. They're tasked with solving a series of puzzles and challenges to "escape" in a predetermined time frame.

Escape room themes could include crime, bomb defusing, espionage, futuristic, prison, murder mystery, or even bank heist settings!

You're given clues and puzzles, and must accomplish certain tasks (as a team!) in a limited amount of time in order to achieve specific goals.

The success of the participants truly hinges on effective collaboration, critical thinking, and clear communication.

Sounds like fun? Then let's find out how to persuade your company to give it a go!

How to Persuade Your Company to Embrace Escape Room Training

If you'd like your company to ditch their usual (dull) teambuilding activities, we've come up with 7 convincing reasons to strengthen your argument:

#1 Enhanced Teamwork

Escape rooms are a playground for teamwork! They require participants to leverage each other's strengths, communicate effectively, and collaborate seamlessly under the pressure of a ticking clock. You simply must work together to get out of there. The skills developed in an escape room setting transfer seamlessly to the workplace, fostering stronger bonds among team members.

#2 Faster Conflict Resolution

The challenges within an escape room often demand creative problem-solving, encouraging participants to approach challenges with a quick and fresh perspective. This translates to enhanced conflict resolution skills as employees learn to navigate and overcome obstacles collectively.

#3 More Networking Opportunities

Escape rooms provide a unique environment for colleagues to interact in a non-traditional setting, especially those that don't work so closely together under normal circumstances. Participants get to witness each other's problem-solving styles, strengths, and collaboration techniques, laying the foundation for more effective networking opportunities once they're back in the workplace.

#4 Better Communication

Communication is the cornerstone of successful collaborations. Escape room training places participants in scenarios where communication is essential. The diversity of challenges requires clear and concise communication to unravel puzzles and progress through the room as a team. This augmented communication directly transplants to the workplace. Whether it's conveying ideas during a team meeting or outlining a strategy, the enhanced communication skills acquired in an escape room setting contribute to a more cohesive, transparent, and collaborative environment.

#5 Smoother Problem-Solving

The skill of approaching problems with a fresh perspective is a valuable asset. The core essence of escape room challenges lies in the realm of problem-solving. Participants are confronted with a number of puzzles, each requiring a unique approach and solution. This constant stimulation of the problem-solving mindset hones their ability to think critically and creatively. In the workplace, this leads to an enhanced capacity to tackle complex challenges, devise innovative solutions, and adapt better to uncertainty.

#6 Increased Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is a crucial measure of organizational success. It impacts productivity, satisfaction, and workplace dynamics. Traditional team-building activities can sometimes lack the excitement needed to fully captivate participants. In contrast, escape rooms inject a sense of adventure and urgency into the experience, making it far more engaging. Plus, the fun of solving puzzles against the clock creates a memorable and enjoyable atmosphere! This not only makes training more effective, but contributes to a positive and energized team. As employees feel more invested in their training experiences, they are more likely to carry this enthusiasm in the workplace.

#7 Positive Office Culture

Last but not least, corporate culture sets the tone for the overall employee experience within an organization. Escape room training, with its emphasis on collaboration, communication, and problem-solving, fosters a more positive culture. The shared experience of overcoming challenges and achieving a common goal strengthens the sense of camaraderie among team members. When teambuilding is a success, this feeling extends beyond the escape room, influencing day-to-day interactions and creating great memories. The cohesive culture cultivated through escape room training contributes to increased employee morale, job satisfaction, and a sense of belonging. Ultimately, this leads to reduces turnover and attracts strong talent, positioning the company as an employer of choice.

Conclusion

There you have it: 7 great benefits to convince your boss and HR to book escape room training for your next team building event.

As we've seen, escape room training offers an entirely new and immersive approach to team building, conflict resolution, and networking. The dynamic and necessarily collaborative nature of these events not only helps employees to refine essential workplace skills, but also contributes to a more positive and collaborative organizational culture.

In fact, escape room training is a very smart investment for companies seeking to nurture a highly skilled, cohesive, and motivated team.

By embracing this unconventional yet effective training tool, organizations position themselves on the forefront of professional development, encouraging a workplace where creativity, communication, and collaboration thrive.

Key takeaways

Originally designed for entertainment, escape rooms have emerged as powerful tools for enhancing teamwork, conflict resolution, and networking within the workplace

Escape room training offers an entertaining yet highly efficient departure from traditional

team-building activities by providing an immersive and engaging experience that fosters collaboration, problem-solving, and communication skills

The skills developed in an escape room setting directly translate to the workplace, leading to improved productivity, satisfaction, and overall workplace dynamics

Escape room training contributes to a positive organizational culture by strengthening camaraderie, boosting morale, and fostering a sense of belonging among team members

Embracing escape room training demonstrates a smart commitment to professional development and positions organizations as innovative and forward-thinking employers

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Applicant Tracking Systems ? Your Best Friend or Worst Enemy?

7. Title: Job Search

Apr 1, 2024

Job Hopping with Purpose - The Art of Strategic Career Changes

Who likes Snakes & Ladders? If you're an ambitious professional, you're going to want to play this game! Dive into our blog post, "Job Hopping with Purpose - The Art of Strategic Career Changes", where we share the secrets to fast-tracking your professional goals. Discover why strategic job hopping is not a bad thing. It's more than just changing jobs – in fact, it's about calculated moves and progressing your career strategically, much like Snakes and Ladders. We divulge four crucial steps to get you there faster. Ready to play? Click the link to discover the art of job hopping and accelerate your success!

More ?

Content: "Job hopping" is often a dirty expression when it comes to recruitment.

Job seekers are afraid that shorter-term roles on their resume might make them look unreliable.

Hiring managers may see job hoppers as unlikely to stay very long in their organization.

There's definitely some truth from both perspectives.

However, much of this perception comes down to how the job hopping is presented on paper and during interviews. Because there's a very big difference between aimlessly switching roles a lot because you don't know what you want, versus jumps that make total sense for career progression. Every move to a new business or job involves gaining fresh expertise and skills. Conversely, if you stay at one company doing the same job for several years, your professional growth will likely slow down.

So it makes sense to shake things up occasionally to keep you moving forward professionally.

Although it can be seen as a riskier approach, taking strategic jumps towards your career goals by hopping from one job to another in a relatively short frame of time could get you there faster.

In the following post, we'll talk about why strategic job hopping is actually a very smart move for your career. We'll also share ways to approach job hopping with purpose, emphasizing the

importance of carefully planned career changes to propel you towards your professional goals.

4 Steps to Strategic Job Hopping

Job-hopping is certainly not for everyone: not only do you have to have a plan, but you must be willing to take a bit of risk to turn the cards in your favour.

Think of it like Snakes & Ladders. The game carries inherent risks, with players having minimal control over dice rolls (e.g. available jobs at any one time) and the unpredictability of snakes leading to setbacks (e.g. the job market, candidate competition). The ultimate goal is to reach the final square on the board (your target career goal). It's all about progressing rapidly upwards through dice rolls and ladders (strategic job hopping), while overcoming challenges posed along the way.

Without a clear plan in place, you run the risk of falling into the trap of aimless job moves (or, perhaps worse still, not taking risks at all because you haven't got a plan).

That's why a deliberate job ladder strategy is crucial; it not only ensures that each career transition contributes meaningfully to your professional growth, but also instills confidence in potential employers by showcasing your deliberate and purposeful journey toward success.

Below we share 4 crucial steps to take when planning a job ladder hop. As you work your way through each step, write down your responses to any questions or prompts given.

#1 Identify Your Longer and Medium-Term Career Goals

The first step before making strategic career moves is to clearly define your actual career aspirations.

Ask yourself: What do you envision for yourself in the next three to five years? Do you aspire to become a manager, transition into a specialist role, or work abroad, for example? Identifying these goals provides a game map for your job ladder trajectory.

Don't just think about it. Make it more concrete by writing it down.

Understanding your objectives enables you to make informed decisions about the types of roles and experiences that will propel you toward your goals.

#2 Map Out Your Path

Once your goals are identified, it's time to map out the steps needed to achieve them.

Assess your current position and determine the gap between your current role and your target role. Are there specific skills or experiences you lack? Is there a particular company known for fostering the kind of professional growth you seek?

For instance, if you aim to become a manager within three years, consider the skills and experiences required for such a position, so you can strategize your moves accordingly.

Also consider the job levels between your current and target position. Identify roles that will act as stepping stones towards your ultimate career destination.

Write these down alongside your responses to #1. This comprehensive mapping will guide your decisions when exploring new opportunities.

#3 Review Target Job Descriptions

To successfully transition into higher-level or more specialist roles, it's crucial to understand the requirements and expectations of your target positions.

Do an internet search or check out www.jobleads.com to review job descriptions of roles you aspire to. Identify the skills, qualifications, and experiences employers are seeking. Save a copy of interesting roles so you can refer to the descriptions later on.

Armed with this information, assess your current skill set again. Identify and note down specific areas that need to be acquired or enhanced. This step aids in the development of a personalized job ladder plan, including potential resume overhauls, LinkedIn profile revisions, skills to gain, or qualifications needed.

Don't forget to jot everything down.

#4 Put Your Job Ladder Plan into Action

Finally, with a clear understanding of your goals and the skills needed to achieve them, it's time to put your plan into action.

Depending on your individual ambitions, this may entail approaching your current company for internal opportunities, or starting to look elsewhere.

Seek professional guidance, take advantage of resume review services, and revise your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile to align with your next career move.

Decide whether to seek only permanent opportunities, or if you're willing to expand your horizons by considering contract or freelance roles (an added advantage of contract and freelance roles is that they're more positively associated reasons for job hopping).

Identify and enroll in courses or training programs that will equip you with the necessary skills and qualifications. Whether through online platforms or traditional education, actively investing in your professional upskilling demonstrates commitment to potential employers.

And remember: don't just think. Do!

A Final Piece of Advice: Job Hop with Intention

While the term "job-hopping" might suggest frequent moves by a professional who doesn't know what they want, it's crucial to approach career changes with intention and a strategic mindset so that each move makes absolute sense to future employers (and yourself).

Aim for job hops in 1-2 year increments to showcase dedication to your roles and projects. Potential employers may raise eyebrows at too many short-term positions, so carefully plan your moves to emphasize progression and growth, while keeping these ladder climbs to a minimum.

If you have a deliberate strategy, then it's much easier to communicate the reasoning behind each job move, whether it's the pursuit of specialized skills, the completion of a contract, or a clear step up the career ladder.

By showcasing the purpose behind your transitions, you instill confidence in hiring managers, convincing them that each job hop is not only logical, but showcases your commitment and dedication to your career.

Conclusion

With a carefully thought-out and strategic approach, rapid career changes (AKA job hopping) can propel professionals toward their goals at an accelerated pace.

The art of job-hopping with purpose lies in intentional moves, careful planning, and a commitment to continuous learning.

As we've seen, strategic job hopping is like Snakes & Ladders, where career progression mirrors the game's dynamics of calculated risks. Like players navigating the board, professionals

strategically plan their moves towards the final square (their career goals). They must carefully navigate setbacks (snakes) and advancements (ladders) along the way to achieve success in their desired roles.

By identifying your long-term objectives, mapping out a clear path, reviewing target job descriptions, and putting the plan into action in a deliberate and logical way, you will position yourself for success.

Key takeaways

Job hopping involves the pursuit of increasingly progressive shorter-term roles, usually with different organizations, to climb the career ladder faster

Job hopping can be compared to the game Snakes & Ladders, where deliberate planning (ladder climbs) and overcoming setbacks (snakes) lead to reaching the final square (target career goal)

4 Essential Steps: Execute strategic job hopping by identifying career goals, mapping out progression steps, identifying needed skills/expertise with target job descriptions, and taking intentional career moves while focusing on continuous learning

Develop a deliberate job ladder strategy, ensuring each career transition contributes meaningfully to professional growth while underlining the logic of each move to future employers

Approach job hopping with a strategic mindset, aiming for deliberate moves in 1-2 year increments to showcase dedication, progression, and growth while minimizing employer concerns

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8. Title: Job Application

Mar 25, 2024

How to quickly craft cover letters using AI chatbots

Ever wondered if crafting a cover letter could be as quick as ordering your favorite coffee? The secret lies in tapping into the prowess of AI chatbots like ChatGPT, Bing Chat, and Gemini. Our career coaches share a 4-step magic wand for applicants - provide your resume, the job description, and let the AI weave a cover letter masterpiece with our tried-and-tested prompts. Intrigued? Discover how AI seamlessly transforms your aspirations into compelling prose. Dive into the blog post now!

More ?

Content: Writing cover letters for Every. Single. Job. you apply for can feel like a real chore.

Even if the hiring manager doesn't read it, we're advised to include one as a professional courtesy anyway.

No wonder the effort sometimes doesn't seem worth it.

Wouldn't it be great if cover letters could be whipped up quickly for jobs you're interested in, without having to invest much time? Either way, you'd tick off the courtesy and introduction boxes, without all that effort going to waste should it not be read.

Well, there IS a way. Step forward AI chatbots like ChatGPT, Bing Chat, and Gemini (formerly Bard)!

We've been coaching job seekers for nearly twenty years in how to write effective cover letters. Our career coaches have tried and tested AI chatbots, originally trying to prove that humans are much better at it. Our conclusion? Yes, humans write great cover letters. But AI can also do an amazing (or even cough better) job.

In fact, AI is a fantastic method to produce cover letters quickly and to a high standard. If you're not a confident letter writer, or you simply don't have the time, AI will help you draft one that you would struggle to write on your own.

In this blog post, we'll talk you through four very simple steps to do it. Our career coaches have played around with prompt wording to get the best combination and result as quickly as possible (you're welcome).

For this exercise we'll use ChatGPT, however the prompts will work in a similar way with other AI chatbots.

First things first

Before getting started, we decided to ask ChatGPT how to ensure a great end result.

JobLeads:

"I would like you to create a cover letter for me. What can I do to ensure you create the best letter possible for me?"

ChatGPT:

Certainly! To help me create the best cover letter for you, here are some tips and information you can provide:

Job Description: Share the job description or provide key details about the position you're applying for. This will help me tailor the letter to match the specific requirements and skills sought by the employer.

Your Skills and Qualifications: Highlight your key skills, qualifications, and experiences that are relevant to the job. Mention any specific achievements or projects that demonstrate your capabilities.

Company Information: If you have details about the company's values, mission, or specific projects,

share them. This allows me to align your cover letter with the company culture and goals.

Your Unique Selling Points: What makes you stand out from other candidates? Whether it's a unique skill, experience, or personal quality, let me know so I can emphasize it in the letter.

Contact Information: Provide the recipient's name and title if available. If you don't have this information, it's okay; I can still create a general cover letter.

Any Specific Requests or Criteria: If the job posting mentions any specific requirements or requests, inform me so that I can address them in the cover letter.

Tone and Style: Let me know if you have a preference for a formal or slightly more casual tone. Also, mention if there are any specific points you want to highlight or avoid.

Your Career Goals: If applicable, share a bit about your career goals and how this position aligns with them. This can add a personal touch to the cover letter.

Remember, the more details you provide, the better I can tailor the cover letter to your specific needs. Feel free to share as much information as you're comfortable with!

So now that we know what will help ChatGPT to produce a great cover letter, let's dive into the

specifics. Before getting started, ensure you have your resume and the description of the job you're applying for on hand. If you have any additional information about the company, such as its values, add these to the end of the job description document before we begin.

OK ? ready? Let's get started!

Step 1: Instruction Prompt

Enter the following starter prompt into ChatGPT:

?Please create a cover letter for me. I'll provide my resume, and the job description of the role I'm applying for. In approximately 250 words, please explain why I'm a close fit. Use my resume to find details about my length of experience, key skills and qualifications relevant to the job description, as well as my unique selling points. Point out 1-2 achievements from my resume that align with the job requirements. Please make the letter concise, precise, and professionally conversational. Do you understand??

ChatGPT will reply with something along the lines of:

Yes, I understand. Please provide your resume and the job description, and I'll create a concise, precise, and professionally conversational cover letter for you.

Step 2: Paste your resume

Reply to ChatGPT with the following prompt:

?First I will share my resume. Then I will share the job description. OK??

ChatGPT:

Absolutely, that works perfectly. Please share your resume, and once you've provided the job description, I'll craft the cover letter for you.

Enter this response:

?Thank you. Here is my resume: [paste your resume here, then hit enter]?

Once you do that, ChatGPT will reply with something like:

Thank you for providing your comprehensive resume. Please share the job description for the role you're applying for, and I'll proceed to create a concise and effective cover letter for you.

Step 3: Paste the job description

Reply to ChatGPT:

?Thank you. Here is the job description: [paste the job description, then hit enter]?

Once you do this, ChatGPT will rapidly draft the cover letter based on your inputs (i.e. your resume and the job description).

Here's the job description we used for this exercise:

Job Title: Business Transformation Manager

Company: TechAdvantage Solutions

Location: Madrid, Spain

Job Description:

TechAdvantage Solutions, a forward-thinking technology company in Spain, is actively seeking a strategic Business Transformation Manager. In this pivotal role, you will bring your expertise to drive enterprise-level initiatives, streamlining operations, and fueling organizational growth. Your proven track record of successfully spearheading complex projects, implementing process improvements, and driving innovation will be instrumental in shaping our future success.

Responsibilities:

? Lead and oversee end-to-end business transformation projects, demonstrating a mastery of project management methodologies and best practices.

? Collaborate closely with cross-functional teams to identify and capitalize on opportunities for process optimization and efficiency improvement.

? Develop and implement innovative strategies to drive organizational growth, reduce costs, and

enhance overall performance.

? Leverage your keen understanding of business processes to deliver transformative results aligned with corporate objectives.

? Cultivate a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, fostering collaboration and engagement across the organization.

? Serve as a strategic advisor, providing insights and recommendations to senior leadership based on your extensive industry knowledge.

? Regularly participate in industry forums to stay abreast of the latest project management trends and best practices.

Qualifications:

? Bachelor in Business Administration, Project Management, or related field. Master preferred.

? Minimum of 10 years of progressive experience in business transformation and project management, with a focus on large-scale corporations.

? Proven expertise in project management, team leadership, stakeholder engagement, strategic planning, and change management.

? Strong skills in project scheduling, scope management, and developing comprehensive project roadmaps.

? Proficiency in business transformation, financial management, cost control, and risk management.

? Knowledge of CRM systems and experience in agile methodologies.

? Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to influence and engage stakeholders at all levels.

Application Process:

Please submit your resume, a cover letter highlighting your relevant experience, and a summary of a successful business transformation project you have led.

TechAdvantage Solutions is committed to fostering diversity in its workforce and is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or

veteran status.

Step 4: Review and edit the cover letter (if needed)

Based on the resume and job description provided, here's what ChatGPT created for our fictional job seeker:

Enrico Caruso

Barcelona, Spain ? 123 456 7890 ? ennycaruso@email.com | LinkedIn Profile

Dear Hiring Team,

I am writing to express my strong interest in the Business Transformation Manager position at TechAdvantage Solutions, as advertised. With a proven track record of spearheading enterprise-level initiatives and driving innovation, I am confident in my ability to contribute to your organization's success.

Over the past decade, I have excelled in senior project management roles, most recently as Senior Project Manager at IberiaInnovate Global. There, I led a comprehensive business process reengineering project resulting in a 20% reduction in operational costs and a 15% improvement in efficiency. My experience aligns seamlessly with your requirements, including expertise in project management, team leadership, strategic planning, and change management.

In my role at IberiaInnovate, I successfully implemented a new project management tool, reducing project completion times by 10%. Additionally, I managed the seamless implementation of a new ERP system, achieving a 25% improvement in data accuracy. These accomplishments demonstrate my ability to streamline operations and drive transformative results, skills that directly align with your needs.

With a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, PMP and CCMP certifications, and proficiency in agile methodologies, I bring a robust skill set to enhance TechAdvantage Solutions' business transformation initiatives. My commitment to diversity aligns with your company values, and I am eager to contribute to a culture of continuous improvement.

Enclosed is my resume, providing further details on my achievements and qualifications. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how my skills and experiences make me a strong fit for the Business Transformation Manager role at TechAdvantage Solutions.

Thank you for considering my application. I am excited about the possibility of contributing to your dynamic team and driving transformative change within TechAdvantage Solutions.

Sincerely,

Enrico Caruso

I think we can all agree that ChatGPT did a pretty good job, don't you think? When doing your own letter, review it carefully for accuracy and flow. If you've used the prompts provided, there should only be a few minor tweaks needed, if any.

Conclusion

There you have it. In just a few simple steps (and only a few seconds if you use our prompts to speed things up), ChatGPT has produced a fantastic cover letter with almost no effort from the user. So ? why not give it a try for yourself? Tip: ensure your resume is up-to-date and ideally pre-tailored towards the types of job you're applying for, to make the end result from the AI chatbot even more precise.

Good luck with your faster, more streamlined job applications using AI chatbots!

Key takeaways

Chore No More: Writing cover letters for each job application can be tedious, but AI chatbots like ChatGPT, Bing Chat, and Gemini offer a quick and efficient solution

While humans can write excellent cover letters, AI chatbots can produce equally impressive results, making them an effective method for those short on time or confidence

Discover our simple four-step process (+ prompts!) to generate cover letters with AI chatbots like ChatGPT. Note: Have your resume and the job description on hand before getting started

To enhance the AI's effectiveness, provide specific details such as the job description, your unique

selling points, contact information, and any specific requests or criteria. This ensures a cover letter that aligns with individual needs

While the AI generates the cover letter, you should still review it for accuracy and flow. Minor tweaks may be needed, but overall, the AI-generated content serves as an excellent starting point for a personalized cover letter

Explore more articles

Your Career Countdown - How to Craft a Professional (and Personal!) Life Worth Living

10 Things That Recruiters Really, Really Want Job Seekers to Know

10 Unconventional (But Cool!) Jobs to Inspire Your Career Pivot

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Job Hopping with Purpose - The Art of Strategic Career Changes

Upskilling while you sleep? AKA The world of hypnagogic learning

Here?s how to fight age bias against your job application!

Applicant Tracking Systems ? Your Best Friend or Worst Enemy?

9. Title: Personal Development

Mar 20, 2024

Upskilling while you sleep? AKA The world of hypnagogic learning

Ready to transform your sleep into a power-learning session? Discover the enormous potential of hypnagogic learning - the art of upskilling while you're falling asleep! Learn about the fascinating state between wakefulness and slumber, where your mind becomes a powerhouse for learning and skill development. From guided sessions to visualization techniques and cutting-edge devices, we share 6 methods to maximize your professional potential and gain a competitive edge in your career journey. Sweet dreams just got a whole lot smarter!

More ?

Content: What's one thing that can get you ahead in your current job and your future career path?

UPSKILLING

Jobs don't remain static, and nor do the skills required to do them. Think back to when you were first hired for your most recent job. How have the skills you needed then, changed now?

Almost certainly, you've had to learn new tricks and hacks to adapt. A great example is AI: over the past year or so, AI has touched a lot of jobs. From drafting communications and presentations to designing strategies or even creating marketing campaigns, tools such as ChatGPT have become essential for many. If you're interacting with these, then you had to learn how to do that.

And that's just one example. What other hard skills (objective job-related competencies) or soft skills (subjective attributes or interpersonal abilities) have you developed over time?

Now, let's take this a step further. Think about your job now, as well as any related abilities you foresee needing in the near future. Write these down.

The next question is: how can you go about gaining those skills, right now, so you can stay ahead?

Probably you think you're too busy at the moment. You're at work for 8+ hours a day. Then you have a family or busy home life to take care of. By the time the weekend comes around, you're

exhausted. There's simply not enough time to study anything new.

But what if there was a way to enhance your skills while you sleep? There is. Step forward hypnagogic learning!

The hypnagogic state is a phenomenon that occurs during the transition between wakefulness and sleep. During this transitional stage, sensory perceptions can be experienced.

In this blog post, we'll explore what hypnagogic learning is, and delve into 6 methods to leverage this unique state for skill development.

You'll discover how you can maximize your potential, gaining a competitive edge in your career journey.

What is Hypnagogic Learning?

Hypnagogic learning involves the absorption of information and learning new skills during the above-mentioned transitional phase between wakefulness and sleep.

This state is characterized by vivid thoughts, creative insights, and enhanced receptivity to external stimuli.

By tapping into the hypnagogic state, individuals can potentially enhance memory consolidation and accelerate the learning process.

Read on to learn more about how to try this for yourself.

Methods to Harness Hypnagogic Learning

#1 Guided Hypnagogic Learning Sessions

Engage in structured hypnagogic learning sessions using guided meditation designed to lead you into the transitional state between wakefulness and sleep. Select meditation content relevant to your learning objectives. The guided nature of these sessions helps relax the mind, allowing for increased receptivity to the suggested information.

How?

Find guided hypnagogic learning sessions through meditation apps or online platforms. Look for recordings specifically designed for skill acquisition or knowledge enhancement. Before bedtime, create a calming environment, use comfortable headphones, and listen to the guided session.

Ensure the content aligns with your learning goals, whether it's language acquisition, leadership skills, or specific professional competencies.

#2 Visualization Techniques

Visualization involves mentally rehearsing the successful execution of tasks or the acquisition of specific skills. Before bedtime, you can vividly imagine yourself mastering challenges at work, delivering a flawless presentation, or seamlessly applying new knowledge. Visualization taps into the brain's ability to enhance muscle memory and reinforce neural pathways, creating a mental blueprint for success.

How?

Set aside a few minutes before sleep to visualize a specific success. Create a mental image of yourself excelling in a particular professional scenario, implementing a new skill, or achieving a career milestone. Focus on details like surroundings, actions, and positive outcomes. Make the visualization vivid and positive to enhance its impact. Repeat this practice regularly to reinforce a positive mindset and enhance your confidence in acquiring new skills.

#3 Affirmations for Skill Enhancement

Craft positive statements that affirm your ability to learn, grow, and excel. Write these affirmations on a notecard or use a mobile app for daily reminders. Repeat these affirmations during the hypnagogic state to influence your subconscious mind positively.

How?

Develop personalized affirmations related to your specific learning goals. Craft statements that reinforce your belief in your ability to learn and excel in your chosen skills. For instance, if you're learning programming, affirmations like "I easily grasp complex coding concepts" can boost confidence and create a mindset conducive to efficient learning. Repeat them during the hypnagogic state, emphasizing positivity and self-assurance. Consistency is key, so integrate these affirmations into your nightly routine.

#4 Pre-Sleep Learning Audios

Choose informative and calming audios related to your professional goals. This could include

educational podcasts, audiobooks, or lectures. By listening to these materials as you drift off to sleep, you expose your mind to valuable information. The auditory input during the hypnagogic state can facilitate a subtle, subconscious understanding of complex concepts.

How?

Curate a playlist of educational audios or podcasts relevant to your specific area of interest. Choose content that balances informativeness with a soothing tone. As you wind down before sleep, play these audios at a comfortable volume. Ensure they are not overly stimulating to promote a smooth transition into the hypnagogic state. Use a sleep timer if needed to avoid disruptions during the night.

#5 Mindful Breathing Exercises

Incorporate mindfulness into your bedtime routine with deep breathing exercises. Focus on your breath, inhaling and exhaling slowly and deliberately. Mindful breathing promotes relaxation, reduces stress, and optimizes your mental state for hypnagogic learning. The heightened focus achieved through this practice can enhance your ability to absorb information during the transitional phase to sleep.

How?

Dedicate a few minutes to mindful breathing before bedtime. Find a quiet space, sit, or lie down comfortably, and focus on your breath. Inhale deeply, counting to four, hold for four counts, and exhale slowly. Repeat this cycle. As you breathe, let go of any tension or stress. This mindfulness practice not only prepares your mind for sleep, but also enhances your receptivity to learning during the hypnagogic state.

#6 Sleep-Triggered Learning Devices

Explore innovative devices designed to optimize the hypnagogic state for learning. These devices may use neurostimulation, subtle cues, or specific patterns to trigger the brain's learning centers during specific sleep cycles. It's essential to research and choose reputable devices that align with your learning goals for a hands-free and efficient learning experience.

How?

Research and invest in reputable sleep-triggered learning devices available on the market. Do an internet search for reviews and recommendations by others. These may include wearable devices, smart pillows, or bedside gadgets. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for setup and use. Experiment with the device to find the settings that work best for you, optimizing your hypnagogic learning experience.

Conclusion

By integrating guided sessions, visualization, affirmations, pre-sleep audios, mindful breathing, and cutting-edge devices, you can effortlessly harness the power of the hypnagogic state to enhance your professional and personal capabilities.

Whether you're a job seeker aiming to stand out in interviews, or a professional looking to advance in your current job or career, exploring the potential of hypnagogic learning may provide you with a unique and efficient edge in your ongoing pursuit of excellence.

Sweet dreams and good luck with your upskilling endeavors!

Key takeaways:

Continuous learning and upskilling are crucial for career growth and adaptability in your current job and in your future career

If you're struggling to make time during the day to learn new skills, then explore the concept of hypnagogic learning. It's a unique state between wakefulness and sleep that can potentially enhance memory consolidation and accelerate learning

Engage in structured sessions using guided meditation to relax the mind and increase receptivity to information

Visualization techniques: mentally rehearse success before sleep, creating vivid images of excelling in professional scenarios to enhance muscle memory and reinforce neural pathways

Craft positive statements affirming your ability to learn, grow, and excel in specific skills, repeating them during the hypnagogic state for positive influence

Curate a playlist of informative and calming pre-sleep audios relevant to professional goals,

exposing the mind to valuable information during the hypnagogic state

Incorporate deep (mindful) breathing exercises before bedtime to promote relaxation, reduce stress, and optimize the mind for hypnagogic learning

Explore innovative sleep-triggered devices designed to optimize the hypnagogic state for learning, such as wearable devices or smart pillows, to trigger learning centers during sleep cycles

Integrate these methods to harness the power of hypnagogic learning, providing a unique and effective edge for job seekers and professionals looking to advance in their careers

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How to quickly craft cover letters using AI chatbots

Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

Applicant Tracking Systems ? Your Best Friend or Worst Enemy?

10. Title: Job Search

Mar 12, 2024

Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

Are you worried about how your job application might be sending unintentional age-related signals? Our latest blog reveals tried-and-proven strategies to navigate through initial recruitment filters and defy age stereotypes related to "older" professionals. We share a wealth of subtle tweaks for a resume that speaks volumes about your skills, not your birth year! Don't let age bias stand between you and your dream job. Click the link now to arm yourself with 13 actionable tactics that put your experience in the spotlight.

More ?

Content: Are you concerned about facing age bias in your job search?

As we progress in our careers, the possibility of encountering age discrimination becomes a reasonable concern. Especially when your peers begin noticing it happening to them, too.

We can all agree: age should not be a determining factor in one's ability to perform a job effectively. Unfortunately, a number of studies and anecdotal evidence confirm that age bias is prevalent, particularly during the earliest stages of recruitment, such as resume screening.

This article isn't about spooking you. Instead, we want to empower you to fight back. But to do this, you need to understand what first-stage filterers (AKA applicant tracking systems or human resume screeners such as internal recruiters) look out for, and then deploy tactics to overcome these.

Because at the end of the day, it's not your age that matters: it's your ability to do the job, evidenced by your background and experience vs subjective biases and first impressions.

In this blog post, we explore 13 common signals that may inadvertently reveal your age to recruiters. We also share easily actionable tactics to mitigate the potential for age discrimination against your job application.

Understanding Age Bias in Hiring

But first things first. What exactly is "age bias"?

Age bias often stems from preconceived notions and stereotypes about different age groups, usually from those younger or older than that particular group. Some common age biases in recruitment include:

Assumptions about "older workers": Hiring decision makers may wrongly assume that older candidates are less adaptable, resistant to technology, and lack energy. These biases overlook the valuable skills and experience seasoned candidates bring to the table

Perception of productivity in younger candidates: Some recruiters may believe that younger candidates are more productive and have greater long-term potential. This bias can disadvantage older applicants in securing roles with growth prospects

Youth-centric innovation: Societal emphasis on youth is often associated with innovation. Despite possessing knowledge, stability, and expertise, older candidates may seem less attractive to companies that prioritize a perceived connection between youth and groundbreaking ideas

Cost considerations: Managers may view older workers as more expensive due to higher salary expectations and benefits. This bias can lead to a preference for younger candidates who are seen as more cost-effective resources

Tech proficiency misconceptions: Swift technological changes may lead hiring managers to believe that older individuals will struggle with new tech, even when it's not necessarily true

Team cohesion concerns: Recruiters might worry that older candidates will have difficulty fitting into younger teams, leading to a bias in favor of younger candidates for better team cohesion

(Un)conscious personal biases: Recruiters, like everyone else, harbor unconscious biases tied to age, which can contribute to discrimination during the hiring process

Fighting Back: 13 Powerful Strategies to Address Age Bias Triggers

Drawing on our nearly twenty years of coaching thousands of job seekers and engaging with hundreds of recruiters and headhunters, our career experts have compiled 13 age bias signals and counter tactics to reduce triggering subconscious discrimination against your job application.

#1 Shorten Your Resume Career History

Focus on recent roles, primarily the last 10-15 years of your career. With the greater emphasis these days on resumes tailored to specific role types vs your entire career history anyway, recruiters won't be suspicious if you trim yours down. If you wish to mention previous relevant roles, then you can simply add a line to list any earlier job titles and company names if relevant.

#2 Manage Your Resume Length:

Keep your resume concise, ideally within two pages. Unless you're a project professional or work in academia, avoid an excessively long resume (3 pages or more). Long resumes signal an abundance of experience, potentially triggering age bias.

#3 Exclude Graduation Years:

Putting the year you graduated from high school or university is one of the first things that give away how old you are. In most cases, when you graduated doesn't even matter: it's your actual practical experience that counts. So, omit graduation years from your resume to shift the focus to your skills and qualifications rather than your age. Highlight what you studied, showcasing the relevance of your education to the position.

#4 Limit Personal Details:

Remove unnecessary personal details such as your date of birth, or your birth year from your email address, to minimize age-related cues.

#5 Update Job Titles:

Modernize outdated job titles to align with the positions you're applying for. For example, job titles including the word "clerk" are no longer common. Use current industry-standard titles to ensure your career history is easy to understand and avoids perceptions of being dated.

#6 Choose an ATS-Friendly Template:

Opt for a modern Applicant Tracking System (ATS)-friendly template to improve compatibility with automated screening processes. That means avoiding text boxes, graphics, icons, columns or images, as ATS can't "read" these properly.

#7 Select Modern Fonts:

Fonts are not only a sign of generational trends (remember the Comic Sans craze of the 1990s?); they can also heavily influence the recipient's impression of you. Choose contemporary fonts like Calibri or Arial to give your resume a fresh and current appearance. Traditional options like Times New Roman not only look fuddy-duddy, but they can be visually unappealing to modern audiences.

#8 Remove Outdated Skills or Interests

Eliminate outdated skills that may signal an older skill set, such as shorthand, filing, WordPerfect, or Y2K-related expertise. Emphasize proficiency in current technologies and tools relevant to your industry, such as cloud-based software.

#9 Avoid Double Spacing

Use single spacing between sentences to avoid signaling an outdated typing style associated with older workers (i.e. those who learned to type on a typewriter).

#10 Remove References

While some younger job seekers may also include a references section (or the ubiquitous "References Upon Request") upon the advice of older family members, it's more common knowledge with this crowd that a reference section is no longer expected by contemporary employers.

#11 Objective Statement

While we're on the subject of contemporary, here's something to be aware of: objective statements at the top of your resume are so last century. The objective of your application is addressed in your cover letter. Instead, use this space for a short paragraph that summarises who you are professionally - your career level, experience, and key industries/areas of expertise. This will get the attention of recruiters much more than a generic and bland statement.

#12 Hobbies & Interests

Unless you have some unique hobbies and interests, it's generally recommended to leave these out of your resume altogether these days (otherwise, every resume would state travel, reading, and food as pastimes!). This is especially true for anything that may hint at being of a more experienced generation, such as CD collecting (nothing against CDs, of course!). If it's unexciting (to the reader)

or dates you, then leave it off.

#13 Copies of Certificates

Another clue that you could be an older applicant is that you include copies of your certifications and qualifications at the end of your resume. This used to be common practice until about 15 or 20 years ago. It's no longer required unless HR asks for these later in the hiring process. Otherwise, they're not necessary - or even wanted. Mention these if relevant in your resume instead.

Conclusion

It's important to note that honesty and transparency are vital. So never actually deceive or lie about your age to potential employers.

You can't control how applicant tracking systems, recruiters, or hiring managers perceive your application. However, there's lots you can do to get past biases and stereotypes without resorting to dishonesty.

By using these 13 tactics, you'll have greater success in bypassing initial filters and ensuring your experience and skills take center stage. If a company engages in age discrimination despite your efforts, consider it a red flag about their values and culture.

In summary: embrace your experience and expertise. Never forget that they're valuable assets, no matter how early or far along your career path you are.

Key takeaways

Age bias in hiring is fueled by stereotypes and preconceptions about different age groups

Shorten your career history: focus on recent roles within the last 10-15 years to highlight relevant expertise vs length of experience

Keep your resume concise (ideally within 2 pages) to avoid signaling an abundance of experience

Omit graduation years to shift focus to skills and qualifications rather than age

Minimize age-related cues by removing unnecessary personal details such as your birth year in your email address

Modernize earlier job titles (if necessary) to align with current industry trends

Opt for a modern resume style compatible with Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

Choose fonts like Calibri or Arial for a contemporary appearance

Emphasize proficiency in current technologies and tools; eliminate outdated resume skills

Use single spacing to avoid signaling an outdated typewriter era style

Skip including a references section as it's no longer expected by contemporary employers

Replace outdated objective statements with a short paragraph summarizing your professional identity

Avoid including generic hobbies, especially those that may hint at a more experienced generation

There's no need to include copies of your certifications or other qualifications with your resume.

When HR wants them, they'll ask. Until then, they're just extra paper that the recruiter probably won't read anyway

Remember, the goal is not to deceive, but to present your qualifications in a way that focuses on your capabilities rather than age-related assumptions.

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Applicant Tracking Systems ? Your Best Friend or Worst Enemy?

11. Title: Job Search

Mar 5, 2024

Applicant Tracking Systems ? Your Best Friend or Worst Enemy?

Applicant Tracking Systems ? your best friend or worst enemy? If you're convinced that these digital gatekeepers are stopping you from landing jobs, then this blog post is not to be missed. We rip apart the myths surrounding ATS and give it to you straight. From understanding their role in application sorting to unraveling the truth about keywords and pre-set screening questions, discover why ATS might just be your unexpected BFF in landing that dream job. Your job hunt is about to get a whole lot smarter!.

More ?

Content: Are you good at your profession?

Do you believe you're one of the top applicants whenever you apply for a job?

Do you think that too many unqualified people apply for the same jobs that you do?

If you answered yes to any of these, then you're going to want to read this blog post.

Because we're going to rip apart the claim that Applicant Tracking Systems decide whether or not your application is seen by a human eye.

And if you're someone who thinks that these systems are your enemy, we're here to tell you why you couldn't be more wrong (and that's a good thing!).

But first things first.

Remind Me ? What's an Applicant Tracking System?

Everyone thinks they know what an applicant tracking system ? or ATS ? does. They screen online applications, scan for keywords, and auto-reject people who don't fit. Because they're not human, and people don't understand how they work, ATS often miss great applicants. Not only that, some people cheat the system through tricks like mass applying through AI or pasting the job description in white font inside the resume to falsely boost keyword match. So ATS are inherently flawed.

Right?

Actually? no.

Yes, ATS are companies? digital job application gatekeepers. They come in various shapes and sizes, from basic application organizers to high-tech programs that scan your resume for keywords and integrate with the company?s HR system.

So there?s no one-size-fits-all ATS.

But regardless of their sophistication or capabilities, all ATS share one thing in common: they help companies manage tsunamis of applications for any given job, which can sometimes make Noah?s ark seem like a canoe.

Once you hit that ?Submit? button, your resume starts its own adventure within the company?s ATS. Depending on the particular brand and type of ATS, your resume will be digitally assigned to the file of the job you?re applying for. Your key information ? contact details, work experience, education, and so on ? will be pulled from your original document to create a candidate profile in the ATS.

It?s at this stage where recruiters typically review your application. They may or may not look at your original resume (for example, if the candidate profile text has parsed weirdly, they may go back and look at what you originally wrote. More on how to avoid this later.).

Now, some ATS do have the ability to scan for keywords, and rank your application accordingly. But the vast majority of ATS simply parse your resume, assign it to the correct job, create or update a candidate profile on the system for you, and sort these for the recruiter. Some also auto-reject based on your responses to screening questions that may be set at the beginning. Others organise and rank applications based on how closely they meet certain criteria.

Truth be told, it?s not always easy to figure out what ATS they?re using, or how extensive its capabilities are.

But that shouldn?t matter. What does matter is ensuring you?re applying for jobs you?re a strong fit for, and that your resume reflects this. Because that?s what will give you the best chance of success. Not the ATS.

Because let?s not forget that behind every ATS is a real, live human being. Yes, robots haven?t

taken over the world just yet. Humans still go through applications and make the final judgement call. So no need to worry about a robot uprising if you're a close fit? at least not in the HR department.

Busting the Keyword Myth

Contrary to internet rumors, ATS don't have a secret mission to scan resumes for keywords and spit out those that don't meet the criteria.

While some systems do indeed scan for keywords, and rank your application according to how closely it matches certain job description criteria, the ATS itself likely won't reject you on the basis of keywords alone.

Instead, they use this information to sort and rank your application, alongside other factors (such as pre-screening question responses, length of experience, and so on).

While we're on the subject of keywords, let's do away with another myth. We're seeing a lot of so-called career influencers and even some job boards claiming that soft skill keywords (i.e. subjective abilities or qualities) are almost as important to include in your resume as hard skills (i.e. job-related objective competencies or skills such as project management or team leadership).

No. While these might be great to mention in a cover letter, you can be sure that no recruiter searches resumes based on keywords such as "interpersonal skills" or "adaptability".

Why? Because they're incredibly subjective. And not words that a lot of job seekers would think to include in an accountant or graphic designer resume (or any resume for that matter).

Instead, recruiters look for hard skills – skills that the best-suited applicants will have included in their application.

So if you think ATS are rejecting you because you forgot to mention "flexibility" or "critical thinking" in your resume, forget it. If they're scanning for keywords, you can be assured it will be for job-related hard skills only. It's when people don't include these that the ATS and human recruiter can pass you over.

Pre-set Screening Questions – They're More Important Than You Think

If you've applied to jobs online, you'll almost certainly have come across pre-set screening (or

knock-out) questions.

These are usually questions about salary expectations, work authorization, current location, and available start date.

While they might seem annoying, or even a bit intrusive, recruiters set these for a reason. The simple truth of the matter is, if your responses to these questions are not in line with their needs, then your application won't be accepted, no matter how great you are.

And yes, at this stage, some ATS will auto-reject you. This leads applicants to think that the system has unfairly rejected a well-matched application, stopping yours from being reviewed by a human eye.

No. If it's rejected at this stage, it's almost certainly because of those pre-screening responses.

What else can help or hinder my chances with the ATS?

A lot of job seekers get angry at the technology, blaming it for their ultimate rejection by the hiring manager.

But here's the thing: No matter how great a fit you are, you may miss out on that interview if you don't pay attention to a few basic rules (which apply even for human recruiters, BTW).

Assuming ATS or recruiters will take the time to read between the lines and guess you have skills or other criteria that you haven't mentioned, or expecting them to make an exception if you answer a pre-screening question in a way that's outside their current requirements, is unfair.

If you're a strong fit, and you meet the requirements, and your pre-screening responses are in line with what they're looking for, you are guaranteed to be towards the top of the pile. The ATS will ensure that.

Aside from pre-screening responses and keywords, here are a few other tips to help your application be favorably sorted by the ATS:

Use an ATS-friendly resume template. Avoid creative templates that include columns, graphics, text boxes, or uncommon fonts (ATS can't read them). ATS parse text line-by-line and use this to create your candidate profile. If elements are unreadable or confusing, the recruiter will be irritated by the

gobbledegook. They may or may not look at your original resume to sort out the mess

Ensure your resume sections use common labels (e.g. Work History or Professional Experience instead of List of Jobs). ATS detect these when parsing your resume, and pull information for different sections of your candidate profile onto their system. If it misunderstands which text belongs to which section, this can lead to confusion

Upload the right file format (many online jobs state the preferred file format, e.g. Word or PDF). If in doubt, use Word, as it's easier for ATS to accurately parse

Include months as well as years in your job descriptions. Many ATS calculate your experience in months and years as another way to sort your application according to what the recruiter wants (and to compare you with other similar applicants) If you don't include months, the ATS may underestimate your actual total experience. You don't want that.

Conclusion

By now, you've realized that the ATS is NOT your enemy.

If you're a strong applicant who has the skills and qualifications, and your pre-screening question responses are in line with what the recruiter is looking for, AND you've taken the time to ensure your resume reflects this, then the ATS is your strongest ally.

It will ensure that your application is sorted towards the top of the pile, and will filter out those which don't meet the criteria.

Which means, your application is more likely to be seen than it might otherwise had been, if recruiters stuck to the traditional stack of printed resumes to sort through.

Just as cream floats at the top of milk, so too will your resume, thanks to the ATS.

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Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

12. Title: Job Search

Feb 26, 2024

What are headhunters and how can they help my job search?

Headhunter, recruiter, search consultant. Ever wondered what the difference is, and how they can benefit you? If you're a senior or specialist professional, then you'll want to know what they do ? and why headhunters in particular could be your gateway to that dream job. Dive into our latest blog post to discover the secrets of headhunters ? the specialists who navigate the intricate world of high-level job placements.

More ?

Content: If you've ever looked for a job, you've probably come across the terms ?recruiter?, ?recruitment consultant?, ?search consultant?, and ?headhunter?.

Do you know the difference?

For the 90% of you who aren't quite sure, this blog post is for you.

A recruiter can be internal or external. Internal recruiters usually sit within a company's HR department, and help to find and interview potential employees. An external recruiter (also known as a recruitment consultant) typically works at an agency and helps multiple companies find talent.

Then we have headhunters, who may also be called search consultants. They tend to focus on more specialized roles. As this blog post is all about these types of recruiters, we'll dive in and explore what they do in more detail below.

What's a headhunter?

A headhunter, also known as an executive recruiter or search consultant, is a specialist hired by companies to identify, evaluate, and recruit top-tier candidates for specific positions.

Unlike traditional recruiters who often focus on filling a variety of roles, headhunters specialize in sourcing candidates for high-level executive or specialized roles.

Like a detective, they proactively seek out potential candidates through their extensive networks, industry knowledge, and targeted research, often approaching individuals who may not be actively

looking for new opportunities.

Headhunters work on behalf of companies. They're primarily concerned with finding the best match for a specific job opening.

Headhunters differ from recruiters in their approach and scope. Recruiters typically work on a broader range of positions and often rely on applicants who have actively applied for a job. In contrast, headhunters are more sleuth-like, seeking out passive candidates and approaching them with intriguing career opportunities.

How can headhunters help me?

Headhunters typically specialize in particular types of roles or industries. As they are usually brought in to recruit for hard-to-fill or very particular roles, their services are best suited for mid-to-senior level professionals and those who do specialized roles, for example C-Suite, department leaders, senior legal professionals, or niche technical roles.

These types of job seeker benefit from the personalized attention, industry insights, and exclusive access to unadvertised opportunities that headhunters bring to the job search process.

Here's how headhunters add value to specialist job seekers:

Headhunters often have access to "hidden" job opportunities that are not publicly advertised (in fact, with over 80% of jobs being unadvertised, headhunters are truly an amazing gateway to great roles). They can connect job seekers with exclusive openings in their network

Headhunters possess in-depth knowledge of specific industries and can provide valuable insights into market trends, salary expectations, and skill requirements. This information helps job seekers make informed decisions

Headhunters can offer guidance on optimizing resumes to make them more appealing to employers. They understand what employers look for and can help tailor resumes to match the requirements of specific roles

Headhunters can assist job seekers in preparing for interviews by providing information about the company culture, interview format, and the expectations of the hiring manager

When a job offer is extended, headhunters can provide guidance on salary negotiations and benefits. They have knowledge of industry standards and can help job seekers secure favorable terms

Headhunters often have an extensive professional network. By connecting with them, job seekers can tap into these networks, increasing their chances of finding relevant job opportunities

Headhunters can offer career advice and guidance based on their understanding of the job market. They may suggest paths for career growth and development based on the individual's skills and aspirations

If a job seeker is not selected for a particular role, headhunters can provide constructive feedback from the employer. This feedback can be invaluable for improvement in future interviews and applications

Headhunters can conduct a confidential job search for individuals who prefer to keep their job search discreet. This is particularly beneficial for those currently employed but seeking new opportunities

How do I approach and interact with headhunters?

So now that we're clear about the benefits that headhunters can bring to specialist professionals, here are some tips in return when dealing with headhunters:

When searching for a headhunter, don't spam. Take the time to research headhunters that focus on target location, industry, and job type (for example, check out our pre-vetted headhunter listings at www.jobleads.com). Send a personalized message to your shortlist and explain clearly why you've approached them and what you're looking for

Before engaging with a headhunter, research their reputation and success rate

Clearly articulate your career goals, skills, and preferences from the start. This helps headhunters match you with positions that align with your objectives

Provide honest and detailed information about your professional background, including any gaps or

changes in employment. This transparency builds trust (remember, their reputation is always on the line, as they specialize in more high-risk assignment)

Keep your resume updated and tailored to highlight relevant skills and experiences. Ensure every detail is factual. This makes it easier for headhunters to pitch you to potential employers

Familiarize yourself with the headhunting process. Know how they operate, the industries they specialize in, and the types of roles they typically fill

Respond promptly to headhunters' inquiries and requests. This shows that you are engaged and serious about the opportunities they present

Remember: headhunters work on behalf of employers, not you (companies pay them). But their goal is to find the best fit for both parties. Be open to exploring opportunities even if they differ slightly from your initial expectations. Trust headhunters' experience and insights

If an offer is extended, negotiate thoughtfully. Headhunters can provide insights into industry standards, but it's crucial to be well-informed and assertive in negotiating your terms

Treat headhunters with professionalism and respect. Even if a particular opportunity doesn't work out, maintaining a positive relationship can lead to future collaborations or recommendations

Conclusion

If you're a senior or specialist professional, then headhunters can be your golden ticket to an incredible new job.

For those of you who are not yet at that stage of your career, we suggest an alternative approach: recruitment consultancies. External recruiters typically recruit from entry-level through to senior-level in a wide variety of industries. Do an internet search to discover great recruiters in your location and area of specialization (and, as with headhunters, always research their reviews and success rates to ensure they're the right fit for you).

Whether you opt for a headhunter or recruitment consultancy, these specialized recruiters are a fabulous source of job opportunities that may not be advertised elsewhere.

If you want to learn more about the do's & don'ts of headhunters, check out our online training

which will teach you all you need to know.

Online Training - Gaining access to headhunters

Key takeaways

Recruiters, recruitment consultants, executive recruiters, and headhunters are different terms for professionals who assist in the hiring process, each with specific roles and focuses

Headhunters, also known as executive recruiters or search consultants, specialize in identifying, evaluating, and recruiting top-tier candidates for specific, often high-level, roles

Headhunters sleuth out potential candidates through extensive networks and targeted research, approaching individuals who may not actively be seeking new opportunities

Headhunters offer valuable services including access to hidden job opportunities, in-depth industry knowledge, resume optimization guidance, interview preparation, salary negotiation assistance, constructive feedback, and more

Headhunters can conduct confidential job searches for professionals who prefer discretion, particularly beneficial for those currently employed but seeking new opportunities

When approaching potential headhunters, avoid spamming them. Research their reputation, articulate career goals clearly, provide honest professional information, and respond promptly to their inquiries

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Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

13. Title: Job Search

Feb 20, 2024

5 Secrets of Highly Successful Job Seekers

Launching into a job search can often feel like a maze with no clear path, leaving many job seekers frustrated and overwhelmed. However, hidden within the complexities of the process are 5 not-so-secret secrets that highly successful job seekers swear by. In this article, we share these strategies gleaned from two decades of coaching professionals just like you to career success.

More ?

Content: We all know there's more to job hunting success than just submitting your resume and waiting for a reply.

Yet when you're looking for a job, it can often feel like the entire process is more complicated, frustrating, and full of dead ends and missed opportunities than it needs to be.

As career coaches and job market experts, we hear this all the time from our coaching clients. And we get it. They're absolutely right.

And yet, absolutely wrong.

Because many times, what turned into a pain point was actually born from missing a vital step, or not fully understanding how hiring work.

Today, we're going to share with you the 5 secrets of highly successful job seekers, gathered from two decades of coaching professionals to career success.

Disclaimer: Let's start off by saying that these aren't actually secrets. That's because they seem so obvious, yet many job seekers don't take these factors into consideration in their haste to find something.

Yet as basic as these 'secrets' seem, they really are the key to landing that amazing job.

Successful job seekers understand the nuances of the process. They patiently embrace a multifaceted approach that goes beyond the standard job application routine, while keeping their eye

on the basics.

So let's dive into these 5 'secrets' that set them apart.

#1 Clear Personal Branding

Just imagine: a recruiter scrolling through a mountain of resumes. How do YOU stand out? Successful job seekers know the answer lies in clear personal branding. It's about more than just showcasing your skills; it's about crafting a robust narrative that resonates with your target audience.

Pro tips:

Craft a Compelling Summary Statement: Start your resume with a concise, impactful summary that snappily highlights who you are and what you do, such as: 'Meticulous and flexible technician with nearly two decades of experience as a plumber, electrician, construction foreman, and laborer in residential, commercial, and industrial settings.' There's no mistaking their personal brand with this statement.

Highlight Achievements and Impactful Results: Potential employers want to see not only what you were hired to do, but how you made a personal impact. Showcase quantifiable achievements, like 'Transformed social media strategy, resulting in a 40% increase in engagement and 25% growth in followers within 6 months.'

Tailor Your Content to Your Target Audience: Customize your resume and LinkedIn with industry-relevant language, rather than making it too generic. For example, if you're applying for a marketing specialist role: 'Executed data-driven marketing strategies, leading to a 15% increase in customer acquisition with 3 months.'

Create a Consistent Visual Identity: Maintain a cohesive visual identity with a consistent color scheme and professional headshot on LinkedIn, ensuring a visually appealing and professional presentation. Leverage the background photo option with an image that supports your visual identity (for example, if you're an architect, then an image of building or blueprint you designed)

#2 Networking Skills: Building Bridges, Not Just Contacts

It's not just about what you know, but also WHO you know. Successful job seekers recognize the power of networking and go beyond collecting business cards. They build genuine connections and actively engage with their professional community. And don't forget: around 80% of jobs are unadvertised. A large number of those are filled through personal and professional connections.

Pro tips:

Participate in Industry Events: Attend industry-specific conferences and networking events to connect with peers. Engage in discussions and share insights to build meaningful connections for potential job opportunities.

Utilize Online Platforms: Leverage LinkedIn to showcase your portfolio and connect with professionals. Actively engage in discussions, expanding your online network and visibility.

Engage with Local Professional Communities: Attend local meetups and association events to connect with professionals in your region. Building local relationships can open doors to job opportunities and provide insights into local market needs.

Informational Interviews: Request informational interviews with peers or firms you admire. Use these meetings to gain insights, expand your network, and potentially uncover job opportunities through referrals.

#3 Adaptability and Continuous Learning

The one and only constant in today's job market is change. Successful job seekers embrace this reality and position themselves as lifelong learners. They understand that staying relevant requires a commitment to continuous learning and adaptation.

Pro tips:

Skill Upgradation: Stay current with industry trends by regularly learning new skills, making yourself a more appealing candidate to employers seeking adaptable professionals

Explore Diverse Job Search Strategies: Embrace flexibility by exploring freelance, contract, or even part-time opportunities, showcasing your openness to diverse career paths

Seek Feedback and Learn from Rejections: Use job rejections as learning opportunities by seeking feedback and adapting your approach based on constructive criticism. This resilience and commitment to improvement make you better prepared for future opportunities

#4 Strategic Job Hunting (AKA Effective Time Management)

Time is a valuable currency when it comes to job hunting. Successful job seekers approach their search strategically, recognizing the importance of effective time management. They set realistic goals, prioritize tasks, and create a well-thought-out plan to keep on top of every aspect of their search.

Pro tips:

Set Clear Goals: Sounds obvious, but this is the backbone of a successful search. Define specific and achievable job search goals to stay focused. Allocate time for researching companies, customizing applications, and networking to ensure a balanced and efficient job-hunting strategy

Prioritize Tasks: Prioritize job search tasks based on their importance and urgency. By focusing on high-priority activities such as tailoring resumes and cover letters, you maximize the impact of your efforts and use your time effectively

Research Companies Efficiently: Streamline company research by targeting organizations aligning

with your values and career goals. This strategic approach not only saves time but ensures you invest energy in opportunities that closely match your aspirations

Follow a Structured Schedule: Establish a structured daily or weekly schedule for job hunting activities. Dedicate specific time slots to tasks like networking, application submissions, and interview preparations, broken down into manageable chunks of time. This way, you create a disciplined routine that optimizes your time management during the job search

#5 Resilience and Perseverance

Job hunting is a rollercoaster of emotions, no doubt about it. The thrill of an interview, the disappointment of rejection, the frustration and hope of waiting to hear back. Successful job seekers possess a unique trait throughout the job-hunting lifecycle: resilience. They learn from setbacks, stay positive, and navigate the journey with unwavering perseverance.

Pro tips:

Learn from Setbacks: View rejections as learning opportunities and seek constructive feedback. Adapting based on this feedback enhances your resilience and positions you for future success

Maintain a Positive Mindset: Stay positive during the job search by focusing on your strengths and achievements. A positive mindset not only boosts your resilience but also makes you more appealing to potential employers

Adapt Your Approach: If certain strategies aren't yielding results, be flexible and adapt your approach. Embrace new techniques, networks, or industries to showcase your versatility and perseverance in pursuing opportunities

Celebrate Small Wins: Acknowledge and celebrate small achievements throughout your job search journey. Recognizing progress, no matter how incremental, reinforces your perseverance and keeps you motivated for the challenges ahead. So go ahead and eat that cake, go to the gym, meet up

with friends, or take time off to relax.

Conclusion

Forget a one-size-fits-all approach. Successful job seekers tailor their strategies to their unique strengths and the demands of the market.

The keyword here is strategy. They leverage 5 strategic "secrets" to reach that end goal: Clear personal branding, effective networking, adaptability, strategic time management, and resilience form the foundation of a successful job search.

So, craft your narrative, build meaningful connections, stay agile, manage your time wisely, and most importantly, embrace the journey with resilience and regular pats on the back. The path to your dream job might be winding, but with these secrets in your arsenal, you're well-equipped for success.

Key takeaways:

Clear Personal Branding: Successful job seekers stand out by crafting a compelling narrative in their resumes and LinkedIn profiles, showcasing achievements and maintaining a consistent identity

Networking Skills: Building genuine connections is crucial. Successful job seekers actively engage in industry events, utilize online platforms, attend local professional communities, and leverage informational interviews to discover job opportunities

Adaptability and Continuous Learning: Lifelong learning is key. Smart job seekers regularly upgrade skills, explore job search strategies, and use rejections as learning opportunities, making them more appealing to employers

Strategic Job Hunting (Effective Time Management): Time is valuable. Successful job seekers set clear goals, prioritize tasks, efficiently research companies, and follow a structured schedule to maximize their efforts and stay focused

Resilience and Perseverance: Emotional resilience is crucial. Successfully job seekers learn from

setbacks, maintain a positive mindset, adapt their approach, and celebrate small wins to stay motivated throughout the job search

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14. Title: Job Search

Feb 14, 2024

Reverse Mentorship - Learning from the next generation

Ever wondered how the tech mastery and entrepreneurial flair of Gen Z could revolutionize your own approach to work? Dive into the world of Reverse Mentorship! In our latest blog post, discover 6 game-changing lessons that go beyond age, transforming the way you navigate tech, diversity, and change. Ready to reimagine your professional journey? Click the link to get started!

More ?

Content: Have you ever found yourself secretly in awe of the tech wizardry of your younger colleagues, wondering how they effortlessly navigate the digital realm?

Not only that: they generally seem more at ease with embracing creativity and risk in the workplace.

Which leads to the next question: What's stopping you from asking how they do it, so you can learn, too?

Here's what's putting the brakes on: the social and cultural norms of expecting the less seasoned to look up to the more experienced.

The fact is, we're missing out on incredibly valuable knowledge by shying away from mentorship opportunities in the workplace, merely based on someone's age. What's the point being a fuddy-duddy, when you can easily tap into ways to make your work better and faster?

That's where the concept of Reverse Mentorship comes in. Reverse Mentorship is the art of seasoned professionals assimilating skills from their younger counterparts. This transformative practice not only challenges age-old norms, but also brings forth a wealth of knowledge and innovative approaches that can redefine the way more experienced professionals approach their work.

In this article, we'll share six compelling reasons why more experienced professionals can tremendously benefit from the reverse mentorship of Gen Z professionals (AKA zoomers).

#1 Tech-Savvy Prowess

It's undeniable: Digital natives have grown up in an era dominated by technology. Their innate ability to navigate and leverage the latest digital tools is just that - native. Boomers, Gen X, and Millennials, while by no means lacking in ability, can tap into this more recent expertise to stay updated on emerging technologies, digital trends, and innovative solutions. In fact, embracing this reverse mentorship in the workplace can bridge the technological gap, empowering the rest of us to adapt to the fast-paced digital landscape.

Bethany, a Marketing Manager, was hired for her wealth of expertise and marketing software knowledge. But there was one tool that a lot of her younger colleagues were using that she hadn't taken the leap into yet: AI chatbots like ChatGPT and Google Bard. She loved new programs, but she struggled to get her head around the idea of AI chatbots. By engaging in reverse mentorship with a Gen Z colleague who was happy to teach her, Bethany not only picked it up quickly, but realized that AI chatbots aren't as complicated as she'd assumed. Learning about these tools led to greater productivity across the department, as she was no longer quick to reject any content generated by it.

#2 Fresh Perspectives on Diversity and Inclusion

Zoomers are known for their more progressive attitudes toward diversity and inclusion. Engaging in reverse mentorship provides an opportunity for their more seasoned colleagues to gain valuable insights into the evolving understanding of workplace diversity. Gen Z professionals often bring a fresh perspective on inclusivity, thanks to the shifting cultural and social media environment they grew up in. Their approach challenges traditional norms and fosters a more tolerant and varied work environment.

Jon, an HR Manager at a sizeable manufacturing company, attended a DEI conference in a nearby city. During a break between presentations, he struck up a conversation with two Gen Z HR

attendees over coffee. They began chatting about the diversity initiatives within their respective companies. The two younger attendees worked for a top-tier trend tech company, where DEI forms part of their core values. The younger professionals provided valuable insights into their practices and policies, highlighting the importance of intersectionality and representation. Jon picked up some great ideas through this discussion. Within three months, this collaboration led to the research, design and implementation of much more inclusive DEI policies and initiatives at his workplace, particularly when it came to hiring.

#3 Adapting to Rapid Change

The Gen Z cohort has experienced unprecedented global changes, from major economic shifts to a global pandemic. Their ability to adapt quickly and remain resilient in the face of uncertainty can serve as a valuable example. Reverse mentorship allows seasoned leaders to discover, understand, and incorporate smarter strategies for navigating change, better supporting a workplace culture that thrives despite constant economic social evolutions.

Aaron was a Project Manager who rose through the ranks thanks to his interpersonal skills, meticulous attention to detail, and ability to see both the micro and macro. When his company was acquired by a faster-paced larger organization, Aaron struggled to adapt, especially as he was now a small fish in a large project management pool. However, instead of quitting, he engaged in stealth reverse mentorship with his mostly-Gen Z team members. By observing their practices, and probing their methodologies, Aaron became familiar with newer collaboration tools and agile project management techniques. This inspired him to pursue several certifications in contemporary project management practices and tools, and eventually led to his promotion to Team Lead.

#4 Social Media Mastery

Social media has become an integral part of both personal and professional communication. Zoomers are smoothly adept at navigating an array of social media platforms to build networks,

exchange information, and create brand awareness. Through reverse mentorship, older colleagues can enhance their social media skills, similarly leveraging these platforms for professional growth, networking, and staying relevant in the digital age.

Hayley was a small business owner who had previously relied only on Facebook ads to promote her business. She observed the growing significance of newer social media platforms in brand promotion, particularly video-based content suited to platforms such as TikTok. She decided to collaborate with the Gen Z daughter of her best friend, a social media specialist. Through reverse mentorship, Hayley learned how to navigate TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube to post engaging content. Guess whose content frequently went viral after hiring that younger social media specialist?

#5 Entrepreneurial Spirit

While other generations are certainly familiar with the entrepreneurial mindset, Gen Z takes it to a whole new level. Older generations may see innovation and autonomy as risky; Gen Z see these as liberating opportunities. Adopting a more open, inquisitive mindset encourages everyone to take creative calculated risks for the benefit of the company and their own professional growth.

A traditional publishing house, faced with challenges in adapting to the digital era, took a risk and hired an ex-YouTube influencer who had subsequently branched out into content consulting. Over the course of a 6-month contract, this youthful guru taught leadership the importance of multimedia content, interactive storytelling, and community engagement. She sat in on interviews for an expanded content team, helping to find the right people to take the company's digital presence forward. This collaboration transformed the publishing house into a dynamic digital content hub, capturing the attention of younger readers and launching its championing in the digital landscape.

#6 Life-Work Integration vs Work-Life Balance

Zoomers tend to prioritize life-work integration over the traditional work-life balance. To their more

seasoned colleagues, Gen Z seems to have a less serious approach to work. But that's not at all the case. In fact, it can be argued that Gen Z have a much healthier and more sustainable approach to their careers. By adopting a more flexible and adaptive mindset, more seasoned colleagues can also achieve greater satisfaction and well-being, ultimately improving overall productivity.

Inevitably as older colleagues got promoted or left, a finance company found itself with a large number of Gen Z employees. Over time, line managers reported frustration at these younger team members' push for a more balanced work life. Until they observed that these Gen Z colleagues not only tended to work more efficiently than older colleagues, but were more productive, too. Through observational reverse mentorship, combined with analysing the results of an employee satisfaction survey, leadership eventually embraced flexible work hours and remote collaboration tools as a way to retain younger employees. The trend caught on with older colleagues, too. This change not only improved overall well-being, but also sets the precedent for a more employee-friendly work culture.

Conclusion

As we've seen, Reverse Mentorship is a highly collaborative method to weave together the wisdom of the seasoned with the fresher perspectives of the emerging.

And the benefits extend far beyond the immediate gains in skill acquisition. Reverse mentorship represents a way for older professionals to not only stay relevant in the fast-paced digital age, but also contribute to a more open culture that values continuous learning, diversity, and adaptability.

This intergenerational exchange is a fantastic way to unlock a future of work where innovation knows no bounds, diversity is celebrated, and success becomes a collective achievement.

Reverse mentorship is not just a trend; it's a roadmap to a workplace that evolves, adapts, and thrives in the face of change, guided by the collaborative spirit of all its contributors.

Key takeaways

More seasoned employees can better navigate the digital landscape by tapping into the tech-savvy

prowess of Gen Z through the practice of Reverse Mentorship

Reimagine workplace inclusivity by embracing fresh perspectives on diversity and inclusion offered by Gen Z professionals

Through reverse mentorship, cultivate adaptability by gleaning insights from Gen Z's resilience and agility in navigating rapid changes

Harness the power of social media strategically by leveraging the expertise of Gen Z professionals through reverse mentorship for networking, branding, and business growth

Infuse innovation and risk-taking into traditional roles by learning from Gen Z's entrepreneurial spirit

Prioritize work-life (or life-work) integration by adopting a flexible and adaptive work environment inspired by Gen Z professionals thanks to reverse mentorship.

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15. Title: General

Feb 5, 2024

Identifying Fraudulent Business Messages via Social, WhatsApp, or Phone

Ever received a message sharing an offer that seemed too good to be true? Scammers are getting craftier, impersonating trusted platforms like JobLeads or other companies! How do you tell the real deal from a potential scam? Check out this blog post for key tips on identifying genuine company communications and staying one step ahead of the scammers! Your safety is our top priority. Read more and join the fight against online fraud.

More ?

Content: Scammers are adopting increasingly sophisticated tactics to exploit both businesses and individuals.

It's unfortunate that these fraudulent actors often impersonate trusted names like JobLeads or other companies to make an interesting offer (e.g. a job) or create a pressing need for heightened awareness and vigilance.

In recent weeks, we've recognized a noticeable uptick in the number of fraudulent messages circulating through WhatsApp, SMS, and email. These deceptive practices aim to exploit unsuspecting individuals, often leading to financial loss or identity theft.

Understanding how to spot these fraudulent messages is crucial in safeguarding your personal information and assets. As valued members of the JobLeads community, your safety is our top priority.

In this blog post, we guide you on how to distinguish between legitimate communications from JobLeads (or any other genuine company) and potential scams.

Recognizing Fake Communications

Official Communication Platforms and Channels

Be wary of messages that come out of the blue, especially those that request personal or financial information.

Legitimate companies will NEVER contact you randomly through platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook or email not being send from official company page addresses. If you receive an unsolicited message through these channels, it's a red flag that the communication is probably fraudulent.

Scammers also target people on sites where unsolicited messages are more common, such as LinkedIn. If you receive a random LinkedIn message and the offer seems too good to be true or too general, then report and block them right away.

Phone Numbers

Legitimate companies have official, verifiable contact details. Be cautious if the message includes a realistic yet random phone number. Especially one with a different area or country code. High vigilance is particularly important when you have never given your phone number to the company or person contacting you.

To ensure the authenticity of the contact, conduct a quick internet search to verify the provided phone number. If it cannot be confirmed through official channels, be careful. Call the company via the number on their website if you aren't certain.

Suspicious Urgency

Scammers often employ tactics to create a sense of urgency, pressuring the recipient to act quickly without allowing time for verification. Messages might threaten account closure, legal action, or other penalties if you do not respond quickly. Always take a moment to verify the authenticity of the message through official channels before reacting. Genuine communications will allow you the time needed to ensure the legitimacy of the message and will always be sent through official channels.

Too Good to Be True Offers

If an offer seems too good to be true, it probably is. High reward promises with little or no risk are a classic sign of a scam. Always question the legitimacy of unsolicited investment opportunities or prize notifications.

Unusual Links

Pay close attention to any links included in the message. Fraudulent messages may contain links or

attachments designed to steal your information or infect your device with malware. To check the legitimacy of the link, hover over it to see the URL (on a computer) or long-press the link (on a mobile device) to preview the address. If the address appears to be completely different from the official website, consider it a significant red flag. Legitimate communications will always provide secure and verifiable links. Also avoid opening attachments from unknown senders.

Poor Spelling and Grammar

Many scam messages contain noticeable spelling and grammar mistakes. While not all poorly written messages are scams, it's a common trait due to the messages often being crafted by individuals for whom the message's language is not native.

What to Do If You Suspect a Scam

If you receive a message from JobLeads or any other company and notice any of these red flags, or if your instincts tell you something is off, take the following steps:

Do Not Respond: Avoid engaging with the suspicious communication. Refrain from providing any personal information or clicking on any links.

Contact the Company Directly: Reach out to the relevant company directly through official channels to verify the authenticity of the communication. Contact Customer Support or use the official contact information available on the website.

The official contact method for JobLeads customers is our Help Center. Please use the following link:

[JobLeads Customer Support](#)

Report the Incident: If you believe you have encountered a scam, report the incident. Providing details about the suspicious communication can help to take necessary actions to protect customers including yourself and others.

Your Security is Priority

While you think it may not happen to you, scammers are getting increasingly savvy at passing themselves off as the real deal.

In conclusion, the key to combating fraudulent messages is vigilance. By knowing what to look for

and how to respond, you can significantly reduce your risk of becoming a scam victim. Stay cautious, stay informed, and protect your digital life with the same care you protect your physical well-being.

JobLeads is committed to ensuring the security and well-being of our subscriber community. By following these tips, you contribute to the collective effort in thwarting fraudulent activities and maintaining a secure online space for job seekers and professionals alike.

Remember, if something feels off, take the time to verify before taking any action. Together, we can build a stronger defence against scammers and protect ourselves.

Stay informed, stay secure!

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16. Title: Job Search

Jan 30, 2024

Should you film your job termination?

Ever envisioned turning your job termination into a cinematic snapshot of your professional journey? In a digital age where every facet of life is shared online, the rising trend of filming firings and layoffs lead to a pivotal question - Is this virtual spectacle a bold assertion of empowerment, or a risky venture laden with potential consequences? In this blog post, delve into the whys and hows of capturing the pivotal moment when professional paths diverge.

More ?

Content: Have you ever wondered what it's like to turn the tables on your employer, capturing the very moment they decide your professional fate?

In an era when sharing every aspect of our lives is no longer just the domain of the Kardashians, a new trend is emerging?filming yourself getting fired or made redundant.

But is this practice a bold act of empowerment? Or a risky move with potential consequences? In the following article, we'll explore the whys and hows of filming such a life-altering event.

A Growing Trend

In a world where social media platforms serve as personal diaries and virtual soapboxes, it's no surprise that some workers are choosing to document their job terminations and post it online. The rise of this trend, particularly among Gen Z and millennials, prompts us to explore why people choose to do this.

Here are the top three reasons they usually give:

1. Evidence in the Digital Age

For some, the decision to film a job termination is rooted in a desire for evidence. With virtual workspaces becoming the norm, disputes over terminations can arise, and having a recording may serve as proof of any wrongdoing or inappropriate behavior on the part of the employer.

2. Potential for Viral Social Media Content

In an age dominated by the pursuit of online visibility, filming a job termination can be seen as an opportunity for a moment of online fame. The allure of viral content and the sympathy it may generate from a global audience are powerful motivators, there's no doubt about it. Especially when it's done in a way that seems highly insensitive or personal (you've probably heard the stories of companies firing dozens or even hundreds of employees via Zoom, for example).

3. Seeking Support and Solidarity

Feeling isolated and alone after losing a job is a common experience. Filming the termination can be a way for individuals to share their vulnerability, connect with others facing similar situations, and find a sense of solidarity and support within a virtual community.

Three Perspectives on Filming a Job Termination

The Activist - Sarah

It was a chilly Monday morning when I found myself sitting in a virtual meeting room with two HR people I had never met, facing a termination that blindsided me. I remember feeling anger and frustration boiling within me as I contemplated the injustice of it all. I'd been a top performer. My most recent performance review was positive. It didn't make sense. The only thing I could think of was that if they were getting rid of people, they were probably going for the youngest. Two colleagues around my age had been fired the previous week, so that's what made me think it's an age thing. That's when I decided to hit the record button. Filming my layoff became a tool for exposing what I believed were unfair employment practices. My family and friends, although initially shocked, rallied behind me, supporting my decision to shed light on age bias. My ex-colleagues reached out, expressing gratitude for bringing attention to issue they had silently endured. The video became a catalyst for conversations about much-needed change within the corporate realm when it comes to age, whether you're younger or older.

The Social Media Maven - Jakub

?As someone who has always found creative expression in every life experience, the idea of turning my job termination into shareable content intrigued me. I won?t lie; I was already working hard at becoming an influencer in my free time, so this struck me as a golden opportunity. The decision to film it wasn?t about revenge; it was about transforming a tough moment into relatable, viral material. My family and friends, who knew that I liked to turn challenges into engaging narratives, initially expressed concern. My boomer dad was shocked. But eventually, even he supported my decision. Ex-colleagues, surprisingly, found the humor in the situation. The video got mixed reactions online, from rude comments to messages of encouragement. In the end, it became a viral video that got me past the 500k subscriber mark. That was really cool.?

****The Support-Seeker - Emily****

?The day I lost my job was horrible. I was filled with confusion, disappointment, and an overwhelming sense of isolation. Unable to bear it alone, I decided to film the termination, not as an act of rebellion, but as a plea for understanding and support. My family and friends, when they saw my vulnerability, became my pillars of strength. My former colleagues, some of whom had also been unexpectedly fired, reached out to share their stories. The video, despite its rawness, became a source of connection and support within a virtual community. It was a decision driven by a need for solidarity during a challenging period. Do I regret it? Absolutely not.?

Some Pros and Cons of Filming Your Termination

If you?re sitting there wondering if you?d film your own termination if it happened to you, let?s take a look at the pros and cons of turning this moment into a recorded spectacle.

From establishing concrete evidence for disputes to finding comfort in online support, the act of capturing your firing or redundancy in video form has become a global talking point.

However, with legal pitfalls looming and potential repercussions for your professional standing, the decision to immortalize a job termination in pixels requires careful thought.

Pros

Evidence in disputes: Filming provides an impartial record that can serve as evidence in the event of disputes or legal challenges

Online solidarity: Sharing the experience online can foster a sense of community support, connecting people who have faced similar challenges and creating a platform for shared understanding and encouragement

Transparency and accountability: Filming can empower workers by promoting transparency and holding employers accountable for their actions

Therapeutic reasons: For some, recording their termination is a therapeutic act, allowing them to express and process their emotions, and transforming a negative experience into a form of personal catharsis

Cons

Privacy law violations and legal ramifications: Filming without explicit consent may breach privacy laws, exposing you to potential legal consequences and raising ethical concerns about the invasion of personal privacy

Professional image: Sharing a job termination video publicly can negatively impact your professional image, with viewers possibly viewing the act as unprofessional or indicative of your penchant for getting involved in workplace conflicts.

Social media backlash: The viral nature of social media can lead to unintended consequences, with the video potentially being misinterpreted, taken out of context, or generating negative attention

Strained relationships: Filming and sharing the termination may impact relationships with colleagues, as they may feel uncomfortable being associated with the incident or worry about potential repercussions within the organization

Employability concerns: Future employers may be hesitant to hire someone who publicly shares such experiences, fearing a repeat of the same scenario.

Conclusion

In a digital era where personal and professional boundaries blur, the decision to film a job termination shouldn't be decided on the spur of the moment.

While the act may provide a sense of empowerment, it comes with potential legal and professional risks. Striking a balance between transparency and professionalism is key.

Before reaching for the record button (and especially before hitting 'Post'), it's vital to consider the long-term implications and weigh the potential benefits against the costs. Because it's not just

about now: this will also affect your future career path, for better or for worse. So decide carefully.

In the end, the choice to film a job termination is a personal one. You should approach it with a clear understanding of your motives, legal ramifications, and the impact it may have on your professional journey.

Then, whichever decision you make, it will be a carefully considered and informed one.

Key takeaways:

People film job terminations for reasons ranging from seeking evidence in disputes to finding solace in online support and creating relatable content for personal brand enhancement

Filming one's termination fosters a sense of community, connecting individuals globally who share similar experiences and creating a platform for shared understanding and encouragement

The act of filming empowers workers by promoting transparency and holding employers accountable, sparking conversations about fair employment practices

Privacy law violations and potential legal consequences loom, with the act of filming without explicit consent raising ethical concerns about the invasion of personal privacy

Sharing termination videos publicly can negatively impact professional images, potentially deterring future employers and signaling a willingness to engage in workplace conflicts

The viral nature of social media introduces unpredictability, with videos being misinterpreted, taken out of context, or generating unintended negative attention

Filming and sharing terminations may impact relationships with colleagues, making them uncomfortable or concerned about potential repercussions within the organization

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17. Title: Job Search

Jan 22, 2024

Why Emotional Intelligence WILL Make or Break Your Career Prospects

Ask yourself - Can hard skills alone propel you up the career ladder? The answer to that is, no. In our latest blog post, we explore the essential role of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) in professional success. Discover how EQ goes beyond qualifications, reshaping your journey in the evolving job market. Dive into the world of EQ and unlock new career possibilities! Click on the link to start reading.

More ?

Content: Do you think that skills alone will help you climb up the career ladder?

Not a chance!

Gone are the days when someone was hired based on a checklist of qualifications and expertise. It now encompasses a more nuanced aspect: Emotional Intelligence, otherwise known as Emotional Quotient or EQ.

EQ is the difference between a good candidate and an exceptional team player. A passable manager and an inspirational leader. Getting passed over for promotion and leaping forward.

As every JobLeads career coach agrees, EQ has a profound impact on someone's career prospects, even if they've never heard of the term.

In this blog post, we'll take a look at what Emotional Intelligence is, and learn why hiring managers place such a high value on it.

EQ in a Nutshell

Emotional Intelligence, or EQ, refers to the capacity to recognize, comprehend, and manage not only our own emotions, but also the emotions of those around us. It's the intangible quality that transforms a competent professional into a collaborative and inspiring force within a team.

When evaluating candidates, hard skills are undoubtedly important, but these are no longer the sole determining factor. Hiring managers seek individuals who can navigate challenges with grace,

collaborate seamlessly, and motivate others ? qualities inherently associated with high EQ.

In the following examples, we break down why emotional intelligence matters and how it can shape the trajectory of your career.

#1 Navigating Challenges with Resilience

In any career, challenges and setbacks are par for the course. People with high EQ possess the resilience to weather storms and bounce back from setbacks.

Their ability to manage stress, stay composed under pressure, and maintain a positive outlook contributes significantly to their professional success.

Sarah, a SaaS Project Manager, faced a significant setback when a critical team member unexpectedly resigned just weeks before a crucial project deadline. Sarah demonstrated resilience (AKA high EQ) by swiftly reorganizing the team, redistributing responsibilities, and providing support to her remaining team members. In her resume, she highlighted this experience: ?Led high-stakes project team through unforeseen challenges; resilience and adaptability to unexpected circumstances resulted in successful project completion within original timeframe.?

As a job seeker, showcasing key instances of overcoming challenges and demonstrating resilience in your resume or cover letter can speak volumes about your EQ.

Share anecdotes that highlight your ability to handle adversity, learn from experiences, and emerge stronger.

#2 Adapting to Change

The modern workplace is ever-evolving, with rapid technological advancements and trend shifts. There?s no doubt about it: to thrive in this environment, professionals need to be agile and adaptable.

High EQ individuals embrace change, view it as an opportunity for growth, and navigate transitions with ease.

John leveraged his cover letter to showcase his adaptability, which was a key soft skill in the Helpdesk Administrator role he was applying for. John described a situation where the company adopted a new project management system. Despite initial resistance from the team, he took the initiative to learn the new system, conducted training sessions for his colleagues, and ultimately facilitated a smooth transition. In his cover letter, John mentioned the project, stating: "I successfully led my team through this challenging technological transition, showcasing my adaptability and commitment to ensuring a seamless workflow even in the face of change."

When writing your own cover letter, emphasize experiences where you successfully adapted to change.

Just like John, highlight instances where you demonstrated flexibility, embraced new technologies, or pivoted your approach to meet evolving demands – whatever the job description calls for. This will underscore your EQ.

#3 Fostering Effective Collaboration

Teamwork is the cornerstone of success in many organizations.

People with high EQ excel in fostering smart collaborations by understanding the emotions, perspectives, and motivations of their team members. They contribute positively to team dynamics, creating an environment where everyone feels heard and valued.

As a Marketing Manager, Emilia emphasized her collaborative abilities in her cover letter. She narrated an instance where she identified tension within her newly merged team following an M&A and organized a team-building workshop. In her cover letter, Emilia wrote, "I recognized the importance of team dynamics in achieving our goals, by initiating a team-building workshop that strengthened collaboration, resulting in a more cohesive and productive team."

In job applications, draw attention to your collaborative achievements. For example, highlight instances where you worked seamlessly with diverse teams, resolved conflicts, and contributed to a

positive team culture.

Use your cover letter as an opportunity to align your experiences with the EQ aspects outlined in the company's job description.

#4 Inspiring and Motivating Others

Leadership is not solely about authority; it's about inspiring and motivating others to achieve collective goals.

Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in effective leadership. Leaders with high EQ can connect with their team on a deeper level, understand their motivations, and provide the support needed for individual and collective success.

If you think back to the managers and leaders you've worked with over the years, the ones with high EQ are likely those that were both effective at their jobs and at relating to their team.

In his resume summary, James - a Sales Manager - communicated his inspirational leadership in his resume summary. He highlighted a quarter where his team faced challenging sales targets. Through motivational speeches, personalized coaching, and acknowledging individual contributions, James led his team to exceed their goals. His summary read, "An empathetic and inspirational leader who navigates struggling sales team to smash targets through strategic coaching, frequent motivation, and championing individual efforts."

When constructing your resume or cover letter, incorporate language that reflects the abilities highlighted in job posts you're applying for. For example, point out instances where you've led teams to achieve remarkable results, demonstrating not only your technical proficiency, but also your capacity to connect with and motivate others (i.e. high EQ).

Communicating EQ in Job Applications

Producing a compelling job application that effectively communicates your EQ requires a strategic approach.

As we've seen, you can incorporate references to EQ in your resume or cover letter.

In your resume summary statement, accentuate 3-4 soft skills such as self-awareness, motivation, empathy, or social skills. This is the first glimpse a hiring manager gets of your profile, so make it count.

Then in your cover letter, identify a further 2-3 specific EQ aspects within the company's job description and weave evidence of these into your narrative. Use relevant examples to showcase how your emotional intelligence has contributed to your past achievements and how it aligns with the company's values and goals.

Maria, an HR Generalist, strategically incorporated EQ into her application materials after learning about this topic. In her resume summary, she stated, "Passionate HR specialist with a strong emphasis on Emotional Intelligence, fostering a positive and inclusive workplace culture." In her cover letter, she further aligned her experiences with the company's values: "I am drawn to your company's commitment to teamwork and collaboration, values that resonate with my strong background in fostering positive team dynamics."

For instance, if the job description emphasizes the importance of effective collaboration, share a specific instance where your ability to understand and navigate team dynamics led to a successful project outcome.

Tailoring your application to highlight your EQ not only sets you apart, but also demonstrates your commitment to the values and culture of your prospective employer.

The Future of Careers and Emotional Intelligence

With the world of work changing so rapidly, especially the technological, interpersonal, and business changes brought about by the recent global pandemic, job seekers must stay on top of emerging trends.

Emotional intelligence is increasingly becoming a critical factor in determining career trajectories. The ability to navigate challenges, adapt to change, foster collaboration, and inspire others is no longer just a desirable trait—it's a necessity.

Hiring managers recognize that individuals with high EQ contribute not only to the success of their teams, but also to the overall culture of the organization.

If you want to thrive in your career and stand out in the evolving job market, then cultivating and showcasing your EQ is paramount. It's a subtle yet powerful force that can make or break your career prospects.

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18. Title: Personal Growth

Jan 16, 2024

How Intrapreneurship Can Skyrocket Your Career

You've heard of entrepreneurship, but what about intrapreneurship? Explore the transformative impact of intrapreneurship in this blog post. We share 7 practical strategies you can take and run with immediately, illustrated with real examples. From problem-solving mastery to value creation, learn easily actionable insights for driving positive change within your organization ? while considerably boosting your own career

More ?

Content: Although the word ?intrapreneur? has been around since the 1970s, it has only recently become an increasingly common label for what is otherwise known as internal business innovation.

In this article, we'll explain exactly what intrapreneurship means, how it differs from the better-known term ?entrepreneurship?, and why it's something you'll want to learn everything you can about.

We'll also take a look at 7 easy-to-apply examples of how intrapreneurship can propel your career to new heights, offering ideas about how you can identify and seize opportunities in your current job or organization.

So let's start with the obvious question: what exactly is intrapreneurship?

The dictionary definition would go something like this: ?Intrapreneurship can be described as the act of behaving like an entrepreneur while working within a large organization. It involves taking initiative, being creative, and driving innovation to solve problems and enhance processes. Intrapreneurs are individuals who exhibit an entrepreneurial spirit, bringing fresh ideas and a proactive approach to their roles.?

Or, in layman's terms, someone who acts like an entrepreneur, but on behalf of their employer, rather than working externally for themselves.

While entrepreneurship involves creating and managing a new business, intrapreneurship happens

within the established framework of an existing organization.

Intrapreneurs leverage the resources, support, and infrastructure of their workplace to innovate and create value. Entrepreneurs must source these elements themselves, often from scratch.

The rise of intrapreneurship

Intrapreneurship is on the rise for several reasons. Organizations are hyper aware of the need to foster a culture of innovation to stay competitive. Intrapreneurs proactively inject vitality into corporate environments, driving growth and helping companies adapt to rapidly changing markets.

For people seeking internal career progression opportunities (and for companies just as eager about employee retention), intrapreneurship is increasingly enabling ways for innovators to contribute meaningfully, making intrapreneurship an attractive avenue for personal and professional development.

?OK, got it?, we hear you say. ?So? how can I be more intrapreneurial and skyrocket my career, like the article title says??

Read on to discover how!

7 ways to stand out via intrapreneurship

Intrapreneurship is not just about big projects. It?s also about showcasing deft mastery of critical business skills that highlight your ability to independently identify and address key issues within the organization.

Stop and think for a moment about current or former colleagues. Almost certainly, at least one person will spring to mind who was always going the extra mile to identify problems and implement solutions. They were likely highly valued by leadership, who did everything they could to retain them. That person is a great example of an intrapreneur.

Below, we share 7 straightforward, easily applicable examples of intrapreneurship that you can apply to your own role and company.

#1 Problem-Solving Mastery

Intrapreneurs are adept at identifying and solving complex problems. By cultivating this skill, you position yourself as an invaluable asset to your organization, attracting career-boosting assignments

and projects.

Imagine you work in a marketing team and notice a significant drop in customer engagement. Instead of waiting for instruction, you proactively conduct a thorough analysis, identify bottlenecks, and propose a targeted customer engagement campaign. By taking the initiative, you not only address the problem but also showcase your problem-solving skills.

#2 Cross-unctional Collaboration

Intrapreneurship often requires collaboration across departments. By actively engaging with colleagues from diverse backgrounds, you expand your network, gain insights into different facets of the business, and enhance your overall skill set.

In a technology company, you, a Project Manager, identify a gap in communication between the development and marketing teams, which you believe has been impacting product launches. You initiate regular cross-functional meetings, fostering collaboration and ensuring everyone is on the same page. This proactive approach not only improves communication, but also highlights your ability to facilitate partnerships across departments.

#3 Innovative Thinking

Intrapreneurs are natural innovators, unafraid to challenge the status quo. Developing a mindset that embraces innovation will set you apart, making you a go-to person for driving positive change within your organization.

Once upon a time, a finance professional noticed inefficiencies in the budgeting process. Instead of adhering strictly to the established procedures, they proposed a digital budgeting tool to streamline the process, reduce errors, and provide real-time insights. This innovative approach not only improved efficiency, but also positioned the professional as a forward-thinking contributor (and the

obvious choice for that next promotion).

#4 Adaptability and Risk Management

Successful intrapreneurs embody both adaptability and the ability to manage risks effectively. These skills are not only crucial for intrapreneurial endeavors, but are also highly sought after in any professional setting.

Imagine that you, an HR specialist working in a rapidly evolving industry, recognize the need for upskilling the workforce. Instead of fearing resistance to change, you create a pilot program for skills development, showcasing the benefits through tangible results. This adaptability and calculated risk-taking not only future-proofs your workforce, but also impresses leadership.

#5 Leadership Development

Intrapreneurs often find themselves leading projects and initiatives. Seizing such opportunities enhances your leadership skills, positioning you for future managerial roles within the organization.

Picture a mid-level manager who identifies a project critical to the company's growth. Despite not having a leadership role, they take the initiative to lead the project, rallying team members, and guiding them to success. This hands-on leadership experience not only contributes to project success, but also positions them for a forthcoming leadership role.

#6 Resource Optimization

Intrapreneurs excel at making the most of available resources. Learning to achieve optimal results with limited resources showcases your efficiency and resourcefulness, qualities highly valued in any professional environment.

In a manufacturing setting, an Operations Manager observes excess material wastage. Instead of

accepting it as the norm, they implement a waste reduction program, optimizing resources and improving the bottom line. This not only contributes to significant cost savings, but also showcases their clear ability to maximize efficiency.

#7 Value Creation

Intrapreneurial initiatives contribute to value creation for the organization. By actively participating in such projects, you demonstrate your commitment to the company's success, making you an indispensable member of the team.

A Customer Support Representative identifies a recurring customer issue and proposes a comprehensive self-help knowledge base. By creating this resource, they not only resolve the issue at its root, but also enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty while slashing support tickets. This not only improves customer retention, but also positions the representative as a strategic contributor.

In each of these examples, someone took the initiative, identified opportunities for improvement, and implemented solutions within their respective roles. These demonstrate how intrapreneurial qualities can be easily applied in a wide array of scenarios, showcasing the transformative potential of intrapreneurship in a professional setting.

Pursuing intrapreneurship in your current workplace

Now that we've explored the myriad benefits, how can you pursue intrapreneurship in your current role?

First, start by identifying areas for improvement within your organization

Then, shortlist those you can directly influence through your position

Be proactive in suggesting and implementing thoughtful, innovative solutions to leadership

Seek out cross-functional collaborations, while placing yourself in a coordinating role

By showcasing these qualities, you'll naturally gravitate towards intrapreneurial opportunities,

demonstrate adaptability, and position yourself as a problem solver

Conclusion

As we've seen, intrapreneurship is not just a buzzword; it's a powerful catalyst for professional growth.

By not only embracing the principles of intrapreneurship, but proactively seeking out opportunities to make meaningful contributions, you can elevate your career to unprecedented heights.

The ability to innovate, collaborate, and drive positive change within your organization positions you as a standout professional, opening doors to new opportunities and career advancements.

Key takeaways:

Embrace intrapreneurship as the art of acting like an entrepreneur within your existing organization.

It's about driving innovation, taking initiative, and steering positive change from within

The key difference between intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship lies in the organizational context: intrapreneurs innovate within established structures, leveraging existing resources to fuel change

There's a growing significance of intrapreneurship in today's business landscape. Organizations are increasingly adopting this approach to stay competitive, foster innovation, retain great employees, and adapt to evolving markets

Discover 7 concrete ways that intrapreneurship can elevate your career, including through problem-solving mastery, cross-functional collaboration, innovative thinking, adaptability, leadership development, resource optimization, and value creation

Recognize that embracing intrapreneurship isn't just a trend—it's a powerful driver of career growth.

By cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset within your organization, you open doors to new opportunities, advancements, and a trajectory of professional success

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19. Title: Personal Branding

Jan 8, 2024

Soft Skills vs Hard Skills - What's the Difference, and How to Showcase These

Embark on a journey to unlock the secrets of leaping from job application to interview with our latest article! Ever questioned if snagging an interview is merely about ticking skill boxes, or is it more about finding the perfect harmony between your abilities and a company's culture? We've got the answers. Delve into the intricacies of balancing soft and hard skills, discovering how this dynamic duo not only lands you an interview (and the job) but ensures it's the right fit for your professional brilliance. Get ready to shine bright in your (skilful!) career journey.

More ?

Content: Soft skills and hard skills. You've probably heard of them, but perhaps you're not quite sure of the difference, or how that matters to your job search.

Well, they do matter. Much more than you think.

Understanding the difference, and learning how to showcase them effectively in your resume and cover letter, is the key to landing that interview.

Because without them, you're just another unappreciated printout on the recruiter's desk, waiting to be filed in the shredder.

And we don't want that.

So let's dive in and demystify what the dynamic duo of soft and hard skills are, and how each plays a unique role in your professional success.

What exactly are hard skills?

Hard skills are the tangible, teachable abilities that you can quantify and measure. Unlike soft skills, they're objective and easily proved. They're like the bricks that construct the foundation of your professional expertise.

Examples include proficiency in a particular technical skill, or expertise such as project

management, team leadership, data analysis, or training delivery. These are provable abilities that you've undertaken in your career, regardless of how well you did them.

Here are some you're likely to see in different job descriptions:

Hard Skills Example 1: Data Scientist

Machine Learning (proficiency in implementing machine learning algorithms for data analysis and predictive modeling)

Big Data Technologies (experience with tools like Apache Spark or Hadoop for processing and analyzing large datasets)

Data Visualization (mastery in using tools like Tableau or Power BI to create insightful and compelling data visualizations)

Hard Skills Example 2: Senior Marketing Manager

Marketing Analytics (utilizing tools like Google Analytics or Adobe Analytics to measure and analyze marketing performance)

Strategic Planning (developing comprehensive marketing strategies aligned with overall business objectives)

Brand Management (overseeing the development and maintenance of a consistent brand identity across all marketing channels)

Hard Skills Example 3: Project Manager

Program Management (managing complex programs involving multiple interconnected projects)

Risk Management (identifying and mitigating project risks to ensure successful project delivery)

Stakeholder Management (building and maintaining strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders to achieve project goals)

Soft skills ? the invisible glue

Now, let's talk about the actually not-so-invisible glue that holds your career aspirations together ? soft skills. These are the interpersonal, emotional, and social intelligence qualities that make you a great team player, an effective communicator, and an adaptable professional.

Soft skills encompass things like communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, and leadership.

Compared to hard skills, soft skills are harder to quantify. Which is why they're considered more subjective. They're often demonstrated through your behavior, attitude, and approach to work.

Unlike hard skills, those around you can perceive your soft skill abilities differently (you may think you need to improve your time management skills, but your former colleagues may say you were always on time ? if not a few minutes early ? for meetings and generally hit your deadlines).

Let's take a look at some examples:

Soft Skills Example 1: Team Leader

Communication (e.g. clearly conveying expectations, actively listening to team members' input, and facilitating open communication channels to ensure everyone is on the same page)

Conflict Resolution (e.g. proactively addressing conflicts within the team, mediating disputes, and finding constructive solutions that maintain a positive team dynamic)

Problem solving (e.g. identifying challenges within the team or projects, analyzing root causes, and implementing effective solutions that enhance team efficiency and overall performance)

Soft Skills Example 2: Accountant

Attention to Detail (e.g. demonstrating precision in financial record-keeping, catching errors in financial reports, and ensuring accuracy in all aspects of accounting processes)

Analytical Thinking (e.g. applying a systematic approach to analyze financial data, identify trends,

and provide insights that contribute to informed decision-making)

Time Management (e.g. effectively managing time to meet deadlines for financial reporting, tax filings, and other accounting responsibilities, ensuring timely and accurate financial information)

Soft Skills Example 3: Graphic Designer

Creativity (e.g. generating innovative and visually appealing design concepts, pushing creative boundaries, and adapting to various styles and preferences)

Collaboration (e.g. working seamlessly with cross-functional teams, incorporating feedback from clients and colleagues, and contributing positively to a collaborative and creative work environment)

Adaptability (e.g. adapting to changing project requirements, embracing new design trends and technologies, and remaining flexible in the face of evolving client needs)

How to Incorporate Key Skills in Your Resume and Cover Letter

Now for the big question: how to incorporate those hard skills and soft skills quickly and relevantly in your resume and cover letter to grab the hiring manager's attention?

Great question! And of course, we've got the answer.

Check out the specific examples and tips below to help you weave your skills into your resume and cover letter like a pro.

Resume

Let's start with your resume.

Hard skills, rather than soft skills, are better suited to your resume. While you can certainly include a sprinkling of soft skills in the summary section, your resume should be primarily dedicated to hard skills.

That's because at this first stage filtering, recruiters and ATS typically look for these tangible, quantifiable skills that are essential to doing the job. You can be a great communicator (soft skill), but if you don't have project management experience and that's what they need, then you're not

going to be able to do the job.

On the other hand, over in your cover letter, your soft skills can help to differentiate you from other applicants with a similar professional background and hard skills. We'll get to cover letter shortly.

There are two ways to incorporate hard skills in your resume. We recommend including a key skills box under your resume summary. This box contains important hard skill keywords that recruiters and applicant tracking systems (ATS) look for when considering your application. It also makes it very easy for you to tweak your resume for specific job applications, increasing your match rate for that role.

As well as a key skills box, ensure the most prominent hard skills for your job type are sprinkled authentically throughout your resume. That way, the recruiter won't think you've tweaked the key skills box to get their attention, without actually having the required abilities.

With keywords, it's important to be specific and avoid generic terms. Instead of saying, "proficient in Microsoft Office," specify "advanced proficiency in Excel for data analysis and reporting."

Tip:

Don't forget to use the English spelling in your target market (e.g. UK English, US English). Otherwise, the ATS in particular may miss this keyword.

Here's how the above job seeker incorporated important keywords in her resume from the job she was applying for. The include "product development lifecycle", brand guidelines", "branded treatments", and "React":

Led product development lifecycle for cross-client front-end component library and parent container for micro-frontends: built/deployed application in 1 month, enabling teams to independently release solution 5x faster

Following delivery issues with high-end branding agency, created brand guidelines/branded treatments via rapid workshopping; designed system from scratch; personally implemented certain custom treatments in React

Now it's your turn. Ensure that your summary, key skills box, and job descriptions include the major hard skills that are important for the types of job you're applying for.

If you're not sure what these are, we recommend doing an online search for similar job descriptions. Identify the most common hard skills and ensure these are incorporated wherever relevant to your own experience. Or use an AI tool such as ChatGPT to identify these for you.

Next, we'll look at how to showcase both hard and soft skills in your cover letter.

Cover Letter

While resumes are the best place for hard skills, your cover letter is your opportunity to share insights into your key soft skills that are relevant to that job and company. They also give clues as to what you're like to work with.

Companies often mention soft skills in their job descriptions, usually in the essential or desirable requirements section. For example:

Qualifications:

Bachelor degree in Accounting strongly preferred; with 2+ years relevant experience

Excel: formulas, pivot tables, general analysis

Proficiency in the use of relevant software applications, databases, and spreadsheets.

Knowledge of accounting and financial statements, with the ability to analyze accounting transactions and financial statements

Must be a motivated self-starter who possesses effective written and verbal communication skills

Must be able to thrive in a deadline-oriented environment with proven ability to manage multiple projects concurrently

Exceptional attention to detail and accuracy and ability to build relationships and manage conflict

Let's see how Rhonda Williams, an experienced accountant, incorporated the most relevant soft skills in this job description in the narrative of her career:

Example Soft Skills

Dear Hiring Manager,

Accountant (Level 3)

I am writing to express my interest in the Accountant (Level 3) position at Wellington Inc. With over 10 years of experience as an accountant and a proven track record in financial analysis in fast-paced environments, I am confident in my ability to contribute effectively to your team.

My meticulous attention to detail has been a cornerstone of my success in previous roles. I consistently ensure accuracy in financial reporting, conduct thorough audits, and identify discrepancies with precision. This commitment to detail not only guarantees the integrity of financial records but also contributes to informed decision-making.

Efficient time management, communication skills, and ability to build relationships have been key assets throughout my career. In my most recent position at RetroGuild, I successfully managed multiple deadlines for monthly financial reporting, tax filings, and audit preparations. My ability to prioritize tasks and meet tight deadlines has allowed me to deliver high-quality work consistently.

Per your requirements, analytical thinking and the ability to manage conflict are additional strengths I bring to the table. I have a demonstrated ability to analyze financial data, identify trends, and provide valuable insights for strategic planning, particularly when navigating the competing interests of different business units. My analytical skills have played a pivotal role in optimizing budgetary processes and improving overall financial efficiency.

I am eager to bring my expertise to Wellington Inc, contributing to the continued success of your

financial team. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how my skills align with the needs of your organization in more detail.

Please find attached my resume for your consideration. Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you regarding next steps.

Yours faithfully,

Rhonda Williams

As you can see, it's fairly easy to incorporate the relevant soft skills into your cover letter once you have a template. Simply tweak these for specific opportunities, aiming to match their phrasing wherever possible (so the human eye and ATS can detect a closer match). Ensure that the anecdote or example you're giving matches the specific keyword.

You'll notice that Rhonda Williams has also pointed out the most important hard skill keywords again, too. Although these are covered in her resume, it packs a double whammy when they're also referenced in your cover letter.

Wherever possible, link your soft skills to specific successful outcomes, for example solving a complex problem or improving a process.

Example Hard Skills

Dear Hiring Manager,

Accountant (Level 3)

I am writing to express my interest in the Accountant (Level 3) position at Wellington Inc. With over 10 years of experience as an accountant and a proven track record in financial analysis in fast-paced environments, I am confident in my ability to contribute effectively to your team.

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Please find attached my resume for your consideration. Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you regarding next steps.

Yours faithfully,

Rhonda Williams

Conclusion

Once you get the hang of it, spotting relevant hard skills and soft skills in job descriptions (and incorporating these in your resume and cover letter) becomes a breeze.

While it may seem like a small thing, in actual fact including hard skills and soft skills in your job application can make the difference between your resume being seen, or landing in the rejection pile.

Remember, the goal is not just to get the job, but to find the right fit where your skills and the company's culture align. So go ahead, polish those soft and hard skills, and let your unique professional brilliance shine through!

Key Takeaways:

Hard skills are specific, quantifiable abilities acquired through education or experience, forming the core professional expertise crucial for job performance

Soft skills encompass interpersonal qualities like communication and adaptability, enhancing collaboration and contributing to overall professional success

Tailor Your Approach: Customize your resume and cover letter for each job application, focusing on the skills most relevant to the position.

Show, Don't Tell: Use specific examples and anecdotes to demonstrate your skills. This not only adds credibility but also makes you more memorable to employers.

Balance is Key: A combination of both soft and hard skills is often what employers are looking for. Strive to strike a balance that aligns with the requirements of the job.

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20. Title: Job Search

Jan 3, 2024

How to Quit Your Job Gracefully - 8 Dos and Don'ts

Thinking about quitting your job? Well, there's are many right ways ? and many wrong ways. Learn the art of a graceful exit with our latest blog! Our career experts share 8 tips to ensure you leave on good terms, maintain a positive reputation, and pave the way for future success. From giving your notice to closing the door behind you, we have got you covered.

Do not burn bridges; build them!

More ?

Content: There comes a time in everyone's career when they decide it's time to move on from their current job.

However, the way you resign can have a lasting impact on your professional reputation and relationships.

?How's that possible??, you may be wondering. ?I mean, who's going to remember, or care, once I'm out the door??

Well, you should care. For many strategic reasons.

For starters, you'll likely need a good reference for your next gig. Moreover, the professional world is smaller than you think, and you never know when you might encounter someone from your previous company again. On top of that, a bad quitting experience can spread like wildfire through the industry gossip mill and even on platforms like LinkedIn (and let's face it, do you really want to be the subject of a #LessonsLearned or #NeverAgain post by an annoyed former boss?).

Leaving a job is not just a personal decision; it's a professional maneuver that sets the stage for your future endeavors. A poorly managed departure can create a ripple effect, affecting your references, professional network, and even future job opportunities.

8 top tips on how to quit your job in a way that will build bridges instead of burning them

#1 DO: Re-Read and Understand Your Employment Contract

Before you hand in your notice, re-read your employment contract thoroughly. It outlines notice periods, conditions, and any other contractual obligations. Thoroughly reviewing it ensures that you are aware of your responsibilities and rights.

This also makes sure you leave on good terms and helps you recall finer details if your employer questions the terms.

#2 DO: Resign in Writing (Via a Signed and Scanned Document)

Resign in writing, never verbally. Preferably send a signed, scanned letter to your manager and HR. Then, give the original copy to your manager.

Why? A written resignation provides a formal record and date of your decision. Having it signed and scanned adds an extra layer of security and ensures that both you and your employer have a copy, especially if someone later claims not to have received it.

If possible, schedule a meeting with your manager to discuss your decision before submitting the written resignation. This personal touch can help maintain positive relations.

#3 DO: Offer a Comprehensive Handover Document

Ask your manager if they would like you to prepare a handover document, and what they would like it to contain.

Creating a handover document helps your team transition seamlessly in your absence. It reflects positively on your professionalism and dedication to a smooth transfer of responsibilities.

If your manager declines, at least provide a written list of key tasks, contacts, and ongoing projects to facilitate the transition for your successor. They likely won't be able to thank you directly, but they will be very grateful.

#4 DO: Conduct an Equipment Check

To avoid problems later on, ensure all equipment to be returned ? such as a laptop or mobile phone ? is checked as close to your departure date as possible (ideally on the last day).

Demonstrate their functionality in front of HR or your manager and ask them to confirm that all items are in good condition.

Consider bringing along a checklist with space for signatures and dates. Review the checklist with

your manager or HR, confirming that all items are in good condition (don't forget to get their signature!). These steps will minimize the risk of disputes after your departure.

#5 DON'T: Blab ? AKA Silence is Golden

Although it can be hard to keep quiet when feelings are running high, telling colleagues about your departure before informing your manager can lead to misunderstandings and damage relationships. Instead, have a direct conversation with your manager first. This allows for a controlled transition and prevents rumors from spreading prematurely.

#6 DON'T: Be Unprofessional in Your Communications

Sending a "rage email" or badmouthing the company after you've quit can irreparably damage your professional image.

We all know that person who departed the company kicking and screaming. Remember how you thought a little less of them for their unprofessional behavior?

Although you may be feeling emotional about your reasons for leaving, address concerns constructively during exit interviews or private discussions. Focus on constructive feedback rather than venting frustrations.

#7 DON'T: Refuse to Train the Next Person

Even though it's not explicitly your responsibility, offering to train your replacement reflects positively on your character and can smooth the transition for the incoming team member.

This doesn't mean intensive onboarding (again, that's not your job). But it certainly doesn't hurt to show the next person the ropes, introduce them to key stakeholders, and offer to share your knowledge in transition.

It helps the organization and your colleagues, fosters a welcoming environment, and adds to your positive post-departure reputation.

#8 DON'T: Bragging Can Backfire

Boasting about your new job to your soon-to-be-ex colleagues may feel tempting. Very tempting. But it's best to curb your enthusiasm in front of them. Bragging about your new job may create negativity and imply that your old company is somehow inferior (as is anyone who decides to remain

there).

Save your excitement for a LinkedIn post after you've left your current organization (while thanking your former colleagues and leadership for being a pleasure to work with. If that's stretching the truth a little, then follow the former UK Prime Minister Edward Heath's sage advice: "A diplomat is a [wo]man who thinks twice before [s]he says nothing."

Conclusion

Quitting your job is a natural part of career progression. But how you handle it can shape your professional reputation for years to come.

Some final thoughts:

A well-managed departure ensures that your references are not only willing but enthusiastic about endorsing you

You never know when you might encounter a former colleague or boss in a different professional setting. These connections can close or open doors to new opportunities, collaborations, or partnerships down the line

In today's digital age, news travels fast. A poorly executed departure can quickly become industry gossip, potentially tarnishing your online professional reputation

By giving appropriate notice, being honest but tactful, offering assistance during the transition, and expressing gratitude (despite how you feel on the inside), you can resign in a way that won't burn bridges

So, the next time you decide to move on, do it with grace and professionalism.

Your future self will thank you!

Key takeaways:

Read Before You Leap: Re-read your employment contract to understand notice periods and conditions for a smooth exit

Paper Trail Matters: Resign in writing and keep a signed copy to avoid disputes and ensure a clear record of your departure

Smooth Handovers Win: Offer to prepare a handover document to facilitate a seamless transition for your team and company

Tech Check: Ensure all equipment is in good condition (and check everything in front of your boss) to avoid post-departure disputes

Silence is Golden: Avoid telling colleagues about your departure before informing your manager. Your boss won't be pleased to hear it through the water cooler grapevine

Positive Exit Only: Refrain from "rage emailing" or badmouthing the company, colleagues, or your boss. It will absolutely come back to bite you.

Help Your Successor: Even if it's not your responsibility, offer to show the ropes to your replacement to ensure a smooth transition and underscore the positive perception of your professionalism

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21. Title: Job Search

Dec 29, 2023

6 Steps to Launching a Freelance Career

Thinking of embarking on a solo career? Discover the art of freelancing in our latest blog post! Learn to identify your strengths, build a stellar online presence, set goals, and more. Dive into real-life stories and success tips from freelancers who have thrived in the gig economy. Ready to take control of your career? Get ready to step into the world of freelancing success!

More ?

Content: Freelancing has become a hugely popular and increasingly common career choice for professionals seeking flexibility, autonomy, and the opportunity to pursue their specific passions.

In contrast to traditional employment, freelancers work independently, often on a project basis, and are not bound to a single employer. A large number of freelancers have previously worked in business, and have chosen freelancing as a way to create their own path.

This shift in work dynamics is driven by technological advancements, changing attitudes towards work, and the desire for a better life-work balance.

In this article, we'll explore what freelancing entails, look at common freelancing jobs, discuss the pros and cons of freelancing, and outline 6 specific steps you can take to successfully launch a freelance career (because, if you're reading this, it's something you're likely considering).

What is Freelancing?

Let's start with what freelancing is.

Freelancing is the practice of working as an independent contractor, rather than being employed by a company on a long-term basis. Freelancers, also known as gig workers or independent professionals, offer their skills and services to clients on a project-by-project basis.

This arrangement allows for greater flexibility in terms of work hours, location, and the types of projects undertaken (not to mention, freedom from traditional workplace structures and demands).

Some of the key differences between freelancing and traditional employment include:

Flexibility: Freelancers have the flexibility to choose when and where they work, often enabling a better life-work balance

Variety of projects: Unlike traditional employees who may focus on specific tasks, freelancers can work on diverse projects for different clients

Independence: Freelancers operate as their own bosses, making decisions about their work and business without going through a hierarchy

Why is Freelancing on the Rise?

There are many reasons contributing to the increasing popularity of freelancing. The top ones include:

Technological advancements such as digital platforms and communication tools make it easier for freelancers to connect with clients globally

Many professionals seek greater control over their work and career, which freelancing provides

Freelancers can tap into a global marketplace, accessing a wider range of opportunities and clients

Common Freelancing Jobs

Let's take a look at some of the most common freelancing jobs. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but it gives an idea of which type of professionals typically pursue freelancing as a career:

Graphic Designers

Writers and Copywriters

Web Developers

Social Media Managers

Virtual Assistants

Consultants

Digital Marketing Specialists

The Pros and Cons of Freelancing

If you're currently deciding whether or not a freelancing career is a path you should pursue, it's important to be aware of the pitfalls as well as the benefits. In our experience with coaching professionals who are seeking an alternative career path, the top pros and cons we typically point out are:

Pros

Flexibility: Set your own schedule and work from anywhere

Diverse projects: Work on projects that align with your specific skills and interests

Independence: Be your own boss and make decisions about your business without others' input

Cons

Income stability: Income can be irregular, especially when starting

Self-employment taxes: Freelancers are responsible for handling their own taxes (and insurance, pension contributions, etc.)

Isolation: Working independently can lead to feelings of isolation

6 Specific Steps to Launch a Successful Freelance Career

#1 Self-Assessment and Skill Identification

Before venturing into freelancing, it's very important to conduct a thorough self-assessment to identify your skills, strengths, and interests. Although you may have a clear idea of what you want to do, this is the time to really think about what you bring to the table, and to pinpoint anything you need to improve to increase your odds for success. This will help you position yourself in a niche market and effectively market your services.

Consider what you excel at and how these skills can meet the needs of potential clients. Try our [Self-Assessment MasterClass](#) to help you sharpen your focus.

Sarah was an in-house Marketing Coordinator who was continually overlooked for the promotion she wanted (and was qualified for). Despite asking to work more on the content generation side, her boss didn't want Sarah to pivot or climb because she was doing such a great job in her current role. Instead, Sarah began volunteering in her spare time for a local non-profit, which valued her passion for content creation. What's more, Sarah discovered a genuine strength in crafting compelling blog posts and persuasive communications. By focusing on these talents, she successfully launched a freelance career as a non-profit/NGO content creator, attracting clients who valued her ability to tell engaging stories.

#2 Build a Strong Online Presence

In this digital age, a robust online presence is crucial for freelancers. Potential clients will want to be assured of your legitimacy as a professional, which a digital presence helps to demonstrate. Create a professional website or portfolio showcasing your skills, previous work, and client testimonials. Utilize social media platforms to connect with potential clients and fellow freelancers, expanding your network and visibility.

Johnny, a freelance web developer, not only created an impressive portfolio website, but also actively engaged with his target audience on LinkedIn (through commenting on company posts, following the organization, connecting with key players, and giving advice on forums). This online presence not only showcased his skills, but also led to direct enquiries from potential clients.

impressed by his work and knowledge showcased on various platforms.

#3 Set Clear Goals and Define Your Niche

Set realistic short- and long-term goals for your freelance career. Because success will almost certainly not happen instantly. Define your niche by narrowing down the services you offer. Specializing in a particular area makes it easier for clients to identify your expertise and increases your chances of attracting relevant opportunities.

Anna, a freelance graphic designer, set a goal to specialize in creating visually striking social media graphics. By honing in on this niche, she became known for this particular expertise, attracting clients specifically seeking her style of eye-catching designs for their social media campaigns.

#4 Create a Solid Business Plan

Treat your freelance career as a business by developing a comprehensive business plan. Outline your services, target audience, pricing structure, and marketing strategies. Consider financial aspects such as budgeting, invoicing, and tax planning. A well-thought-out business plan will serve as a roadmap for your freelancing journey. It can also help you to secure funding from schemes to support entrepreneurs and the self-employed.

Freelance start-up advisor Miko crafted a detailed business plan that included financial goals, marketing strategies, and contingency plans. This plan not only provided clarity, but also served as a reference point for adapting to changing market conditions, ensuring the sustainability of his freelance consulting business. (An added bonus: he was in a great position to advise his own clients how to create a business plan, as he'd recently made one himself)

#5 Network and Establish Relationships

Networking is an incredibly powerful tool in the freelancing world. Over 80% of jobs in the corporate world are filled through personal connections, and the rate is arguably even higher for linking freelance workers with specific opportunities. Attend industry events, join online communities, and actively engage with peers and potential clients. Establishing genuine relationships can lead to referrals, collaborations, and a steady stream of clients.

Giovanni, a freelance writer, actively participated in writing forums and attended conferences related

to his niche (pharmaceutical industry developments). By networking with fellow writers and editors, he not only received valuable feedback on his work, but also secured writing opportunities from industry publication editors and websites who recognized his skills through online interactions.

#6 Deliver Outstanding Work and Seek Feedback

This one's a no-brainer. Your reputation and long-term success as a freelancer are built on the quality of your work. Consistently deliver outstanding results and exceed client expectations. Encourage clients to provide feedback, testimonials, and referrals. Positive reviews enhance your credibility and attract more clients.

Emilia, a self-employed home health nurse, made a point of not only meeting but exceeding patient expectations. By delivering empathetic and knowledgeable healthcare support, she received lots of positive feedback and patient referrals, leading to a steady influx of new individuals and families to support in her community.

Major Freelancer Platforms and Sites

Many freelance professionals work either exclusively, or complement their independent projects, through work available via freelancing websites. Here are seven of the biggest and most trustworthy sites to pursue freelance projects through:

Upwork: A popular platform connecting freelancers with clients across various industries

Freelancer: A global freelancing platform offering opportunities in writing, programming, design, and more

Fiverr: Known for its gig-based model, Fiverr allows freelancers to offer services starting at \$5

Toptal: A platform that connects top freelancers with high-profile clients in fields like software development and design

LinkedIn ProFinder: LinkedIn's platform for connecting freelancers with clients seeking professional services (not available in all markets)

PeoplePerHour: A platform that matches businesses with skilled freelancers in areas like writing, design, and marketing

Guru: A platform where freelancers can showcase their portfolios and connect with clients seeking specific skills

Conclusion

Without a doubt, freelancing offers a unique avenue for individuals to take control of their careers and enjoy the benefits of independence and flexibility. By following the 6 specific steps we've outlined above, aspiring freelancers can set the foundation for a successful and fulfilling career.

Let's conclude with a final look at the considerable benefits of freelancing:

Flexibility: Work on your terms, setting your own schedule and choosing projects that align with your interests

Independence: Be your own boss, make decisions about your business, and enjoy autonomy in your work

Diverse opportunities: Access a wide range of projects and clients, allowing you to diversify your skills and experience

Global reach: Tap into a global marketplace, connecting with clients from around the world.

Personal growth: Freelancing encourages continuous learning and personal development as you adapt to different projects and client needs

Life-Work Balance: Achieve a better balance between work and personal life, tailoring your schedule to suit your lifestyle

Key Takeaways:

Identifying your unique strengths through self-assessment is crucial. Pinpoint your strengths and passions to define your unique selling points ? before you pursue your freelance career

Create a professional website and leverage social media to showcase your skills and connect with potential clients

Clearly outline your short-term and long-term goals. Specialize in a niche to stand out in a competitive market

Treat your freelancing career as a business. Develop a comprehensive business plan for your services, pricing, and marketing strategies

Actively network with peers and potential clients. Attend events and join online communities to establish meaningful connections

Consistently deliver high-quality work and encourage clients to provide feedback. Positive reviews build credibility and attract more opportunities

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Upskilling while you sleep? AKA The world of hypnagogic learning

Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

22. Title: Personal Branding

Dec 18, 2023

How to Write Resume Accomplishments Using ChatGPT

Are you curious about how AI can help you save time with your job applications? Then this blog post is for you! We provide a step-by-step guide on how to write powerful accomplishment bullet points for your resume using ChatGPT (You can also use these examples for interviews.). The article shows you how to identify and quantify the accomplishments you're most proud of, and shares specific instructions you can give ChatGPT to turn your notes into polished bullet points in seconds.

More ?

Content: If you've recently written (or plan to) write a resume, you've probably heard that you should include achievements as well as responsibilities under each job description.

That's because hiring managers want to know not just what you were hired to do, but how you personally took that job and made an impact on the organization. As past performance is a good indicator of future performance, this tells them how you could potentially benefit them as well.

The easiest way to showcase this for recruiters is by including at least 2-3 accomplishments you achieved in your most recent jobs.

What is an achievement?

An achievement (synonym: accomplishment) is something you personally did successfully by drawing on your skills, talents, or other abilities.

For example, these might include particularly successful projects, portfolio values you managed, sales targets you smashed, a complex problem you overcame, new processes you introduced, significant cost savings you effected, how many accounts you oversaw, or the growth of a team that you steered.

Perhaps you led a difficult project with many problems, yet you managed to complete it on time and within budget by leveraging your ability to set clear targets, mentor a remote cross-functional team,

and build strong client relationships to facilitate more effective collaboration.

Maybe you noticed that multiple departments were inputting related data into separate Excel spreadsheets when one would have been more effective (and would enable faster data analysis). You suggested this to leadership, merged the spreadsheets, checked everything carried over accurately, and communicated the changes to relevant colleagues.

These are examples of achievements you can include in your resume (and later on, interviews).

How do I write achievements?

Achievements are presented in bullet point format in your resume, taking up 1-2 lines per point.

Supervised team of 12 multilingual engineers across 6 locations and 5 time zones

Drove development of cloud infrastructure supporting Embolden's online electronic design tools

Developed microservice architecture supporting 7 products

Migrated 4 key apps to cloud across 3 continents ahead of schedule with 0 errors or delay

The most common approach is to list several job responsibilities for that role, followed by 2-3 (or more, depending on the role / seniority) accomplishments. The reason for this order is that firstly you introduce the reader to what you were hired to do (to give them context), then to what you achieved. There's no need to include achievements for roles 8-10 years+ ago, unless they are particularly powerful. Potential employers will be more interested in your recent abilities.

Whichever achievements you decide to include, ensure these are relevant to the job you're applying for, and that they clearly demonstrate your impact on the organization.

That said, many people find it hard to think about and quantify their accomplishments. So let's walk through the process together.

Step 1: Identifying Accomplishments

Let's start with the "what?". What did you achieve in your most recent roles? Here are some questions to help jog your memory:

What projects have you successfully completed in your current or previous roles?

Have you increased productivity or efficiency in any specific tasks or processes? How much improvement did you achieve?

Have you exceeded any targets, goals, or quotas? How did you achieve those results?

Have you received any awards, recognition, or promotions? What were the reasons behind them?

Have you successfully solved any challenging problems? How did you approach and resolve them?

Have you contributed to cost savings or revenue generation? How much money did you save or generate?

Have you implemented any new strategies, systems, or initiatives that positively impacted your team or organization?

Have you mentored or trained colleagues to improve their skills or performance? What was the outcome?

Have you contributed to improving customer satisfaction or feedback ratings? How did you achieve this?

Have you played a significant role in securing new clients or retaining existing ones?

Have you collaborated on cross-functional projects that resulted in successful outcomes?

Have you published any articles, reports, or research that added value to your organization or industry?

Have you successfully managed a team, project, or event from planning to execution?

Have you played a key role in the implementation of new technologies or software that improved workflows?

Have you demonstrated leadership skills by taking on additional responsibilities or initiatives?

Grab a pen and paper, or open a blank document on your device. Now think: for each job you've held in the past 8 years, try to identify at least 2-3 achievements inspired by these questions. Write down notes for each. If you come up with more, great! You'll have more to choose from when whittling them down to a manageable number of points (up to 6) per role.

It might help to use the STAR Technique (Situation you were in, Task you had to do, Action/s you took, Results you achieved) in each scenario to help you hone in on the most important details. Also ask yourself: who, when, where, why, and how to recall as much as possible.

As you make notes, remember to quantify your accomplishments whenever possible, using specific numbers, percentages, or timeframes to showcase the impact of your contributions. This will make your accomplishment statements more compelling and provide concrete evidence of your capabilities to potential employers.

Step 2: Creating accomplishment bullet points using ChatGPT

When it comes to writing accomplishment points, that's where AI tools such as ChatGPT can really help. Not only do they help you craft the bullet points, but they can do it in seconds (versus minutes or longer without it).

Example 1

Here are the notes that a senior job seeker wrote down after going through the above questions.

I led the acquisition of StellarGlobal as a project partner to create a joint venture worth \$146m. That's still running strong today. I helped de-risk \$73m in global assets by driving repositioning, refurbishment, and the negotiation of many leases. I also got development approval for a 25-level tower in Dubai with a GFA of 68,000m². I also led the sale negotiation, which led to the asset on-selling for \$35m. Another thing I did was to firstly identify and then acquire an existing retail centre in Czechia, which I then repositioned to include fuel stations, which is unusual there. This earned us an extra \$12m each year in extra revenue.

Using this example, let's ask ChatGPT to turn these into accomplishment bullet points. We asked it: Please create accomplishment bullet points for my resume based on these notes: [Paste notes].

ChatGPT:

Spearheaded the acquisition of StellarGlobal as a project partner, successfully establishing a joint venture worth \$146m that fostered strategic growth and expanded market presence.

Mitigated global asset risks valued at \$73m by driving repositioning and refurbishment initiatives,

resulting in improved property value and enhanced profitability for the company.

Negotiated numerous leases to secure favorable terms and conditions, contributing to increased revenue streams and strengthened tenant relationships.

Played a pivotal role in obtaining development approval for a prestigious 25-level tower in Dubai, spanning an impressive Gross Floor Area (GFA) of 68,000m², showcasing exemplary project management and regulatory compliance skills.

Led the intricate negotiation process for the sale of this asset, resulting in a remarkable on-selling price of \$35m, highlighting exceptional negotiation expertise and maximizing returns for stakeholders.

Demonstrated astute market analysis and strategic vision by identifying and acquiring an existing retail center in Czechia, effectively tapping into an unconventional opportunity.

Successfully repositioned the acquired retail center to incorporate fuel stations, a unique addition in the Czech market, effectively diversifying revenue streams and solidifying the center's competitive edge. It created an additional \$12m annually in extra revenue.

Example 2

Here are the notes that a recent Global Economics and Business graduate (with internship experience) created after going through the questions above:

Well, I was asked to do a Risk & Performance of Non-Performing Exposures (NPE) portfolio analysis for credit management client. I got great feedback about that NPE.

I remember that they also asked me to monitor and analyse and then synthesise a whole bunch of corporate and financial info, then I had to create statistical exhibits from that to analyse comparative financial performance. I built models to illustrate the projected financial results/value

I also drafted a client presentation, some internal presentations (like revenue updates and forecasts), as well as some investor communications

They trusted me to act as a liaison between the Europe-wide project team and a bunch of client stakeholders. That was pretty cool.

Let's again ask ChatGPT to turn these into accomplishment bullet points.

Please create accomplishment bullet points for my resume based on these notes: [Paste notes].

ChatGPT:

Conducted a comprehensive Risk & Performance analysis of the Non-Performing Exposures (NPE) portfolio for a credit management client, receiving outstanding feedback for the quality and insights of the NPE analysis.

Successfully monitored, analyzed, and synthesized complex corporate and financial information, leading to the creation of detailed statistical exhibits to analyze and compare financial performance among various entities.

Developed sophisticated financial models to illustrate projected financial results and value, aiding in informed decision-making by the stakeholders.

Authored a compelling and informative client presentation, as well as several internal presentations, including revenue updates and forecasts, showcasing expertise in data visualization and presentation skills.

Proficiently handled investor communications, demonstrating clear and effective communication to instill confidence and trust among investors.

Acted as a valued liaison between the Europe-wide project team and numerous client stakeholders, ensuring seamless communication and fostering strong collaborative relationships.

Exhibited exceptional organizational and time-management skills while managing multiple tasks and responsibilities simultaneously, delivering high-quality results within tight deadlines.

Demonstrated strong analytical prowess in dissecting complex financial data, providing valuable insights and recommendations to drive strategic decision-making.

Earned a reputation for reliability, professionalism, and dedication to excellence, leading to increased responsibilities and opportunities within the organization.

Received commendation for exceptional problem-solving abilities, contributing to innovative solutions in optimizing credit management strategies and improving overall portfolio performance.

ChatGPT has created quite a few points from these few notes! However, there are too many for an entry-level professional. So we'll ask it to cut these down into just a handful of points:

Please reduce these accomplishments to just 4 bullet points.

ChatGPT:

Successfully conducted Risk & Performance analysis of NPE portfolio for credit management client, earning excellent feedback.

Created comprehensive statistical exhibits from extensive corporate and financial data, enabling informed comparative financial performance analysis.

Developed accurate financial models illustrating projected results/value, supporting key decision-making processes.

Acted as a trusted liaison between Europe-wide project team and client stakeholders, facilitating seamless communication and collaboration.

Much better!

Step 3: Refining ChatGPT's content

As you can see, ChatGPT took the rough notes and generated several strong accomplishment points. However, AI isn't perfect: some of the wording is a little long and 'salesy'.

But that's OK: the great thing about AI is that you can ask it to modify the text without it being offended! We asked it to:

Please remove any overly-salesy adjectives.

It then produced:

ChatGPT:

Led the acquisition of StellarGlobal as a project partner, creating a joint venture worth \$146m, which continues to thrive today

De-risked \$73m in global assets through strategic efforts, driving repositioning, refurbishment, and negotiating leases

Obtained development approval for a 25-level tower in Dubai with a GFA of 68,000m². Led the successful sale negotiation resulting in the asset on-selling for \$35m

Identified and acquired an existing retail center in Czechia, later repositioned to include fuel stations, an unusual addition in the local market; generated \$12m/year extra revenue

The polished version is much better, you?ll agree!

As you?ve seen, in a jiffy ChatGPT took the job seeker?s notes, then created and refined these into ready-to-use bullet points that will sound great in the individual?s resume.

If you want to refine the wording still further, play around with different commands until ChatGPT produces content you?re happy with.

So - now it?s your turn. Follow the three steps above to quickly (and painlessly!) create your own accomplishment points for each of your most recent jobs.

If you?d like more support with your resume, take advantage of JobLeads? FREE resume review service. Find out more here:

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23. Title: Job Search

Dec 13, 2023

10 Unusual Perks & Benefits for Your Job Offer Negotiation

Ready to revolutionize your job offer negotiation game? Say goodbye to the traditional compensation package and embrace offers that go beyond the pay check. In our latest article, we share 10 unconventional perks that savvy professionals are successfully negotiating into their offers. From unlimited paid time off to pet-friendly offices and even fertility support, discover how companies, big and small, are redefining traditional job offers.

More ?

Content: Gone are the days when a job offer was simply a base salary and the promise of healthcare and a pension plan.

Whether you're in talks for a new job, or you're wanting to upgrade your existing compensation package, you have far more leverage than you realize.

Meetings at the ping pong table? Free snacks and meals? Weekly massages? You bet. In today's highly competitive job market, companies are pulling out all the stops to attract and retain top talent. And it's not just the likes of Google, Amazon, and Microsoft that are offering cool job perks. The trend is filtering down to mid-sized and even start-up companies, too.

From unconventional perks to unique benefits, negotiating your job offer has become a far more interesting and strategic game. Here are 10 outside-the-box ideas to consider in your next job offer negotiation.

#1 Childcare Subsidies

Forget about the tired routine of balancing work and parenting. More and more forward-thinking companies recognize the challenges of modern parenthood and offer childcare subsidies to ease the financial burden. Imagine having peace of mind, knowing that your child is in good hands while you're at the office. For example, companies like Google provide generous childcare benefits, even offering employees access to on-site daycare services at a fraction of the market cost. If your

company can't do on-site services, they may instead be willing to offer a subsidy for your child to relocate to a school or childcare centre closer to the office.

#2 Travel Allowance or Transport Discount

If you're fed up with the daily commute grind, negotiating a travel allowance or transport discount could be a game-changer. Some companies are acknowledging the stress and expense associated with commuting and are offering innovative solutions. For instance, as well as public transport passes, some companies even provide employees with subsidized electric scooters or bicycles, promoting a greener and healthier alternative to traditional transportation.

#3 A Better Job Title

Titles matter, and some companies are willing to get creative with them. A unique or prestigious job title can be a significant boost to your professional identity. Negotiating for a job title that better reflects your skills and contributions can have a positive impact on your career trajectory. Imagine introducing yourself as a "Digital Innovation Guru" rather than a generic "Project Manager."

#4 Pet-Friendly Office Policy

For animal lovers, negotiating a pet-friendly office policy can turn your workplace into a welcoming haven for both you and your furry friend. Company schemes like Amazon's Dog at Work and Salesforce's Puppyforce have embraced the trend, allowing employees to bring their pets (well, dogs at least – sorry, cats!) to work. This not only reduces stress, but also fosters a positive and inclusive workplace culture. Three woofs for that!

#5 Unlimited Paid Time Off

Ditch the traditional vacation accrual system. Some companies are adopting an unlimited paid time off (PTO) policy, giving employees the freedom to manage their time as they see fit. This perk is about trusting employees to balance work and personal life responsibly. Netflix, Oracle, Zoom, and LinkedIn are notable examples of organizations that have successfully implemented this approach. So there's no reason why yours can't, too!

#6 Flexible Hours

Life doesn't always fit neatly into a 9-to-5 schedule. Negotiating for flexible working hours (or even

working-from-home days) can empower you to better manage your time and optimize your productivity. Companies like Nike, Amazon, and Apple have embraced the concept of flexible hours, allowing employees to choose when they start and end their workday. This flexibility can be a game-changer for achieving a healthier life-work balance ? and can certainly make the difference when deciding to accept an offer.

#7 Learning & Development Budget

Investing in your professional growth should be a shared goal between you and your employer. Negotiating for a learning and development budget can open doors to new skills and experiences. Some companies allocate a specific budget for each employee, empowering them to attend conferences, enroll in courses, or pursue certifications. This commitment to continuous learning is a win-win, benefiting both you and the company.

8 Fertility & Family Planning Benefits

Family planning can be a delicate topic, but some companies are recognizing its importance and offering fertility benefits. These benefits may include coverage for fertility treatments, egg freezing, or adoption assistance. Forward-thinking companies like Meta and Spotify have been pioneers in providing comprehensive fertility and family planning support, reflecting a commitment to the diverse needs of their employees.

#9 Paid Professional Memberships

Associating yourself with professional organizations can enhance your career and expand your network. Negotiating for paid professional memberships as part of your job offer can demonstrate your commitment to staying current in your field. Many companies willingly cover the cost of professional memberships as a way to invest in the expertise of their employees. While this may seem like an easy and inexpensive benefit for employers to agree to on the negotiation table, in actual fact the expansion of your network and the potential opportunities this brings could turn out to be incalculable for you.

#10 Professional Publication Subscriptions

This is another win-win. While this is not a huge investment for companies, this option enables you

to stay ahead of industry trends and research by negotiating for company-sponsored subscriptions to professional publications. Whether it's access to leading journals, magazines, or online platforms, having a wealth of industry knowledge at your fingertips can give you a competitive edge. Some companies understand the value of keeping their employees well-informed, so they actively support their access to relevant publications.

Conclusion

The job market has evolved, and so have the perks and benefits that come with it. As you gear up for your next job offer negotiation, consider these unconventional perks that go beyond traditional compensation packages.

Tailoring your benefits to your unique needs and priorities can make your professional life more fulfilling and set you on a path to long-term success.

So, when the negotiating table is set, don't be afraid to think outside the box and secure a package that truly reflects your worth.

Inspired? We certainly hope so!

Key takeaways:

Job offers have evolved beyond basic salaries and standard benefits, providing more room for negotiation and creative perks

Outside-the-box offers (like childcare subsidies and pet-friendly policies) are no longer exclusive to industry giants, with companies of all sizes recognizing the need for enticing incentives to attract and retain top talent

Employee-centric perks such as unlimited paid time off and flexible hours showcase a growing emphasis on life-work balance, promoting trust and autonomy in managing time responsibly

Negotiating for a learning and development budget reflects a shared commitment between employees and employers to invest in continuous professional growth

Forward-thinking companies are acknowledging and addressing the diverse needs of modern living, exemplified by non-traditional benefits like fertility support

Benefits such as paid professional memberships and subscriptions to professional publications may seem small, but can offer invaluable networking opportunities and industry knowledge, contributing to long-term success

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24. Title: Job Search

Dec 5, 2023

Digital Nomadism - Rebel Against Mundane Job Boundaries

Discover the endless possibilities of digital nomadism in our latest blog post. We share with you the fundamentals of this liberating lifestyle, where your office transcends geographical boundaries, enabling you to embrace a fusion of work, life, and adventure. Explore common jobs tailored for the nomadic spirit, and check out some of the top destinations that welcome digital nomads with open arms (and visas). If you've ever dreamt of breaking free from the conventional 9-to-5 and embracing a life of independence and exploration, this blog post is your passport to your new digital office.

More ?

Content: Remember that classic Shakespeare expression, "The world is your oyster"? Well, in the era of digital nomadism, the world is your office!

At its core, being a digital nomad means leveraging technology to break free from the constraints of a fixed workplace.

Imagine your office to be the bustling coffee shops of Berlin, the tranquil co-working spaces of Bali, or the cosy apartments in Buenos Aires. Sounds far-fetched? According to a recent study, there are more than 35 million digital nomads out there. That's 35 million people who can confirm that a digital nomad lifestyle is not only not far-fetched, but entirely possible.

In the following article, we'll explore the concept of being a digital nomad, the myriad benefits of this lifestyle, common digital nomad jobs, and the top 10 places where you can live and work seamlessly as a digital nomad.

Ready to find out more? Then let's dive in!

What is a Digital Nomad?

A digital nomad is a professional who leverages technology to work remotely, untethered from a fixed location. Whether you're a writer, designer, developer, or marketer, many workers are

attracted to this lifestyle because it offers the flexibility to travel while maintaining a fulfilling career.

In reaction to the recent global pandemic, the traditional boundaries of working from a fixed location have become much more flexible. It was a wake-up call to something employees have been saying for years: people can work just as effectively ? and as many studies have shown, even more effectively ? outside the office.

The allure of the digital nomad lifestyle lies in the fusion of work and exploration. This breed of professionals seeks a lifestyle where the world becomes a vast canvas for both personal and career growth.

Why do people become digital nomads? Their motivations are as diverse as the nomads themselves. Some are drawn by the promise of adventure and cultural immersion, while others seek a reprieve from the monotony of the nine-to-five grind.

One thing they have in common is that they're the architects of their own time, dictating when, where, and how they work. The freedom to craft a personalized work-life balance is a magnetic force that pulls many away from conventional employment structures.

In essence, it's a rebellion against the mundane: the digital nomad lifestyle is an embodiment of the belief that life is too short to be lived within the confines of a cubicle.

What are the Pros of Being a Digital Nomad?

We're sticking to pros in this article because, if you wanted cons, you wouldn't be reading this, would you?

Picture this: your office is not a dull cubicle, but the vibrant streets of Barcelona or the serene beaches of Bali. The allure of digital nomadism goes beyond such picturesque backdrops, however: it's about rewriting the rules of work and life.

Many countries are increasingly jumping on the virtual bandwagon to welcome digital nomads.

Why?

Firstly, digital nomads inject money into local economies by spending on accommodation, food, transportation, and other services. This influx of income (without taking jobs away from locals) contributes to the growth of small businesses and tourism.

Additionally, hosting digital nomads fosters cultural exchange, as these individuals often engage with local communities, sharing their skills and perspectives.

Furthermore, attracting digital nomads aligns with a country's aspiration to position itself as a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship, encouraging a diverse and dynamic workforce.

The presence of digital nomads also contributes to a positive global image, showcasing the country as open-minded, progressive, and adaptive to evolving work trends.

And for digital nomads themselves? Here are just a few pros off the top of our heads:

Flexibility and Freedom: Digital nomads have the autonomy to create their work schedule, allowing for a better work-life balance

Global Networking: Engage with professionals worldwide, expanding your network and gaining diverse perspectives

Cost of Living Balance: Choose to live in affordable locations while earning a salary that aligns with higher-cost regions

Personal Growth: Exposure to new cultures, languages, and environments fosters personal development and adaptability

Increased Productivity: Many digital nomads report increased productivity due to reduced office distractions and the ability to create a personalized work environment

What are Common Jobs for Digital Nomads?

Embarking on the digital nomad journey opens up a world of career possibilities that transcend the conventional boundaries of the corporate landscape.

And the more widespread digital nomadism becomes, the more opportunities are available for the next wave of office-escaping rebels.

You may be wondering, digital nomadism sounds great, but what jobs are suited to this lifestyle?

The answer is, thanks to technology, more than you can imagine!

Here's a shortlist of common job types that are location independent:

Web Development/Design

Digital Marketing

Virtual Assistance

Graphic Design

Online Teaching

Freelance Writing/Content Creation

Social Media Management

Programming/Software Development

Consulting

E-commerce

How to Become a Digital Nomad?

More and more countries are opening themselves up to digital nomads. Many are now offering special visas for just this purpose.

Official rules for working as a digital nomad can vary from country to country, but some common requirements or conditions that countries may set for digital nomads include:

Visa or Permit: As mentioned, many countries offer specific visas or permits for digital nomads, allowing them to legally stay and work for an extended period

Income Requirements: Some countries require digital nomads to demonstrate a minimum income or show proof of employment to ensure they can support themselves while residing in the country

Health Insurance: Certain countries may stipulate that digital nomads must have adequate health insurance coverage for the duration of their stay to relieve pressure on the local healthcare system

Local Registration: Digital nomads may be required to register with local authorities upon arrival, providing information about their stay, residence, and work activities

Tax Obligations: Countries may have specific tax regulations for digital nomads, determining whether they are subject to local taxes and the conditions under which they are liable

Maximum Stay Duration: Some countries may set a maximum allowable stay duration for digital nomads, after which they may need to apply for an extension or leave the country

Remote Work-Friendly Infrastructure: Digital nomads often choose destinations with reliable internet connectivity and suitable workspaces, so countries may emphasize the availability of such infrastructure

Proof of Employment or Freelance Work: Providing evidence of employment or a stable freelance business may be required to ensure that digital nomads are engaged in legitimate work

And now to answer a hot question: Where are digital nomads working? Let's find out!

What are the Top 10 Digital Nomad Hotspots?

Bali, Indonesia

Chiang Mai, Thailand

Lisbon, Portugal

Barcelona, Spain

Medellin, Colombia

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Tbilisi, Georgia

Cape Town, South Africa

Playa del Carmen, Mexico

Tallinn, Estonia

If you're curious to discover more locations, a quick internet search for top digital nomad spots will reveal many more ideas.

Conclusion

Embarking on a digital nomad journey is an exciting step towards a life of freedom, adventure, and professional fulfilment. And it's totally doable (just ask those 35 million digital nomads out there!).

Before jumping on a plane and heading somewhere exotic, take the time to intensively research locations of interest, including the pros and cons. Find out what others have to say by checking out videos online, reading more articles, or tapping into your network to connect with those who are currently living this lifestyle.

Don't look back with regret. If digital nomadism appeals to you, there are many ways for you to make it happen.

Good luck and remember: The world is your office!

Key Takeaways

Being a digital nomad means leveraging technology to untether from a fixed workplace, turning the world into your canvas

With over 35 million digital nomads worldwide, the lifestyle is not only possible but thriving

Digital nomads are driven by diverse motivations, from a thirst for adventure to a desire for cultural immersion and a break from the monotony of traditional work

Digital nomads enjoy unparalleled benefits, including flexibility, global networking, cost of living balance, personal growth, and increased productivity

Many countries actively welcome digital nomads, recognizing the economic and cultural benefits

they bring, contributing to local businesses and fostering innovation

A huge number of jobs can be carried out remotely, including content writing, web development, and digital marketing

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25. Title: Job Search

Nov 27, 2023

Recruitment Trend Predictions for 2024

Step into the future of employment with our latest article exploring recruitment trends in 2024. Discover how AI chatbots are reshaping job roles and hiring practices, while AI tools will continue to create a more efficient, candidate-centric experience. Remote work and digital nomadism have evolved from a trend to a standard, further blurring the lines between office and home. Uncover the strategic importance of upskilling and reskilling for career advancement in 2024, empowering professionals to stay ahead of technological advancements and remain competitive. Keen to learn more? Then check out our latest blog post to gain a comprehensive insight into the trends that will shape the recruitment landscape in 2024.

More ?

Content: In 2023, a huge amount happened in the world of job seeking and recruitment.

Without a doubt, one of the biggest impacts was the rapid rise of AI chatbots such as ChatGPT, Bing Chat, and Bard. Not to mention better AI-based tools to enhance HR and recruitment systems.

All of which have been adopted with gusto by hiring managers in everything from drafting job descriptions, crafting offers and composing rejection letters, through to more efficient resume parsing and candidate identification.

Job seekers are taking equal advantage of the efficiency and shortcuts that technology brings. The internet is awash with advice about how to craft resumes, cover letters, and interview question responses in seconds using AI.

Employees have been equally savvy about AI and its enormous potential to increase job satisfaction and slash their working day. As AI gets better at doing tasks usually done 100% by humans, it is both eliminating time-consuming repetitive chores and changing the very nature of many jobs.

Which means that 2024 is likely to be an equally explosive year when it comes to both technological

development, and incorporating technical innovations into hiring practices.

Not only that, but the post-pandemic world of work has changed the face of employment in more ways than one. Think digital nomadism and learning & development access, for starters. Jobs no longer have to be based in an office, or even in the same city or country.

In this blog post, we'll share our 6 top predictions about recruitment trends in 2024, based on interactions with hundreds of hiring managers, job seekers, and recruitment stakeholders.

1. The AI Revolution: Redefining Job Roles and Descriptions

As we mentioned, artificial intelligence (AI) has been the talk of the town for the past 12 months. 2024 will be no different.

Brace yourselves for a continued transformation in how we approach our tasks and define our roles. The rise of AI is not just about automation; it's about reshaping the very nature of our job descriptions.

As AI becomes more integrated into our workflows, expect a shift towards skill sets that complement and enhance these technological advances.

For example, a recent marketing coaching client shared that they have slashed their original workload by 6-7 hours per week simply by using a selection of finely-tuned, tried-and-tested ChatGPT prompts. AI chatbots now take over the drafting of her internal and external communications, press releases, intranet and website content, advertising copy, social media campaign text content, and so much more.

Many jobs are adapting to incorporate similar AI-driven shortcuts. So, expect to see the ability to leverage AI for daily tasks to increase in 2024. This will rapidly become more commonly reflected in existing job descriptions, with job postings for new hires making increasing reference to AI tool abilities.

2. Remote Work and Digital Nomadism: The New Standard

2023 saw the increasing rise of digital nomadism and remote work, building on the groundwork left by the global pandemic of 2020-2022.

Now that working away from the office has become very much the norm, the lines between office

and home will continue to blur in 2024 as more companies embrace the flexibility of remote work. No longer just a pandemic-induced trend, working from anywhere is becoming a standard option for a myriad of job types (just look at any major job board for evidence).

Not to mention, the fact that companies save significant money by having employees work from home or elsewhere means they will generally continue to support this type of work.

So, update that resume, dust off your virtual collaboration skills, and get ready to embrace the freedom of working in your PJs or from that cozy café or foreign country in 2024!

3. Upskilling and Reskilling: Your Ticket to Career Advancement

In 2024, the savvy professional will increasingly recognize the importance of staying ahead of the curve ? especially as a deliberate career advancement move.

Upskilling and reskilling won't be just buzzwords; 2024 will see these become highly strategic methods to climb the career ladder.

In 2024, we predict job seekers and employees will take even greater charge of their professional development to seek promotion and land better jobs. Why?

Upskilling and/or reskilling in the latest technologies and tools in the face of rapid advancements means you will have more current knowledge than the competition

Those who continually develop their skills are much more likely to be considered for promotions or higher-level positions

Upskilling makes you more marketable in the job market. Having a diverse skill set can make job seekers stand out and increase your chances of landing new opportunities

Reskilling allows employees to adapt to changes in the job market or shifts in their industry. This adaptability is crucial as job roles and requirements can change over time

Learning new skills can lead to increased productivity in the workplace. Employees who are proficient in the latest tools and techniques can often perform tasks more efficiently (and stand out as valuable assets when it comes to retention considerations)

Industries may have specific certifications or skills that are highly valued. Upskilling ensures that you

meet or exceed changing industry standards, making you a more attractive candidate

In a globalized economy, employees may need to upskill to meet the demands of an international marketplace. Language proficiency, cultural awareness, and other global skills can be critical

Upskilling helps you to future-proof your careers by staying ahead of industry trends and changes, as well as avoid job obsolescence

4. Salary Transparency: Shaping a Candidate-Centric Job Market

Say goodbye to the mystery of salary negotiations!

The push for greater salary transparency in job postings is creating a more balanced (and perhaps even candidate-centric) job market.

Thanks to this trend, in 2024 job seekers will have more control over where they apply, armed with information that lets them align their expectations with a company's offerings.

Aside from increased trust and less time wasting in the recruitment process, salary transparency reduces wage inequality, encourages pay equity discussions, and give companies a competitive advantage over organizations that obfuscate.

Salary transparency allows candidates to self-select based on their financial needs. This means that individuals who apply are more likely to be genuinely interested in the role and its compensation.

It's a win-win situation that fosters better competition between organizations, ensuring that quality candidates are matched with the right opportunities.

5. AI Beyond the Hype: Responsible Integration in Recruitment

AI will not only impact job responsibilities and job descriptions in 2024.

Generative AI might continue to grab the headlines in 2024, but a recent study by Gartner suggests that the hype has served as a tipping point in other aspects of AI as well, including its ability to make recruitment processes faster, fairer, and clearer.

Both generative AI and regular AI play distinct yet complementary roles in enhancing the recruitment process. Generative AI contributes by automating candidate screening, enabling personalized communication, and implementing chatbot support to streamline interactions and provide

information efficiently.

Moreover, it plays a crucial role in promoting diversity and inclusion by analyzing and mitigating biases in job descriptions and recruitment materials. By leveraging generative AI, recruiters can create more inclusive and respectful communication and accelerate the initial stages of candidate evaluation.

On the other hand, regular AI focuses on tasks such as resume parsing, predictive analytics, efficient workflow management, and automated scheduling. It excels at extracting key information from resumes, predicting candidate success based on historical data, organizing workflow, and automating administrative aspects of the recruitment process.

When both generative and regular AI are combined, they offer a comprehensive approach, facilitating skill assessment and matching, bias mitigation, and continuous learning and improvement. Which can drastically enhance the overall candidate experience.

Hand-in-hand is a significant push towards responsible AI. As we embrace 2024, it's not just about automation; it's about ethical and mindful integration. This will filter down to recruitment practices and drive the push towards a better candidate experience.

6. Beyond the Paycheck: Expanding the Benefits Horizon

In 2024, it's not just going to be about the paycheck; it's going to be about the entire package.

Job seekers and employees are becoming increasingly aware of certain companies offering both traditional and non-traditional perks and benefits to make compensation more attractive.

Which means that, in the face of greater competition, other companies are upping their game by expanding the types of benefits and perks they offer, as well.

Think beyond the basics such as extra paid time off, family leave, stock options, childcare subsidies, and better insurance.

Workers are negotiating for less obvious yet valuable benefits, like paid professional memberships, flexible hours, transportation passes, home office/remote working equipment, meal services, wellness programs, doggy daycare, sabbaticals, and tailored training and development opportunities.

2024 will see a greater push towards a more holistic compensation experience that goes beyond a traditional salary and benefits package.

Conclusion

So there you have it, a sneak peek into the recruitment trends that are set to define 2024.

Do you predict any other trends in 2024?

Key takeaways:

The rapid rise of AI chatbots and tools is transforming recruitment and employment processes. In 2024, expect a continued shift in job roles and descriptions, with AI not only automating tasks but reshaping the very nature of jobs. Job postings will increasingly emphasize AI tool abilities, reflecting the integration of technology into daily tasks

Digital nomadism and remote work have become the new standard. In 2024, companies are expected to further embrace this flexibility, blurring the lines between office and home

Upskilling and reskilling will be strategic approaches in 2024 for career advancement. Job seekers recognizing the importance of staying ahead of technological advancements will actively engage in professional development. Current knowledge, adaptability to industry changes, and diverse skill sets will be key factors in climbing the career ladder

Salary transparency in job postings will give job seekers more control over where they apply, armed with information to align expectations with a company's offerings. This trend fosters trust, reduces wage inequality, encourages pay equity discussions, and gives companies a competitive edge in attracting quality candidates

Generative and regular AI will play more complementary roles in enhancing the recruitment process in 2024. While generative AI automates candidate screening and enables personalized communication, regular AI focuses on tasks like efficient resume parsing and predictive analytics. The responsible integration of AI will become a more significant focus, driving a better candidate experience

In 2024, the compensation package will go beyond salary. Job seekers are increasingly aware of

companies offering diverse perks beyond traditional benefits. Negotiating for professional memberships, flexible hours, transportation passes, and unique benefits like doggy daycare or tailored training opportunities will be part of a holistic compensation experience

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26. Title: Mastering The Interview

Nov 22, 2023

Using AI chatbots to practice interview questions

Do you have a job interview coming up, but you've been putting off preparing for it because of how much work it involves? We hear you. In this blog post, we'll show you how AI chatbots (like ChatGPT, Bing Chat, and Bard) can generate 100% personalized question responses for you to practice in minutes!

More ?

Content: Have you ever frozen when an interviewer asks, "Tell me a bit about yourself"? Or, "Why are you a great fit for this role"?

You're like a deer in the headlights, because you thought you could wing easy questions on the day. Now the pressure is on, and your train of thought chugs out that window.

Well, we've all been there. When you're stressed in an interview setting, your tongue can freeze and your mind goes blank. Especially if you're under-prepared.

And that's the key: one of the best ways to boost your confidence and performance is through thorough preparation.

A lot of people avoid preparing because they think it takes a lot of effort, or will make them sound rehearsed and inauthentic. Or that they've done so many interviews, they can handle whatever comes their way with zero hesitations.

That's usually the opposite of what happens in reality. Especially when you get flustered by unexpected question phrasing or a hard-hitting interviewer.

Practice (and Preparation!) Makes Perfect

There's no denying that when you've pre-anticipated responses to likely interview questions, and have practiced how to answer them, you actually sound a lot smoother.

And thanks to recent developments like AI chatbots, the effort factor (which, as we've seen, is why a lot of us avoid preparing in advance) is considerably slashed.

An AI chatbot is a versatile tool that can assist you in multiple aspects of interview preparation. ?AI chatbot? is just a fancy name for tools such as ChatGPT, Bard, or Bing Chat, which you?ve probably already tried out already in other contexts.

So, how can AI chatbots help with your interview preparation?

Question Generation: AI chatbots can help you generate potential interview questions. By practicing your responses to these questions, you can refine your answers and boost your confidence

Resume-Based Responses: With your resume as a reference, the AI chatbot can help you craft personalized responses to common interview questions. This ensures that your answers are tailored to your unique experiences and skills

Mock Interviews: You can use AI chatbots for mock interviews, allowing you to simulate the real interview experience and receive constructive feedback.

Research and Insights: AI chatbots can even provide insights into common interview best practices, the company you?re interviewing with, and industry-specific trends

All at no cost, in the privacy of your own home, and on demand.

In this blog post, we?ll show you how to use tools like ChatGPT (or Bard or Bing Chat, or whichever other tool is your personal favorite) to generate and practice interview questions. We?ll share what happened when one of our coaching clients tried this exercise (we?ll even give you the 5 prompts so that you can create tailored responses based on your own resume).

Ready? Then let?s get started!

The Basic Steps (Summary)

Step 1: Gather Information

Before you start using your chosen AI chatbot, make sure you have the following resources at hand:

Your resume

The job description

Step 2: Generate Interview Questions

To generate interview questions using your preferred AI chatbot, follow these steps:

Set the Context: Provide information about the job you're applying for, and any specific skills or experiences you want to highlight (e.g. the job description and your resume)

Ask the AI chatbot: "Can you generate common interview questions for a Software Developer position in the tech industry?" or "What are typical questions asked during a Marketing Manager interview?"

Review and Select: The AI chatbot will generate a list of questions. Review them and select the most relevant ones for your preparation.

Step 3: Resume-Based Responses

To generate personalized responses based on your resume, follow these steps:

Provide Context: Share your resume with the AI chatbot and specify the question you want to answer. For instance, "I'm preparing for a Software Developer interview. Can you help me draft a response to the question: 'Tell me about your experience with web development'?"

Collaborate with the AI chatbot: Engage in a conversation with the AI chatbot to refine and develop your response. You can ask follow-up questions and seek suggestions for improvement.

Save Your Responses: Keep a record of your responses for future reference.

5 Common Interview Questions (With Prompts)

Almost every job interview incorporates a variation of the 5 common interview questions below. And even if they don't, preparing for these questions will help you to address any number of other related questions.

Here are the 5 questions, as well as prompts you can share with your preferred AI chatbot.

#1 "Tell me about yourself?"

Prompt: "Based on my resume, can you help me create an engaging response to 'Tell me about yourself'?"

#2 "What is your greatest professional achievement?"

Prompt: ?I want to discuss my most significant accomplishment as a Marketing Manager. Can you assist me in crafting a response??

#3 ?Why do you want to work for our company??

Prompt: ?I?m applying for a software development position at XYZ Inc. Can you help me personalize my response to ?Why do you want to work for our company???

#4 ?Describe a challenging situation you faced at work and how you overcame it.?

Prompt: ?I?d like to talk about a challenging project I handled as a Project Manager. Can you help me formulate a response??

#5 ?Where do you see yourself in five years??

Prompt: ?I?m a recent graduate applying for an entry-level position in finance. Can you assist me in creating a response to ?Where do you see yourself in five years???

Remember to tailor these questions and prompts to your specific job application and experiences.

In the next section, we?ll share how an AI chatbot (in this case, ChatGPT) helped a real-life job seeker prepare for their interview using these same five questions.

AI Chatbots in Action

Let?s see how ChatGPT helps someone prepare for these five common job interview questions.

Background information: Rudi Gold is a Data Engineer based in the Netherlands. He wants to apply for a Data Engineering role with a particular company in Amsterdam.

#1 Tell me about yourself

Rudi asked ChatGPT: ?I?m preparing for a data engineer interview. Based on my resume, can you help me create an engaging response to ?Tell me about yourself???

Of course, ChatGPT said it would be happy to.

YOU:

Hello! I?m preparing for a data engineer interview. Based on my resume, can you help me create an engaging response to ?Tell me about yourself??

ChatGPT:

Of course! I?d be happy to help you craft a compelling response to the ?Tell me about yourself?

question. To tailor the response to your specific situation, I'll need some information from your resume. Could you please provide me with key points or highlights of your experience, skills, and any notable projects you've worked on as a data engineer?

After pasting his resume, ChatGPT created a personalized response for Rudi to edit and practice:

Certainly! I'm a Principal Data Engineer and AI Developer with a rich and diverse background spanning 18 years. In this time, I've successfully navigated through the intricacies of scalable architectures, AI projects, cloud infrastructures, distributed computing, big data analytics, and microservices. My professional journey has taken me from start-ups to government projects and top-tier enterprises, allowing me to cultivate a deep understanding of the intricacies of the tech landscape.

My expertise lies in a wide range of domains, including AI, data modeling, data management, web technologies, big data, cloud computing, semantic web, IoT, machine learning, and project management. I'm proud to be bilingual in English and Dutch, a skill that has proven invaluable in my international collaborations.

On the technology front, I've mastered several programming languages such as Python, Java, JavaScript, R, NodeJS, and more. I've worked extensively with web technologies like J2EE, REST, and HTML5, and I'm well-versed in data modeling using RDFS, RDF, OWL, JSON, and more. My data management experience includes MongoDB, DynamoDB, Redis, MySQL, and Lucene-SOLR, among others. In the realm of big data and cloud, I've tackled Kafka, Hadoop, Spark, AWS, and Elasticsearch, to name a few.

In terms of academic qualifications, I hold a Master's degree in Software Engineering from the University of Amsterdam and a Bachelor's degree in Software Engineering and Business Informatics from Fontys University of Applied Science.

In my recent role at DashFuture, I spearheaded a career pivot into AI-based development for a highly confidential \$2.3 billion federal project. Coordinating a project team, I focused on implementing strategies for design and testing, resulting in significant project savings. Prior to that, as a Principal Cloud Engineer at Embolden Tech, I led a multicultural team in developing cloud

infrastructure and successfully migrated key applications to the cloud across multiple continents, achieving ahead-of-schedule results with zero errors or delays.

My earlier experiences include leading research on integrating Semantic Web technologies into Big Data analytics infrastructure at Resolute, where I developed scalable architectures for global research projects valued at \$127 million. At Scholable, I led multiple EU and internal projects, securing \$6.4 million in funding and playing a key role in standardization for government agencies.

Overall, my journey has been marked by a commitment to excellence, leadership in complex projects, and a passion for staying at the forefront of technological advancements. I'm excited about the prospect of bringing this wealth of experience and skills to contribute to [Company Name]'s dynamic environment.

As you can see, ChatGPT tends to be a little wordy. So feel free to ask it to shorten the reply you receive for your own interview preparation, or edit it yourself if needed.

2 What is your greatest professional achievement?

Rudi then moved on to the next question on our list. ?I want to discuss my most significant accomplishment as a Data Engineer. Can you assist me in crafting a response??

You:

I want to discuss my most significant accomplishment as a data engineer. Can you assist me in crafting a response?

ChatGPT:

Absolutely! Could you provide more details about what you consider to be your most significant accomplishment as a data engineer? This could include specific projects, challenges you overcame, the impact of your work, or any notable results. The more details you provide, the better I can assist you in crafting a compelling response.

You:

Sure! In my previous job, I drove the development of cloud infrastructure supporting Embolden's online electronic design tools. This included developing microservice architecture supporting 7 products. Once everything was developed and tested, I helped migrate 4 key apps to the cloud

across 3 continents ahead of schedule with 0 errors or delays.

After prompting Rudi to add some more specifics, ChatGPT generated a response for Rudi to tweak and practice:

Certainly! One of my most significant accomplishments as a data engineer was during my tenure as the Principal Cloud Engineer at Embolden Tech. In this role, I played a pivotal part in driving the development of cloud infrastructure to support Embolden's online electronic design tools. The challenge was not just about transitioning to the cloud but ensuring seamless functionality and performance for a suite of 7 diverse products.

To tackle this, I spearheaded the design and implementation of a robust microservices architecture tailored to the specific needs of each product. This involved a meticulous approach to ensure scalability, reliability, and optimal performance across the board.

The true test of this endeavor came with the migration of four key applications to the cloud, spanning three continents. What made this achievement particularly noteworthy was not just meeting but surpassing the migration schedule, and accomplishing this feat with zero errors or delays.

This accomplishment stands out for several reasons. Firstly, it showcased my ability to conceptualize and implement scalable cloud infrastructure tailored to a complex array of products. Secondly, the successful migration across continents highlighted my adeptness at coordinating and executing large-scale projects with precision. Finally, achieving this ahead of schedule and with flawless execution underscored my commitment to delivering results that not only meet but exceed expectations.

The impact of this accomplishment was felt across the organization, as the cloud infrastructure enhancements significantly improved the overall efficiency and accessibility of Embolden's electronic design tools. It also demonstrated my ability to navigate challenges inherent in data engineering, from architecture design to flawless execution on a global scale.

This experience has fueled my passion for leveraging data engineering solutions to drive business success, and I'm eager to bring this expertise to contribute to similar impactful initiatives at

[Company Name].

As always, when reviewing your own AI chatbot-generated response, you may wish to shorten or tweak it a little to sound more like ?you?.

#3 ?Why do you want to work for our company??

Your interview may have gone swimmingly up until this point. But if you fail to come up with a specific response to this particular question, they?ll know you haven?t done your research or prepared.

You:

I?m applying for a Data Engineer role at Enertec Netherlands. Can you help me personalize my response to ?Why do you want to work for our company??

ChatGPT:

Certainly! Here?s a personalized response for the question ?Why do you want to work for Enertec Netherlands?? based on the information you?ve provided:

I am genuinely excited about the opportunity to contribute my skills and expertise as a Data Engineer at Enertec Netherlands. As I researched your company, several aspects stood out to me that align perfectly with my professional values and career aspirations.

Enertec?s commitment to innovation in the energy sector is particularly inspiring. Your focus on developing cutting-edge solutions aligns seamlessly with my background in scalable architectures, AI projects, and cloud infrastructures. I am eager to bring my experience to a company that is at the forefront of leveraging technology to drive positive change in the energy landscape.

Furthermore, I am drawn to the collaborative and dynamic work environment at Enertec. Your emphasis on teamwork and the diverse range of projects aligns well with my experience in leading multicultural teams, as demonstrated during my tenure at DashFuture. I believe that my skills in data engineering, coupled with my ability to collaborate effectively, would contribute to the continued success and innovation at Enertec.

The company?s commitment to sustainable practices and energy efficiency is a value that resonates with me both professionally and personally. I am excited about the prospect of applying my expertise

to contribute to Enertec's mission of creating sustainable energy solutions for the future.

In summary, Enertec Netherlands represents an ideal environment where I can merge my passion for data engineering with a company that values innovation, collaboration, and sustainable practices. I am eager to bring my skills to the team and be a part of Enertec's continued success in pioneering advancements in the energy sector.

You can always ask the AI chatbot to refine this response by asking it to research the company for you, and then incorporate what it learns into the response. However, double-check each fact to ensure accuracy: AI chatbots are brilliant, but not perfect.

#4 Describe a challenging situation you faced at work and how you overcame it.

This can be a tough question for many people. They want to maintain the balance between picking a relevant example, coming across as knowledgeable, while not sounding like they're bragging or conversely that they lost control of the example situation. An AI chatbot can help you craft your response in a positive and authentic way.

You:

I'd like to talk about a challenging project I handled as a data engineer. Can you help me formulate a response?

ChatGPT:

Certainly! Please provide some details about the challenging project you'd like to discuss. Specifically, I'd like to know the key aspects of the project, the challenges you faced, the actions you took to overcome them, and the results or impact of your work. The more information you can provide, the better I can assist you in formulating a comprehensive and compelling response.

You:

OK so that's in my current job. The key aspects are coordinating the project team in the development of implementation strategies for design and testing. This was the first time I've led a project team, so that's been really cool. The goal is to steer the deployment of solutions to directly reduce manufacturing, assembly, integration, and testing costs/schedule. The challenges have been: as I've come in with a fresh pair of eyes, I saw several ways that we could make the project

flow a lot better. I ran these by leadership and got the go-ahead. In the end, I introduced efficiencies which have so far led to \$235k project savings.

Here's what ChatGPT came up with:

One of the most challenging yet rewarding projects I've undertaken in my current role as an AI Developer at DashFuture was when I took on the responsibility of coordinating a project team for the development of implementation strategies focused on design and testing. It marked my first foray into a leadership role, and it has been an immensely fulfilling experience.

The primary goal of the project was to steer the deployment of solutions with the aim of directly reducing manufacturing, assembly, integration, and testing costs and schedules. As I delved into the project, I identified several areas where improvements could be made to streamline the workflow and enhance overall efficiency.

Approaching the challenges with a fresh perspective, I proactively communicated my insights to the leadership team. I was met with enthusiasm and granted the go-ahead to implement the proposed changes. This marked a pivotal moment in the project, as it allowed us to not only address existing bottlenecks but also introduce new methodologies that significantly improved the overall project flow. Implementing these efficiency-driven changes resulted in tangible and impactful outcomes. To date, we've realized project savings totaling \$235,000, a testament to the effectiveness of the enhancements introduced. This achievement not only validated the importance of continuous improvement but also demonstrated my ability to navigate and lead a team through transformative changes.

Leading this project has not only honed my project management and leadership skills but has also instilled in me a deep appreciation for the value of collaboration and innovation in problem-solving. It's a testament to the impact that strategic, well-executed changes can have on both the project's success and the organization's bottom line.

This experience has fueled my passion for driving positive change through data engineering and project management, and I'm eager to bring this proactive and results-driven mindset to future challenges at Enertec Netherlands.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

Many of us don't know where we'll be in 6 months or a year. Let alone 5 years. So even though whatever you say won't actually be your goal, potential employers ask this question to get a feel for your ambitions.

You've got to get the right balance between a desire to grow and develop, without them thinking you'll then take those skills elsewhere.

You:

Thank you! Finally, can you assist me in creating a response to "Where do you see yourself in five years?"

ChatGPT:

Certainly! Crafting a response to the "Where do you see yourself in five years?" question requires a balance between expressing ambition, alignment with the company's goals, and a realistic understanding of career development. Here's a sample response:

In the next five years, I envision myself continuing to grow both professionally and personally, and I see Enertec Netherlands as a key partner in that journey. As a Data Engineer, I aspire to take on increasingly challenging projects that not only leverage my current skill set but also push me to acquire new skills and knowledge.

I'm keen on further developing my expertise in emerging technologies and trends within the data engineering field, especially as they relate to the evolving landscape of sustainable energy solutions. Enertec's commitment to innovation and sustainability resonates with my own values, and I'm enthusiastic about contributing to the company's vision.

Beyond technical skills, I see myself in a leadership role, collaborating closely with cross-functional teams and contributing to strategic decision-making processes. As a team leader, I aim to foster an environment of continuous improvement and mentorship, empowering my colleagues to excel and driving collective success.

Moreover, I'm committed to staying at the forefront of industry advancements, possibly taking on additional responsibilities in research and development. Whether it's exploring new technologies or

contributing to the company's growth, I believe that my journey with Enertec will be characterized by ongoing learning, leadership development, and meaningful contributions to the organization's success.

It's my goal to not only align my personal career objectives with the objectives of Enertec but also to make a lasting impact within the company and the industry at large. I'm excited about the potential for growth and collaboration here, and I am committed to being a valuable asset to Enertec's vision for the future.

As we have seen, AI chatbots are brilliant at customized interview preparation. In this blog article, we discovered how they can generate job-specific interview questions, and prepare personalized responses based on your resume.

So, now it's your turn. Try the 5 questions and prompts for your next interview practice, and we guarantee you'll feel much more confident and prepared.

Key takeaways:

AI chatbots (such as ChatGPT, Bard, Bing Chat, etc.) are becoming increasingly used as a tool to help job seekers prepare for interviews

When it comes to interview preparation, AI chatbots are being increasingly used for customized question generation, personalized resume-based responses, mock Interviews, and even company research and insights

Learn what 5 of the most common interview questions are, and copy our 5 prompts to generate individualized responses

Read how a real-life job seeker uses each prompt to create an entirely unique interview preparation experience

Discover how AI chatbots slash your interview preparation and research time from hours to minutes

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Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

27. Title: Calibration

Nov 14, 2023

Surviving a Toxic Boss - 10 Essential Tactics Before You Resign

Are you about to quit your job because of a terrible manager? Before you throw in the towel, check out our latest blog post. In it, we share our top 10 dos and don'ts about handling bad bosses, based on 20 years of coaching great professionals just like you. Although it can seem unlikely when you're angry and hurt, there are ways to address the situation without you having to give up a job and company you love. Hop on over to the blog to find out how.

More ?

Content: Are you on the cusp of leaving your job because of a terrible manager?

We hear you. We've all been there. And yes, it sucks.

Let's face it: some people are simply not leadership material. They get promoted on the basis of their ability to do their current job well, with the assumption that they can lead others towards similar success. But that's not always the case.

We can all agree that functional leadership and people leadership are two entirely different kettle of fish. Unfortunately, when the people management side is lacking ? combined with the person's inability to recognize their need for development ? this can lead to conflict and poor relationships with subordinates.

If you're at that point where you just want to quit because of a terrible manager, then this article is for you.

Before you make yourself the one to resolve the situation by leaving, we'll share our top 10 dos and don'ts about how to handle the situation.

Sean's Story

This happened a few years back, but I still think about it sometimes. I was working as a software developer, and people kinda knew me as the tech guru. I could crack code like nobody's business and solve problems left and right. But here's the thing, I had this one big issue in my life, and that

was my new boss, let's call him Alex. Alex was this super results-driven manager. He was always pushing for numbers, but he didn't seem to care much about the human side of things. And, well, that didn't sit well with me. I'm all about teamwork, collaboration, and supporting each other. So, most days, I just ended up feeling frustrated and quietly thought about quitting. Then, one day, after this really rough meeting where Alex shot down one of my ideas without even considering it, I decided I'd had enough. I started thinking about looking for a new job for real this time. But before making any big moves, I decided to face Alex. I prepared this solid presentation on how team morale and working together can boost productivity and innovation. I even provided stats on how we performed before he came along - although I didn't phrase it like that - and since then. I was fully expecting a major clash, because I could have been seen as stepping way out of line. But you won't believe what happened. Alex actually listened. He asked questions and, believe it or not, admitted that his approach might be hurting the team spirit. Over the next few weeks, something incredible happened. Alex began to change. He started asking for input during meetings, praising the team's efforts, and even organized a weekly team-building lunch. The whole atmosphere at work started shifting, and I began to feel way more satisfied with my job. So, yeah, the story of how Alex and I worked things out taught me a valuable lesson. Sometimes, you don't need to jump ship to find job satisfaction ? you can make your own grass greener right where you are.

Dos

1. Decide if the criticism has any merit

Your manager has given you feedback in a way that feels unfair and rudely delivered. We're sorry to hear that.

The first thing to do is to take some time to calm down and find a quiet space to think. Then be honest with yourself: does their feedback have any merit? If yes, then take it on board and address the matter in a way that works for the both of you.

If it's the first time they've been rude, then chances are that they'll apologize. If not, do communicate to them that you take their feedback on board, but next time you would appreciate it to be delivered in a way that enables you to tackle it constructively. Then see how they respond.

If they have a habit of being blunt, to the point that you feel the feedback is unfair or unprofessional, you can either schedule a 1:1 to discuss the feedback or, if you believe they will be combative, then meet with their boss or HR to get advice on how to handle it.

2. Speak with them before approaching HR

Following on from #1, our advice is to always try to meet with the manager first before escalating it up the chain. No matter how much you dislike what's happened or even that person, it's generally a good idea to try to resolve the matter directly first.

Before doing so, try to figure out their motivations, as this will inform how you approach the situation. For example, if they're new, perhaps they feel insecure. Or maybe they're stressed out by a serious life event, and are taking it out on their employees. That doesn't make it right, but at least you'll know that you're dealing with a short-term reaction versus an unpleasant personality.

Take the initiative to ask for a catch-up via a calm email, not verbally. Not only does this give the impression that you are collaborative and open, and enables them to rectify the situation or clarify their reasoning. It also creates a text trail should matters escalate further (which is perhaps a key reason to take the initiative and set up the meeting yourself).

Go into the meeting calmly and professionally. Choose your words very carefully (it helps to practice what you'd like to say in advance to ensure the language is clear and tactful).

Hopefully the matter will be quickly resolved during this meeting. If not, the next step is to escalate it up the chain to their manager. Don't tell your boss this during the meeting, though, or they'll beat you to it. You want to retain control and have a fair chance to share your side of the story.

Pro tip: send a copy of any correspondence about the issue from this point on to your personal email (BCC or forward it to yourself ? never let anyone see that you're doing this by adding your email as a main or CC recipient). In rare extreme cases, some companies retaliate by firing the complaining party and cutting off their email access. Forwarding yourself copies of correspondence now will protect you later on if things turn ugly (which almost certainly they won't, but better safe than sorry). You should also keep a private log with notes on dates, times, witnesses, and what happened, in case important details get forgotten later on.

3. Speak with your manager's boss

Depending on the severity or inaccuracy of what's been said, the next "do" is to arrange a 1:1 with your manager's boss. Although it might feel uncomfortable to take such a step, this is an important move in being seen to want to resolve the situation (and have the written evidence to prove so).

If the next manager up is reasonable, they will take every step to investigate and find a solution. Don't assume they'll automatically take the bad manager's side. Give them a chance to do their job.

After this meeting, send the higher manager an email to thank them for their time, and to summarize what was agreed. Don't forget to immediately BCC or forward yourself a copy to your personal email address.

4. Take it to HR

While Human Resources can seem like it's there to support the company, the true function of HR is to oversee the full employee lifecycle, from recruiting and onboarding through to disciplinary actions and administering benefits. Their purpose is to create an environment in which employees are motivated to stick around and make a significant contribution to their employer.

And by taking the matter to HR yourself, you underline the fact that you're the one taking steps to find a solution (and, of course, you're adding weight to the written communications you've been diligently forwarding to yourself, just in case).

Once a matter reaches HR, the issue will likely become a formal investigation. Rather than fearing it, show that you're open and transparent by handing over any requested information as soon as possible. Respond positively to requests for meetings or clarifications.

Any's Story

"So I'd been doing my job for a year before a manager was hired to supervise our growing department. When I first joined, I asked the CEO lots of questions, because this was a career pivot for me and I wanted to make sure I did everything right. I had great feedback after my annual performance review, and everyone said I'd done a great job. As the department was expanding, the CEO informed me that a department manager would be hired. They had wanted to offer me the job,

but as I only had a year of experience in the new industry (although I had 15 years of experience in a similar industry), they wanted me to learn how to run the department from someone already at that level. Then, one day if the opportunity arose, I'd be ready to take over. I was really OK with this. I'd previously been a manager, but I wanted more time anyway to learn about this industry. The new manager turned out to be a bit of a challenge to say the least. I thought we got along well at first, and I did everything I could to show him the ropes. I answered all his questions, even early in the morning, late at night, and at the weekend. I soon heard from the CEO snippets of feedback that the new guy thought I was a bit of a know-it-all and that I wasn't listening to him because I'd been there a year and supposedly knew better than him. He was claiming I made a total mess of everything the previous year and had no clue what I was doing. I had no idea why he thought that, as it was definitely not true. But I took the 'know-it-all' feedback on board, because he was clearly feeling insecure, and tried hard to make it clear he was in charge. Around this time, it struck me that he was still communicating a lot, but I wanted to give him a chance to settle in (he was also new to the city). But after a while it became too much. One Friday I got woken by a message at 6.30am, and then had another message at 10.30pm that night with a task that needed to be done by Monday morning. I finally said something: I asked him nicely if he could please message during the working day from now on, to give me time to handle tasks then instead of during my free time. He didn't reply, but the next morning at 8.24am our team received an email with new 'Department Guidelines'. Number 1? That we must all comply with his 'requests, instructions, and suggestions'. I began pushing back after that, and chatted to the CEO about my misgivings. The CEO tried to get us to sort it out by ourselves, but by then I had colleagues privately telling me that the manager had confidentially asked them to give their opinion about my competency. Everything escalated from there, culminating in him taking away a task I was fully qualified for, and giving it to someone else with a dismissive 'The decision's been made'. I put in a formal complaint and, after realizing it would be too hard to work with him, I also submitted my resignation. I assumed that upper management wouldn't be interested and would side with the manager because he's a manager. But I was wrong. The CEO and HR acted rapidly. I was shocked to be honest, because I thought

they would accept my resignation as they needed a manager and I was replaceable. But they made it clear that no, they weren't keen to lose me, and arranged urgent meetings with him and me (separately) to find out what was happening. Long story short, the CEO and HR were fully supportive of me, and instructed the manager to work on his people management skills (to be fair, he was great at his actual job, but struggled as a people manager and was insecure, as this was his first leadership role). I'm still there and I'm glad they stopped me from quitting. I secretly won't stay beyond when the current project I'm working on ends in 7 months, but in the meantime I'm gaining more valuable industry experience that will help me to easily get another job. I also have a very positive impression about how companies are not always just about people being numbers, but valuable individuals who want to contribute. I'm glad I overcame my reluctance to get upper management involved instead of just walking away without saying anything.?

Don'ts

1. Ignore it

If a manager says or does something that you instinctively, as a seasoned professional, don't believe is right, don't sit back in silence. Particularly if it is damaging to team relationships or violates company policies & procedures.

Just because they are a manager, that doesn't mean you have to endure an unsupportive or even toxic relationship with them. After all, you work there too, and your own job satisfaction is at stake. And, you never know who else is being silently affected by the manager's behavior. By speaking out, you encourage others to voice their concerns, too.

2. Gossip about them to colleagues

Whatever you do, don't gossip about the matter with your colleagues. Unless they are witnesses of specific instances, there is no professional reason to inform them.

Although it can be very tempting to justify your version of events by having more people on your side, once you're seen as a rumor-monger, it can be hard to do away with that impression.

On the other hand, it's very important to clarify your feelings and reduce your stress by talking about it. Find a trustworthy friend or family member to vent to first, before approaching colleagues.

3. Leave before attempting all the dos

Often when we're angry and hurt by a negative work situation, our first reaction may be to quit and find another job. But even though we're escaping one situation by quitting, you will likely face different challenges in the next job (i.e. don't view quitting with rose-tinted glasses). So, carefully evaluate the situation and avoid making hasty decisions in the heat of the moment. Sometimes, it might end up being easier trying to resolve the current issue, than having to start over again and dealing with different challenges in another role.

Unfortunately, when it comes to difficult bosses, the situation won't go away by simply calming down and coming back to your desk in a more positive mood tomorrow. But why should you be the one to quit when things get tough? Especially when you're well established with the company and the role.

That's why it's vital to work through the "Do" steps before taking things further, even when you want to run the other way.

4. Forget that bullying, intimidating, unreasonable micromanagement, and so on are rarely isolated

Unless they're having a bad day, toxic behavior by a manager is unlikely to be a one-off incident.

Although their criticism or actions may seem out of the blue and take you by surprise, it could actually be part of a wider pattern. Pay careful attention to how they interact with you and other team members.

And remember, don't forget to keep quiet track of concerning behavior by noting the date, time, location, situation, behavior, and any witnesses as soon as possible after it occurs. Then, if you end up escalating an issue, you'll have plenty of evidence to support you.

5. Document, document, document

We can't say this loudly enough. When relationships with managers turn sour, it's vital to document any unacceptable comments, behaviors, requests, and so on.

If you have any meetings with them to discuss an issue, don't forget to send a follow-up email to thank them for their time and to bullet-point a summary of what was discussed.

Remember to always forward or BCC a copy of the correspondence to your private email address,

in case you lose access to your work emails.

6. Make negative comments about the manager at a job interview

If you do decide that it's time to move on from your current company, it's best to avoid making negative comments about the manager or organization during job interviews.

Why?

Not only does this make them wonder if there's another side to the story, but they'll also think that you'd complain about them too during future job interviews.

Instead, stick to a constructive response to the standard interview question, "Why are you leaving your current job?". For example, you can tell them that while you enjoy your job a lot, there are no career progression opportunities available there. Or that you'd like the opportunity to grow and develop in a fresh and challenging role.

Ruben's story

I got hired as an accountant at a mid-size law firm. Great pay, great location. But on Day 2, the receptionist (who I later discovered was dating one of the lawyers) told me that the senior lawyer of the department I was working in (surprise, surprise, her boyfriend) was angry that I got the job instead of a friend he'd recommended. Apparently, and I think this was a big part of his annoyance, the company had a generous internal referral program of 5 paid days off for any employee who recommends a candidate who then gets hired. I told her I was sorry and that I wished the friend good luck finding a new role. I thought that was the end of it. But her boyfriend soon started bringing incorrect invoices to my attention. The first couple of times I apologized, thinking I'd make a newbie mistake. But when suddenly half or more were wrong, I got suspicious. Rather than chatting to the guy, because I knew his motivation, I sat down with another accountant and got them to review the incorrect invoices. Big surprise ? there was a tiny typo in one, but the rest were perfectly fine. She came with me to speak with the lawyer, and told him clearly that she'd found no errors on any of them. He didn't apologize, but I got no more complaints after that. I'm glad I spoke up and had someone check, before giving up or getting mad at the lawyer for his attempts to undermine me.

Conclusion

While it may be tempting to throw in the towel and walk away when dealing with a difficult boss, it's important to try and resolve the situation before giving in and quitting.

Although there is no guarantee of fixing things, quite often a resolution can be found to help you stick around. When a difficult situation arises with a terrible manager, check out the list of dos and don'ts to ensure you've done all you can.

It's better to try hard and have no regrets, than to regret what you didn't attempt.

Key takeaways:

Some people are simply not leadership material. They get promoted on the basis of their ability to do their current job well, with the assumption that they can lead others towards similar success. Which is not always the case. Remember: their people management failings are theirs, not yours

If a manager gives you feedback that you take offence to, decide if their criticism has any merit (even if you're angry about the way it was given) before deciding what to do

Speak directly with the manager before taking action. Not only does this give them a chance to apologize and/or clarify, but you are seen to take the lead in resolving matters

If speaking directly to the manager doesn't work or is impossible, arrange a confidential chat with their boss. If the boss is reasonable, they will take every step to investigate and find a solution

The next step is to approach HR, whose job it is to support employees. Once HR becomes involved, it will likely become a formal investigation. Be cooperative and provide any evidence when requested

If a manager says or does something that you instinctively, as a seasoned professional, don't believe is right, don't sit back in silence. Bullying, intimidating, and unreasonable micro-management are rarely isolated

But that doesn't mean gossiping about them with colleagues. Vent to a family member or friend.

The same goes for job interviews: avoid making negative comments about the manager or company to the interviewer, or they'll assume you'd do the same about them

Evidence, evidence, evidence: Always keep a written (e.g. email, internal communications app) trail

of your interactions. If matters escalate, you'll have evidence to support you. BCC or forward copies of all correspondence to your personal email address, in case your work email gets cut off

Don't quit before trying all possible solutions. Even though you're feeling angry about the situation, why should you be forced to leave a job you're happy with if a resolution can be found?

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Your Career Countdown - How to Craft a Professional (and Personal!) Life Worth Living

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Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

28. Title: Personal Growth

Nov 7, 2023

Upskilling for Career Progression, Pivots, and Job Hunting

What's upskilling? And how can you take control of this as an ambitious professional? The path to career progression, pivots, and successful job hunting often requires a strategic approach to upskilling ? or intensively enhancing particularly hard or soft skills through self-directed training and professional development ? to help you get there faster. In this blog post, we explore 5 practical upskilling ideas, as well as stories about professionals who have successfully applied these tips to boost their own careers.

More ?

Content: Whether you're interested in a new job, progressing in your career, or pivoting to a different job or industry type, upskilling can help you get there faster.

Even if the job, sector, or job level is new to you, being able to demonstrate transferable skills in your resume and during interviews can help convince potential employers that you're a risk worth taking.

But you can't just throw yourself at job opportunities and hope for the best. The path to career progression, pivots, and successful job offers often requires a strategic approach to upskilling.

In this blog post, we'll explore 5 practical upskilling ideas, as well as anecdotes about other professionals who have successfully applied these tips to boost their own careers.

1. Embrace Digital Literacy

The digital age has transformed the way businesses operate, making digital literacy a must-have skill for employees of all ages. Mid-career and late-career professionals often find themselves lagging in this department.

But it's never too late to catch up. Digital literacy means not only being good with internet platforms, mobile devices, and social media. It also means being at ease with a wide variety of programs, tools, and platforms that enable you to do your job better, faster, and more precisely.

Admittedly, it's something we tend to put off as a skill to develop until it affects our current job. However, in an ever-evolving digital world, doesn't it make sense to get ahead?

Jakub's Story: The Power of Digital Literacy

Jakub, a mid-level Sales Manager, found himself at a crossroads when his company adopted a new CRM instead of the old Excel spreadsheet system he was used to. Instead of resisting change, he decided to become proficient in it. More than proficient. Especially as he had his eye on a promotion to team leader. Jakub completed an online course about the CRM, in addition to the training provided by his company. He also put his hand up to become a super user, helping other employees with queries and individual support. Within a few months, Jakub not only mastered the CRM, but also began using its data analytics function to optimize his sales strategies. During his next performance review, armed with his super user training experience and increased sales, Jakub successfully negotiated his promotion to team leader.

How can you follow in Jakub's footsteps?

Check out online courses (free or paid) on programs, platforms, or other tools that are desirable in your next career move. If you're not sure what these are, then read some sample job descriptions online. You'll find any required digital knowledge in the 'Essential Requirements' or 'Desirable Requirements' sections. Look for common trends, and then focus on these skills.

Wherever possible, obtain certificates as evidence. Don't forget to add these to your resume and LinkedIn as you go along, in case a job opportunity suddenly arises.

2. Develop Your Soft Skills

While hard skills like project management or budget management are very important for both your resume and ability to carry out your job, upskilling soft skills like communication, flexibility, and adaptability is equally crucial for career progression and job hunting.

While soft skills are definitely more subjective (you may think you're great at time-keeping, for example, but your boss may say you're often late for meetings), these can - and do - help you

stand out from professionals with similar hard skills.

Because we tend to develop our soft skills over time, as we learn and grow as a professional, it can be hard to keep track of areas for improvement until a situation arises to test our abilities. As well as your own self-reflection, think back to times when you felt a particular skill of yours could be better. Or re-evaluate feedback from team members or performance reviews.

Perhaps you struggle with making decisions, or you'd like to be better at mentoring and motivating junior colleagues. Write down a list of your soft skills to focus on.

Maria's Story: The Power of Smarter Communication

Maria had been a Project Manager for several months. She was assigned to a project to roll out a product update across four sites of a key client. The client stakeholders were often dismissive of her team's efforts, believing their product management team should be taking the lead, not Maria's company. This was Maria's first major project leadership role, and working with such a difficult client was challenging to say the least. Recognizing that her communication and negotiating skills needed refining, Maria took an online course in advanced communication techniques. She also sought advice from more experienced senior colleagues, gaining highly insightful advice on techniques and strategies to try. Maria applied her upskilling straight away. As her communication abilities improved, she found herself better able to overcome resistance from the client's team. At the end of the implementation, Maria's CEO received a letter of commendation from the client's CEO to praise Maria's leadership, communication, problem-solving, and bottleneck resolution skills.

How to follow in Maria's footsteps?

The way to upskill the soft skills you've identified can be varied and multi-faceted. In-person or online courses in public speaking or conflict resolution are ideal, whereas negotiation or effective decision-making could be refined and practiced by watching online masterclasses or videos.

Don't forget to practice any techniques learned in your current job, so that you have the opportunity to develop and refine what you've learned in real-world settings.

3. Upskill to Explore New Industries

For many of us, contributing to the growth of an industry or sector we love may be a huge motivator for career satisfaction. Conversely, investing your working days in something you feel neutral or even unhappy about can be a source of great dissatisfaction.

But just because you've worked in certain industries for your entire career, that doesn't mean you can't branch out and try something new. Career pivots can be intimidating, but they offer opportunities for growth and fresh challenges. Sometimes, switching industries can even rejuvenate your career. In fact, the best industry for you may as yet be undiscovered.

It's true that some hiring managers view experience outside their industry as irrelevant. However, the vast majority are certainly willing to consider candidates with clearly transferrable knowledge, as well as applicable soft and hard skills. The trick is to ensure these speak loudly and clearly in your resume, cover letter, interview responses, and LinkedIn.

For example, your ability to not only plan curriculum-based classes but motivate and inspire learners as a teacher in the education industry, can be transferred to a learning & development setting in a corporate environment.

Luis's Story: From Automotive to Renewable Energy

Luis, an accountant with 23 years of experience in the automotive manufacturing sector, decided to pivot into the realm of renewable energy after becoming fascinated by the sector at a climate change conference. In addition to reading up on the industry, he joined his current company's Sustainability Committee and researched new energy vehicle development in the automotive industry. In particular, he attended webinars and a conference on hydrogen fuel cell vehicles and electric vehicles, then shared his learnings with his company's development team. But it was more than this. Luis also built up a network of accounting and recruitment professionals working within renewable energy. When an opportunity came along at Siemens Gamesa, Luis got in touch with a contact there and asked for his resume to be submitted via their referral program. Of course, his resume reflected all the conferences, learnings, publications read, and committee involvement, not to mention relevant keywords grabbing the reader's attention immediately. It took several rounds of

interviews, including winning over a sceptical interview panel member. However, Luis eventually secured a mid-level accounting role at Siemens Gamesa, and honestly couldn't be happier about his career.

Pivoting to a new industry often requires learning industry-specific knowledge and networking extensively within that field, as Luis's case illustrates. And the further into your career you are, the more work that will probably entail. But that doesn't mean it's impossible by any means.

Depending on your target industry, you may need to be creative about how to showcase transferable knowledge. This may range from rephrasing your professional summary and key skills section of your resume, through to pursuing volunteerism or hobby opportunities in your desired sphere to build up your on-paper knowledge and experience.

Also, like Luis, immerse yourself in learning everything you can about your target industry. Press releases, publications, research papers, books, videos, industry events, and networking with people in the industry are all valuable ways to learn more and to decide if it's right for you.

4. Master the Art of Data Analysis

This one may sound a bit far out, but hear us out. Just think about it: how often has a manager or senior leader asked you for metrics or data-based insights on your work? This might include sales target or KPI achievements, marketing campaign metrics, the statistical pros and cons of developing a certain product, or even data to identify high performing or underperforming clients.

Data is the lifeblood of virtually every industry. So (do you see where we're going here?) highlighting your proficiency in data analysis can make you much more attractive when it comes to promotion or industry pivots. Even if you're not pursuing a role as a data analyst.

Emily's Story: The Power of Data Analysis

Emily really, really wanted to be promoted to Marketing Campaign Manager. A colleague beat her to the post when the job was recently advertised. Although Emily was a great fit, the Senior Marketing Director told her that her colleague had deeper data analysis expertise. Emily in fact had plenty of

data analysis experience. But she a) hadn't thought to highlight this on her resume because she didn't think it was relevant and b) found out that her colleague studied statistical analysis as a core subject as part of her Marketing degree. Emily was determined to land that job next time it became available. After updating her resume and LinkedIn, Emily completed three certificate courses related to tracking, analyzing, and reporting data-driven insights, and how to apply these to creating and evaluating campaigns. This upskilling anecdote has an unexpected twist: while waiting for that coveted internal opportunity to arise, Emily was approached by one of the course leaders for a remote opportunity with a hugely promising start-up. Emily took a leap of faith and accepted the opportunity (after negotiating for a more senior job title). The new role gave her not only a broader job scope, but the fast-paced start-up environment suited her much better than a more traditional setting.

Data analysis skills are highly sought after in many industries, including marketing, finance, and healthcare.

To upskill in this, consider pursuing online courses in data science, business analytics, or machine learning to enhance your data-related skill set.

Learn how to use any data analysis programs your company uses, or study commonly-used programs such as Adobe Analytics or Tableau.

The next step is to apply what you've learned to an aspect of your current role. Be seen by leadership as someone interested in data analysis. Pursue tasks or projects that will enable you to put these skills in action.

Then, ensure your upskilled experience and skills are reflected on your resume and LinkedIn.

5. Cultivate Leadership Skills ? Before They're Needed

Leadership should not just be a logical next step up the career ladder. Almost certainly, if you close your eyes and think for a moment, you'll recall some terrible leaders you've worked with who were promoted for their industry, sales, or other expertise, but floundered once they were promoted to

leadership. Particularly when that involved managing people.

They struggled because they either didn't have the skill set, experience, or character to be a good leader. While the latter is harder to overcome, and experience takes time, the skill set angle can certainly be prepared for. This is where investing in quality leadership programs and upskilling courses can pay dividends (literally and figuratively).

Robert's Story: From Employee to Leader

Robert, a robotics engineer with 15 years of increasingly progressive expertise, aspired to be a department head. He'd been passed over twice already, and had been ghosted by an external recruiter after three rounds of interviews. Robert had no solid feedback to go on, but he knew that his leadership skills were either not clear, or he wasn't seen as quite ready. He was determined to change that. The first step was a Coursera certified course on leadership by the Copenhagen Business School. This opened his eyes to several aspects of leadership that he hadn't considered before, especially in an innovative company that was regularly commented on by the media and public as his was. Robert completed two additional Coursera courses to round out his perspective. He then began applying some of his learnings to two junior colleagues that he mentored. The next step was to revise his resume, putting emphasis on more recent experience and gained skills, and minimizing earlier roles and outdated expertise. Additionally, Robert joined an industry membership body, which enabled him to attend specialist conferences, network with industry movers-and-shakers, and participate in membership committees. It was another 18 months before Robert tried applying again. And this time? He was successful.

While developing leadership skills doesn't mean pursuing an MBA, it does mean actively upskilling to ensure you're fully ready. After all, it's not just a senior job title: you may have the professional satisfaction of many employees under your wing. As well as pursuing any practical experiences in your current role, aim to immerse yourself in the art of leadership well beforehand.

Check out YouTube videos and online masterclasses to learn more about modern leadership.

Read leadership books and listen to leadership podcasts.

Take online or in-person leadership courses (as Robert discovered, Coursera is a great resource).

As you go along, figure out your leadership style. Think deeply about areas of strength and areas for development. Cultivate the upskilling of both.

Learn common leadership interview questions and practice great responses (check out the JobLeads MasterClass on Mastering the Job Interview or the JobLeads Ultimate Guide to Interview Questions).

Consider seeing a career or leadership coach.

Pursue leadership interviews with the mindset of "practice makes perfect", even if you don't land the job this time around.

In short, do everything you can to be a great leader so that, when the time comes, you will be truly ready to be one.

Conclusion

Upskilling is not a one-time effort: it's a career-long commitment. Whether you're aiming for career progression within your current industry, a pivot to a new one, or simply looking for a new opportunity, these 5 practical upskilling tips will help you get there faster.

Remember: It's never too late to invest in yourself and embrace change. As Jakub, Maria, Luis, Emily, and Robert show us, with determination and the right upskilling strategy, you'll get there faster and be better at it.

Key takeaways

Embrace Digital Literacy: The digital age has transformed the way businesses operate, making digital skills a highly valuable asset. The more tech-savvy you are, the more you can potentially contribute to your employer (e.g. data analysis, faster task accomplishment).

Develop Your Soft Skills: While hard skills are of course vital for your resume and for your ability to carry out your job, upskilling soft skills like communication, flexibility, and adaptability can help you stand out from the competition and do your job better.

Upskill to Explore New Industries: Sometimes, switching industries can rejuvenate your career. To showcase your transferable skills, ensure these speak loudly and clearly in your resume, cover letter, interview responses, and LinkedIn.

Master Data Analysis: Data is the lifeblood of virtually every industry. Sales targets, KPIs, marketing campaign metrics, the statistical pros and cons of developing a certain product ? a huge amount of business decisions rely on data. Being skilled at tracking, evaluating, interpreting, and applying learnings from data analysis can make you a very valuable employee.

Cultivate Leadership Skills: Leadership should not just be a logical next step up the career ladder. Too many people struggle with leadership because they don't have the skill set, experience, or character to be a good leader. While the latter is harder to overcome, and experience takes time, the skill set angle can certainly be prepared for through a strategic approach to upskilling.

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How to quickly craft cover letters using AI chatbots

Upskilling while you sleep? AKA The world of hypnagogic learning

Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

29. Title: Job Search

Oct 31, 2023

The 5 Stages of a Successful Job Search Journey

Radically enhance your job search by viewing it as a strategic journey, rather than going at it blind. Drawing on nearly two decades of career coaching expertise, JobLeads shares with you a proven roadmap for success. We break the job search process down into 5 key stages, each with specific actions and tools, to streamline the process and land that dream job faster.

More ?

Content: Whether you're thinking about finding a new job, or you're already in the process of looking, it can be helpful to look at the job search journey as a whole, instead of in separate pieces.

JobLeads has coached thousands of job seekers over the past two decades. In that time, we've found it very helpful to break the job search journey down into distinct stages.

Why?

Because looking for a job isn't about jumping onto career boards and typing in keywords. It's a multi-stage process, each with its own focus, action steps, and milestones. Rather like a jigsaw, you can't finish the puzzle without working through it piece by piece.

Of course, it's very hard to see that when you just want to get hired. We get it. But there's a lot of value in stepping back for a moment, understanding the full process, and planning ahead for what needs to be done at each stage. That way, you'll save yourself a lot of time and heartache, and find a better job faster.

Here at JobLeads, we use a 5-stage approach to guide job seekers through the job search process.

These are:

Phase 1 ? Calibration

Phase 2 ? Personal Branding

Phase 3 ? Job Search

Phase 4 ? Job Application

Phase 5 - Interview

Let's take a look at each stage individually, including the typical steps involved. Although you're probably familiar with most of it, it doesn't hurt to remind yourself about what's involved and what you should prepare for.

Phase 1 - Calibration

Calibration is the stage before you actually start looking. This is when you assess your current career status, decide what you really want in your next job, and map out a job search game plan.

A. Audit your current career status

This means taking a good hard look at where you are in your career currently. For example:

? What are your short and long-term career goals and vision?

? What are your key career achievements to date?

? How would you define your professional values and their priorities?

B. Decide what you really want in your next job - before you start searching

This is crucial, because no one wants a job they're not going to be happy with. So that means really looking at what fulfills you ? and doesn't fulfill you ? when it comes to job tasks. Here are some things to consider:

In the first step, you thought about overall career achievements ? now, what about specific job accomplishments? Have these influenced the type of responsibilities you'd like next?

Linked to that, what are your key strengths and development areas?

What type of company type and culture would you thrive in?

Do you want to work full time? Part time? Be a contractor? Remote? In-person? Hybrid?

Create a list of job titles which interest you: this will help to target your next career move, and provide keywords for searching on job boards and company websites

Also, research alternative trend titles for your desired job (e.g. ?Tech Guru?, ?HR Ninja?). These can also affect job keyword searches

C. Map out your Job Search Game Plan - Land your dream job in < 90 days

In our experience, the people who are most strategic and organized about their job search, land a great job faster. This means:

Creating a job search game plan, which can include a daily/weekly schedule and specific tasks you'll focus on

Implementing bitesize efficiencies to minimize efforts, for example searching on JobLeads instead of multiple sites, or using ChatGPT to slash your resume and cover letter editing time

Setting daily and weekly goals to keep yourself accountable and on track

And finally, harnessing a winning mindset by taking care of your mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing throughout the job search journey and beyond

Phase 2 ? Personal Branding

A. Personal Branding is the stage where you create or refine your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn

Have you tailored these to the type of job you identified in the Calibration phase?

Are they keyword optimized (reflecting the most common skills for that role, e.g. project management, forecasting, team leadership, etc.)?

Are your resume and cover letter Applicant Tracking System and recruiter friendly?

Are your resume and LinkedIn consistent? i.e. does what you say you do publicly (LinkedIn) reflect what you state more privately (resume)?

B. Personal branding also means reviewing your digital footprint to ensure a positive impression

Does your publicly-accessible social media and online presence give a positive or negative impression of you?

Have you commented or posted anything which might be off-putting to potential employers?

C. At this stage, it's also helpful to prepare a 30-second elevator pitch

An elevator pitch is a 30-second summary you can use to introduce or 'sell' yourself verbally or in writing to headhunters, potential referrers in your network, etc. If you're not sure how to prepare one, JobLeads has a great video lesson on the topic

Phase 3 ? Job Search

Before you start applying for jobs, it's important to decide where you're going to look: not every site and source is relevant or useful for what you're looking for.

Take time to identify the most relevant sites for your job type. Ideally, focus on 2-3 maximum to check regularly in order to maximize your search time and efforts

Check out JobLeads. As a mass aggregator, our platform frequently trawls hundreds of job sources globally, presenting fantastic opportunities all in one place. Not only does this save you time, but you'll also connect with opportunities you may not have discovered otherwise

Identify quality headhunters in your area of expertise and location. As gatekeepers to the >80% of unlisted jobs out there, headhunters can connect you with amazing opportunities. You can find great headhunters on the JobLeads platform

Identify useful contacts in your network (e.g. LinkedIn) who can refer you to hiring managers

Phase 4 ? Job Application

After thoroughly preparing in Phases 1-3, you're now ready to start applying for great jobs!

You'll need a clear strategy and to be very organized at this stage, as you'll be pursuing many options simultaneously. But it will all be worth it in the end.

At this stage, don't forget to customize your resume and cover letter for specific opportunities. Watch our video tip on how to do this, or take our ChatGPT masterclass to see how AI can do it all

for you

After identifying potential contacts in Phase 3, it's time to approach them. We recommend writing an email template that you can simply copy, paste, and tweak for each contact. JobLeads has a great video lesson in how to leverage your network

We highly recommend creating a spreadsheet to track and follow up on each application, so you can keep on top of every single opportunity

Phase 5 - Interview

By Phase 5, your targeted job search efforts are really paying off. You're receiving interview invitations for the fantastic jobs you've applied for.

Now's the time to undertake thorough research on the companies you're interviewing with. You'll prepare for likely interview questions, practice your responses, learn how to leave a lasting impression, follow up effectively, gracefully acknowledge rejections and strategically evaluate offers. We recommend taking our masterclass on mastering the interview process. We also have a great video tip about using ChatGPT to prepare customized interview question responses to help you practice in advance. And don't forget the JobLeads Ultimate Guide to Interview Questions to help you master any interview.

As we've seen, it's incredibly helpful to familiarize yourself with all stages of job searching, before you get started. That way, you'll approach your job hunt with a clear strategy, while slashing your time investment and only focusing on efforts that will land you that amazing job faster!

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Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

30. Title: Job Search

Oct 25, 2023

How to maintain a life work balance while job searching

Maintaining a proper life-work balance during your job search journey can be tough. In our latest article, we share 6 practical strategies to keep your head above water, each backed by instantly actionable tips. We delve into smart priority management, energy-boosting techniques, and how to detox from digital distractions. Discover how your support system can keep you grounded, and why staying meticulously organized is your super power. Balance is everything, and your life always takes precedence. Click the link in the description to learn how to maintain that balance from job hunt to job offer.

More ?

Content: Did you notice we've called it your 'life/work balance', and not the other way around?

That's because no matter where you are in your job search or career journey, the number one priority is your life.

Looking for a new job can feel exhilarating yet stressful. What begins with a great deal of optimism can turn into a tiring exercise when the results aren't happening as quickly as you'd like.

It's essential, though, to strike a balance that ensures both a successful job search and a fulfilling life outside of it. In fact, we'd argue that you'll struggle to have one without the other.

In the following article, we share 6 strategies plus actionable examples to help you maintain your life/work balance while navigating the job search process.

#1 Strategically balance your priorities

Balancing your job search and your personal life requires a well-defined strategy. Much like a chess player, you need to plan your moves to maximize your chances of success, without neglecting other aspects of your life.

How do I do that?

Create a Job Search Schedule

To balance your job search with other commitments, prepare a weekly schedule. Allocate specific time slots for job searching, responding, following-up, networking, and interviews. Then, set aside quality time for family, hobbies, and relaxation.

Set Realistic Goals

If you don't find something in your field quickly enough, it's tempting to apply for other opportunities out of desperation. But not only does this lead to burnout, you may end up with a job that you won't be happy with. Then you'll find yourself straight back to the job hunt. Instead, set a realistic goal of applying to a certain number of jobs each week, and acknowledge that it can take a month or two to land the right one. Channel your impatience into skill development, volunteering, or spending quality time with loved ones in the meantime.

#2 Recharging Your Batteries

When you're up to your eyes with job searching, self-care often takes a back seat. But if you want to remain in top form for interviews, it's vital to prioritize activities that rejuvenate your mind and body.

How do I do that?

Incorporate Exercise into Your Routine

Make exercise a non-negotiable part of your daily schedule. Whether it's a morning jog, yoga session, or a quick workout at the gym, physical activity can boost your mood and energy levels, enhancing your overall well-being during the job search.

Mindfulness Meditation

Meditation doesn't always get the credit it deserves. When you're in a high-stress situation, managing anxiety is super important. That's where mindfulness meditation can step in. By cultivating a calm and focused mind, you'll be better equipped to handle the challenges of job hunting while maintaining emotional balance.

#3 Take A Digital Detox

It sounds counter-productive: cut back on technology access at a time when you're relying on it to find a job? Hear us out. The constant allure of emails, job alerts, and social media can slash the

boundaries between work and personal life. Limiting your digital interactions can be a smart move.

How do I do that?

Set Aside Tech-Free Hours

Rather than being digitally available 24/7, choose specific hours to disconnect from your devices (plural!). Spend the time reading a book, cooking, or hanging out with your partner. By doing away with the constant dings and rings of technology, you'll genuinely feel a lot calmer.

Set Notifications to Silent During Family/Alone Time

Ensure quality uninterrupted family or alone time by muting notifications during meals and bedtime routines. By creating a technology-free space at home during these times, you'll strengthen your relationships and maintain that life-work balance.

#4 Take a Break

Yes, job searching can seem all-consuming. Schedule regular breaks into your daily routine. Take a day or two off from searching every week. Short pauses can actually help you focus more (and prevent burnout).

How do I do that?

Take Mini-Breaks During Daily Job Searches

Instead of marathon job searching, break your sessions into manageable chunks. After every hour of searching or applying, take a 10-15 minute break. Stretch, grab a snack, watch a funny video, or step outside for fresh air. You'll come back re-charged and focused.

Schedule Days Off

Plan occasional bonus days off from the job search. Use these to unwind, pursue hobbies, or explore new interests. Taking a day off doesn't make you less serious about finding a job. By disconnecting when needed, you'll prevent burnout and approach your job search with renewed vigor.

#5 Lean In To Your Support System

Your friends and family can be invaluable sources of emotional support and guidance during your job search. Keep in regular touch with your support system to help maintain perspective and

balance.

How do I do that?

Regularly Check-In with Loved Ones

Schedule regular check-ins with your family or close friends. Share your successes, setbacks, and anxieties with them. Their encouragement and feedback can provide a fresh perspective on your job search journey.

Join a Job Seeker's Support Group

Joining a job seeker's support group on social media can be really helpful. This can be especially useful if you're transitioning between careers, or if you're feeling lost. These groups provide a space to share experiences, offer advice, and build a supportive community to help maintain your life/work balance. Search your favorite social media platform with keywords such as "job search" or "job tips". Try a few variations. You'll probably find local groups, as well as larger online communities.

#6 Be Super, Super Organized

It's all too easy to lose track of where you're at in your job search if you're not highly organized. If you don't know where you've applied, or when they responded, or next steps for each role, how will you know when to follow-up or move on?

How do I do that?

Use a Job Search Spreadsheet

Create a detailed spreadsheet to track your job applications. Include columns for the company, position, application date, and follow-up dates. Such a system will help you stay organized, ensuring no opportunity slips through the cracks. [in fact, you can find the JobLeads Job Tracker in the comments, free of charge!]

Set Clear Goals and Milestones

Define your job search goals and establish milestones so you know where you're headed. For example, set a target for the number of networking events or interviews you'll attend in a month. This structured approach will keep you on track while allowing time for other life pursuits.

Key takeaways:

- ? Don't forget: your life should always be the #1 priority, even during a job search. Remember that balance is essential!
- ? Create a job search schedule and allocate specific time slots for job searching, networking, and interviews. Set realistic goals to avoid desperation and stay on the right career path.
- ? Recharge your batteries by incorporating exercise into your daily routine. Practice mindfulness meditation to manage job search stress effectively.
- ? Set aside tech-free time to disconnect from digital devices and relax. Silence notifications during family time to strengthen relationships and maintain balance.
- ? Taking mini-break during the day will help you to maintain focus and prevent burnout. Schedule days off occasionally to unwind and focus on other interests.
- ? Share experiences and emotions with close friends and family. Consider joining a job seeker's support group or online communities for advice and support
- ? Be super organized: Use a job search spreadsheet to track applications, companies, and follow-up dates

Consciously maintaining your life/work balance while job searching is a highly important goal that requires careful planning and dedication.

By creating a well-defined strategy, prioritizing self-care, setting boundaries with technology, incorporating breaks, leaning on your support system, and staying organized, you can smoothly navigate the process while taking care of your overall well-being.

Remember, it isn't just about finding a job - it's about protecting that life/work balance.

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Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

31. Title: Personal Branding

Oct 12, 2023

Enhancing Your Professional Brand

How you come across to potential employers - on paper and online - can make all the difference between them picking up the phone or moving on. In this blog post, we explore the concept of your professional brand ? a unique blend of your passions, experiences, personality, skills, and values. We discuss seven key areas that will help you shape a strong image that captures the attention of hiring managers, recruiters, and headhunters. From showcasing your passions and emphasizing your education and career history, to highlighting your personality, culture fit, and professional values, we provide instantly actionable insights to strengthen your overall professional image.

More ?

Content: Have you ever thought about how you project yourself to potential employers?

Whether you're actively or passively looking, any hiring manager who comes across your details will form an immediate impression based on how you present yourself, both digitally and on paper. That initial impression can decide if they pick up the phone and get in touch ? or move on to the next candidate.

In this article, we'll explain what your ?professional brand? is, and share seven ways to project a strong image that will entice hiring managers, recruiters, and headhunters. We'll also share examples of how you can achieve this.

What is a ?Professional Brand??

Your professional brand is a unique combination of your passions, experiences, personality, and values that sets you apart from other job seekers. It's the essence of who you are as a professional.

This can be determined through your resume, cover letter, LinkedIn profile, social media presence (profiles and well as comments), online forums you participate in, and so on.

Without meeting you, these factors are all that potential employers have to go by to decide if you'd be a great job and cultural fit for their organisation.

That's why it's vital to ensure that whichever elements they come across, you project a professional, experienced, and positive image of yourself.

8 Ways to Strengthen Your Professional Brand Image

#1 Your Interests and Passions

Your passions and interests reflect your genuine enthusiasm and engagement in specific areas of your life. They reveal your unique personality and what truly motivates you. For example, if you're passionate about environmental sustainability, might be seen through your involvement in eco-friendly initiatives, such as volunteering for a local wildlife group or implementing green practices in previous workplaces.

Showcase your passions by sharing your experiences on your personal blog or social media, and networking with like-minded professionals. When job seeking, look for companies that align with your passions. In your resume, passion areas relevant to the job you're applying for can be incorporated in your professional summary, key skills box, job descriptions, and of course your Hobbies & Interests section. Not only does this highlight your interests, but it can lead to great icebreaker conversation starters during an interview.

#2 Your Education and Career History

Almost more than any other element, your career and academic history reflect your professional brand. The choices you've made and the direction you've taken are resounding evidence of how you've shaped your image as a professional throughout your career.

Ensure that relevant qualifications and certifications are outlined on your resume and LinkedIn profile. Consider mentioning key subjects from your degree (especially if these form useful keywords for recruiters, such as "AI in Education"). Continue learning and upgrading your skills through courses, workshops, or certifications relevant to your field. Share any certificates or course reflections on LinkedIn (these days, many training / education providers enable a "Share on LinkedIn" feature to announce the successful completion of a course).

#3 Your Personality and Ideal Culture Fit

Your personality traits and your compatibility with a company's culture are absolutely critical components of your personal brand.

For example, if you're an introvert who thrives in a collaborative yet highly independent environment, emphasise previous responsibilities and achievements in your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn that demonstrate this. During interviews, emphasize your cultural fit and provide examples of how you've thrived in similar environments. Don't be afraid to ask questions about the company's culture to ensure it will be a positive fit for you personality and professional ambitions.

#4 Your Professional Values

Your professional values define your ethical standards, principles, and what you stand for in your career. Companies tend to seek out employees with similar qualities. So it's important to ensure that this comes across clearly in your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn (and, later on, in your interview question responses).

As an example, if integrity is one of your core values, highlight in your resume and LinkedIn how your accomplishments consistently reflect honesty and transparency in the workplace. Reflect on your values and make them visible in your resume and LinkedIn summary. If you need inspiration about keywords to include, take a look at the corporate values on the websites of company's you admire. These keywords have typically been discussed, reviewed, then approved by multiple internal stakeholders, so tend to be reliable indicators of appropriate phrasing to use in your resume and LinkedIn.

#5 Your Strengths and Skills

Your strengths and skills are the competencies and abilities that make you a valuable asset to employers. Potential employers will be on the lookout for these in your resume and LinkedIn before getting in touch.

For example, if you excel in data analysis, showcase specific projects where you utilized your data-driven insights to drive business growth. Highlight these strengths and skills on your resume, LinkedIn profile, and in interviews, providing strong examples of how they've benefited your

previous employers.

#6 Your Digital Presence

Your digital presence encompasses your online identity, including your personal social media profiles and professional platforms like LinkedIn. For example, your LinkedIn profile should be complete and professional, featuring a well-written summary, a professional photo, and testimonials from colleagues, peers, or mentors.

Ensure a powerful professional brand by regularly updating your LinkedIn profile to reflect your current skills and experiences. Share strategic content and engage with your network through insightful comments and posts. And don't forget your personal social media: either set accounts to minimal visibility so only your friends can see these, or go through your publicly-accessible posts and other content to ensure you present yourself in a professional light (you never know if a potential employer will review them ? over 90% do!).

#7 Your ?On Paper? Presence (Resume)

Your resume is a concise summary of your education, work history, skills, and achievements. A professional brand-driven resume will clearly highlight your career progression, quantify your accomplishments, and align with the job you're applying for.

To take your resume to the next level, tailor it for each job application, emphasizing the skills and experiences most relevant to the position. Use strong action verbs and quantifiable achievements to make your resume stand out. Seek feedback from peers or professional resume writers to ensure it effectively represents the image you'd like to project. The same goes for your cover letter: ensure the tone, language, and keywords reflect your unique professional brand.

Conclusion

Building a strong professional brand image is essential for job seekers looking to differentiate themselves from the competition.

By focusing on these seven areas ? your passions and interests, education and work experience, personality and culture fit, professional values, strengths and skills, digital presence, and your resume ? you can create a compelling ?brand? that will not only attract potential employers, but also

enhance your overall professional image.

Key takeaways:

? Your professional brand is a combination of your passions, experiences, personality, and values that make you unique as a job seeker. It's how you present yourself both online and on paper

? Highlight your interests and passions by sharing experiences in your resume, LinkedIn, on social media and by networking with like-minded professionals

? Your academic and career history are absolutely vital components of your professional brand. Highlight relevant responsibilities, accomplishments, qualifications and certifications that showcase the image you'd like to project

? Your compatibility with a company's culture and your personality traits extremely important to your long term satisfaction and desire to work there. Communicate this to potential employers by tailoring your resume, cover letter, and interview responses to emphasize how you thrive in specific work environments

? Your standards and principles define your professional values. Make sure these are evident in your resume and LinkedIn to align with the values of the companies you most admire (and hope to attract)

? Highlight specific strengths and skills that make you a valuable asset to certain types of employers. Use specific examples in your resume, LinkedIn profile, and interviews to demonstrate this

? Maintain a professional online presence, especially on LinkedIn. Regularly update your profile, share relevant content, and engage with your network. Don't forget to audit your personal social media to ensure a professional image

? Your resume should reflect your professional brand. Tailor it for each job application, use strong action verbs, and seek feedback from peers or former colleagues to ensure it effectively represents the image you'd like to project

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32. Title: Job Search

Oct 3, 2023

On the (virtual) fence about remote work? 9 reasons why it will broaden your career horizons

Have you heard about all these remote job opportunities out there, but you're on the fence about the benefits of working online? Wonder no more! From fewer geographical constraints to broader job options and unique professional development possibilities, it's no wonder remote work is becoming so popular. JobLeads' career coaches have put together a list of 9 highly compelling reasons why remote work has transformed the career trajectory of hundreds of our clients. We also show you how easy it is to find great remote positions all in one place on JobLeads.

More ?

Content: Are you looking for a new job, and you've noticed a huge number of remote opportunities out there? Are you tempted to apply, but you're unsure about the benefits of remote work?

Then read on!

Thanks to the recent global pandemic, remote working went from a relatively uncommon arrangement to very much the norm for many types of job.

Although many businesses assumed it would just be a temporary trend, remote working has become incredibly popular with both companies and employees.

According to The New York Times, a study by researchers at Stanford, Harvard and others analyzing more than 50 million online jobs found that around 12.2% of postings explicitly mentioned remote work ? a fourfold increase since before the pandemic.

Why? For businesses, the increased productivity, reduced office expenses, and access to a broader talent pool make remote work a fantastic win-win. For workers, the ability to balance work and home commitments, cut down on commuting time and expenses, and gain access to opportunities in different locations is equally appealing.

But for those testing the job market waters for the first time since the pandemic, remote work can

come with a lot of ?what ifs??.

You're not alone. Here at JobLeads, we've coached thousands of clients in the same (remote) boat as you. Not only that, we've switched our own organisational framework from almost entirely office-based to a fully remote model. We're all for job seekers finding the type of job that suits their needs best. So, we're well versed in the pros and cons of remote working (mostly pros!).

Our career coaches have gathered a bunch of remote work insights from the job seekers' perspective. We've broken these down into 9 highly compelling reasons to consider remote opportunities for your next career move.

How can remote work supercharge my career?

#1 Expand your job prospects

With remote work eliminating geographical constraints, more than ever before job seekers can tap into a global job market. Remote positions open up opportunities with companies located in different countries, industries, and markets, increasing the chances of finding a better-fit job. Depending on the company's office locations and specific employment laws, it's entirely possible to carry out work for one branch while being paid through your local one. International workers can even be hired via legal entities abroad or as independent contractors. This can remove the need to pay foreign tax and having to secure a visa or work permit.

#2 Facilitate workplace diversity

Through pursuing international or intra-country roles, remote work can provide you with stimulating opportunities to collaborate with professionals from diverse backgrounds. A greater exposure to different perspectives, work styles, and cultures can foster personal and professional growth, broaden your skill sets, and enhance your adaptability.

#3 Break down language barriers

In a global business environment, remote work can truly promote the value of multilingualism. If you speak a foreign language, or even another variation of your own language, you can leverage your linguistic skills to communicate and collaborate better with international teams, which in turn will improve your career prospects.

#4 A catalyst for networking

Remote workplaces enable employees to connect with other professionals in different cities, states, and countries, as well as across diverse industries and sectors. Not only does this help you to expand your global network, it can also facilitate future job prospects or project collaborations. Bonus: expanding your network increases your odds of engaging with potential mentors who can provide unique advice and guidance to help you develop professionally.

#5 Gain better global collaboration skills

Remote work ? particularly international ? boosts your cross-cultural competence, an increasingly valuable skill in today?s highly interconnected digital world. You can gain more experience in navigating cultural and linguistic differences, and in building inclusive and diverse teams, all of which contributes to your career advancement and makes for great interview stories.

#6 Increase flexibility for upskilling and continuous Learning

Remote workplaces offer people the flexibility to pursue a huge variety of upskilling and professional development opportunities. Firstly, tapping into the knowledge of colleagues in different locations can expose you to new ways of thinking. Secondly, you can take advantage of training and other learning provided by the remote location you work for, which may not be available locally. Thirdly, remote work can even facilitate your pursuit of extracurricular online learning (e.g. virtual workshops, digital courses, or self-paced learning), which may have seemed daunting in the past. This will help you to stay updated with current professional trends and practices, acquire new skills, and advance your career.

#7 Embrace remote work for entrepreneurial ventures and start-ups

With fewer physical constraints (such as the need for office space or workplace supplies), remote work can empower experienced professionals to launch their own businesses and create their own career paths. Remote ventures offer plenty of cost-saving benefits, as well as access to global virtual talent pools. The online world enhances the potential for innovative business ideas that may be harder to take off in a traditional format.

#8 Gain a better work-life balance

Remote work allows many professionals to achieve a better work-life balance thanks to the flexibility to manage personal commitments and reduce commuting time. Without doubt, this will positively impact your career growth and long-term success, as well as improve job satisfaction and overall well-being.

#9 A stepping stone to an international move

Remote work experience can serve as a valuable stepping stone to relocating abroad. By building up remote international experience with a particular company, you increase your chances of being hired for an on-site job in future. The work permit process can be onerous for many employers, but they are more willing to go the extra mile for someone they already know and value. Having experience with that particular company also makes it more likely for immigration authorities to approve your work permit or intra-company transfer visa.

Key Takeaways:

Remote work expands job prospects by eliminating geographical constraints, allowing job seekers to tap into a global job market and explore opportunities with companies in different countries and markets

Pursuing remote work can facilitate workplace diversity, providing opportunities to collaborate with people from diverse backgrounds and broaden your skill sets

Multilingual skills can be leveraged in remote work to break down language barriers and improve collaborations with international teams, which can enhance career prospects

Remote work enables networking across different locations and industries, increasing global connections, fostering potential job prospects, and facilitating mentorship opportunities

Engaging in remote work, particularly international, enhances cross-cultural competence, an increasingly valuable skill in today's interconnected digital world

Remote workplaces offer flexibility for upskilling and continuous learning through exposure to diverse knowledge and access to broader training options

Remote work empowers professionals to venture into digital entrepreneurship and start-ups thanks

to lower costs and access to a global talent pool

Achieving a better work-life balance is a huge benefit of remote work, as it allows you to manage personal commitments, reduce commuting time, and improve overall well-being

Remote work can serve as a launching pad to an international move: building experience with a particular company increases the likelihood of being hired for an on-site job with them in the future and can simplify the work permit process

JobLeads aggregates global job opportunities, including thousands of remote roles, making it convenient for job seekers to find remote positions and broaden their career horizons

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33. Title: Job Application

Sep 29, 2023

Cracking the Code of Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

In this blog post, we debunk the myth of recruiters being replaced by technology. Instead, we share how companies use Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to streamline initial resume screening. As many people soon find out, ATS are ruthless at filtering incoming applications against job requirements. Drawing on two decades of career coaching expertise, we share 10 quick tips to help you ?beat? the ATS, ensuring your resume gets through the technology gatekeeping your access to great jobs.

More ?

Content: 10 Expert Tips to Optimize Your Resume and Get Past the ATS

Have you heard about companies ditching recruiters and using technology to manage the hiring process?

Well? while there?s some smoke to the fire, the rumor isn?t quite true.

Recruiters aren?t losing their jobs. Instead, many companies are cutting out the first step, using technology to handle the initial filtering process instead of hiring specialists.

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

This technology is called an Applicant Tracking System or ATS.

This is how it works. The hiring manager identifies major hard skill keywords and criteria that they think are important in the job vacancy they want filled. This might include certain knowledge areas, specific qualifications, or a particular length of experience.

This info is put into the ATS. Then when someone applies online, the ATS automatically screens your resume against the requirements and tells the recruiter how closely you match.

Sounds great, right? The trouble is, many people don?t edit their resume to show how their experience and skills match what the company is looking for. Then they get upset when they get rejected. They might even blame the technology. But how will the ATS - or a recruiter - know you

have it if it's not there?

Over 90% of medium- to large-sized organizations use ATS. They're a lot more efficient at quickly identifying good fits.

But even if the company isn't using an ATS, their hiring managers are still looking for the exact same things in your resume.

In this blog post, we'll share 10 immediately actionable tips that you can use to get your resume through the ATS and in front of recruiters.

10 Tips To "Beat" the ATS

Tip #1

Most ATS are designed to read resumes left to right, line-by-line. So that means a clean, simple, one-column style works best. Which leads us to Tip #2?

Tip #2

Avoid creative resumes. ATS often struggle with these because of all the design elements. That means no columns, no text boxes, no fancy graphics if you want to avoid "reading" errors. In fact, 21% of resumes submitted through an ATS include features that are unreadable to the software.

Tip #3

ATS can't read between the lines, either. If you have the required skills and meet the essential criteria, state it explicitly, using the same wording. If the ATS doesn't flag you as a good fit, your application may never land in front of the recruiter.

Tip #4

Linked to #3, ATS rate the hard skill keyword match between your resume and the job posting (soft skills, not so much). So, be sure to identify key hard skills mentioned in the job vacancy and incorporate them strategically into your resume.

Tip #5

You can't trick ATS! You'll see lots of advice on the internet encouraging you to "keyword stuff" or hide extra keywords in (invisible) white font in your resume, so the ATS thinks you're a good fit. Don't. Not only will you get rejected once the recruiter sees that you don't actually have the

experience, but it wastes their time (and yours). If you have the skills, include them. If you don't, look for better-fitting opportunities.

Tip #6

It might sound great to use creative headings (e.g. "Snapshot" instead of "Summary") to stand out. But standard headings such as "Work Experience," "Education," and "Skills" ensure the ATS can effectively navigate your resume, ensuring all relevant information is accurately assessed and ranked.

Tip #7

Check your spelling: a misspelled skill can't be "read" by ATS. It may sound obvious, but carefully review your resume for spelling (and grammar) errors, especially crucial keywords. ATS rely on precise language to interpret and rank resumes accurately.

Tip #8

Include a key skills section in your resume to quickly tweak it for specific jobs. As mentioned, ATS sort and rank your application according to how closely it matches the key skills and criteria in the job posting. Although you should also have relevant skills sprinkled naturally throughout your resume, a key skills box ensures a precise match with the job posting's language AND makes it easier to quickly edit your resume for each job you apply for.

Tip #9

Write out acronyms and abbreviations so ATS can check for both. For example, a recruiter may be looking for someone with the "Project Management Professional" qualification. But if you just put PMP, the ATS may not have been asked to look for this acronym. Include both versions to ensure you're not overlooked either way.

Tip #10

ATS "read" Word documents better than PDF. While many ATS can handle both Word and PDFs, the less sophisticated ones may struggle to parse PDFs correctly. So unless stated otherwise in the job posting, use Word for online applications.

Conclusion

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are nothing to be worried about. There's really no rocket science behind the technology ? they're essentially looking for the exact same thing as recruiters (and no, they're not replacing them!).

By tailoring your resume to ensure it (relevantly) includes the hard skills and essential criteria mentioned in the job posting, it's more likely to rank higher when the ATS or recruiter reviews your application.

The 10 tips in this blog post will help you to optimize your resume quickly and with better results.

Key takeaways:

Despite rumors, recruiters aren't losing their jobs: many companies leverage Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to simplify the initial resume screening process, making it more efficient and effective

An ATS is recruitment software that automatically screens resumes against specific criteria and keywords set by recruiters. It ranks applicants based on how closely they match the requirements

Beat the ATS by tailoring your resume to match job requirements: Many applicants get rejected because they fail to showcase how their skills and experience align with the company's needs. Customizing your resume to reflect the job's hard skill keywords significantly improves your chances of passing through ATS and catching the recruiter's attention

ATS often struggle with creative resumes, so stick to a simple, single-column format. Avoid using text boxes, fancy graphics, and multiple columns that may cause parsing errors

Avoid keyword stuffing: Attempting to trick ATS by overloading your resume with irrelevant keywords or hiding them in white font is not a smart move. Many ATS can detect this! It not only leads to rejection, but also wastes the recruiter's (and your) time.

Using standard headings (e.g., "Work Experience," "Education," "Skills") ensures that ATS can "read" and categorise your resume sections correctly.

Don't forget to check for spelling errors: ATS rely on precise language for accurate resume assessment

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Upskilling while you sleep? AKA The world of hypnagogic learning

Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

34. Title: Job Search

Sep 15, 2023

Leverage Marketing Psychology for Your Job Application

In this blog post we show you how to unlock your job search potential with the strategic application of marketing psychology principles. We share 6 effective techniques to instantly capture hiring managers' attention. We explain why crafting an attention-grabbing resume headline and highlighting quantifiable achievements speak volumes about your impact. Harness the power of storytelling, employ design principles, and demonstrate your initiative by understanding the company's unique challenges. Leverage scarcity to create urgency and stand out in the competitive job market. By applying marketing psychology techniques, you will transform your job application into an irresistible proposition for any hiring manager.

More ?

Content: Long gone are the days when you could submit a one-size-fits-all resume and cover letter and hope for the best. With online job ads reaching a global candidate pool, and technology enabling speedy applications, recruiters can receive dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of submissions for a single job.

Which means, your application is a very tiny fish in a very massive ocean.

To truly stand out from the crowd and grab the attention of hiring managers, why not draw upon the principles of marketing psychology?

Marketing psychology is all about how individuals and groups behave in the context of marketing and advertising. It delves into the psychological processes, motivations, and factors that influence their decisions and behaviors when interacting with products, services, brands, advertisements, and marketing strategies. Marketing psychology leverages these psychological insights to create effective marketing campaigns and strategies that resonate with target audiences.

So, just as marketers use psychology to engage and persuade consumers, you too can use these very same tactics to grab the attention of hiring managers.

Employing persuasion techniques from the world of marketing can significantly boost your chances of landing your dream job," advises Jan Hendrik von Ahlen, Managing Director at JobLeads. "Craft your application materials, such as your resume and cover letter, to engage potential employers just as marketers engage consumers. Highlight your unique value, tell a compelling story, and make your application visually appealing. These strategies, drawn from marketing psychology, can set you apart in a crowded job market. When my coaching clients employ these strategies, their success rate absolutely rockets."

Let's take a look at 6 simple ways to leverage marketing psychology techniques in your job search.

1. Craft an Attention-Grabbing Headline

Think of your resume as a self-advertisement. Much like a compelling headline in an ad, your resume should feature an impactful headline that summarizes your unique value proposition or core skills. Recruiters spend under 10 seconds deciding whether or not to continue reviewing a resume. A captivating headline can entice them to keep reading. It could be something as simple as reflecting the advertised job title ("Senior Luxury Goods Sales Specialist") or a statement of your experience ("Award-Winning Graphic Designer with 10 Years of Film Industry Creative Excellence"). "Crafting an attention-grabbing headline for your resume or LinkedIn profile is akin to creating the perfect elevator pitch. In a competitive job market, your headline serves as the gateway to an interview," von Ahlen agrees. "It's the first impression that can pique a recruiter's curiosity and set you apart from the crowd. A great headline instantly communicates your relevance, and leaves hiring managers eager to learn more. It's the doorway to your career story, and by making it compelling, you increase your chances of stepping through that door and being called in for an interview."

2. Showcase Quantifiable Achievements

Incorporate the principle of social proof by highlighting quantifiable accomplishments from your previous roles. Use numbers, percentages, and specific results to draw attention and build credibility. "Incorporating quantifiable achievements provides concrete evidence of your abilities, showcasing your potential contribution to their organization," von Ahlen agrees. "By using specific

numbers, percentages, and results, you not only stand out from other applicants, but also demonstrate your capability to make a tangible impact. As someone who hires on a regular basis, I can tell you that resumes with quantifiable metrics are far more impressive to me than those without.?

3. Tell a Story of Transformation

Marketing psychology emphasizes the power of storytelling to captivate an audience. This approach can be equally effective in your job search. Present your career journey as one of growth and transformation, describing the challenges you've overcome and the skills you've developed. Explain how these experiences uniquely position you for success in the specific role you're applying for. While this technique is particularly impactful in a cover letter, you can also apply it to your resume summary to engage hiring managers on a deeper level. ?The key to this tip is to tailor your message to resonate with your target audience, in this case, the hiring manager,? von Ahlen advises. ?Craft a narrative that speaks to their needs and challenges, and use data and quantifiable achievements to help it sound more factual.?

4. Incorporate Design Principles

Design principles play a crucial role in creating a visually appealing resume that guides the reader's attention. ?Recruiters tend to follow a specific visual pattern when they're assessing a resume. So if you want to ensure the most important details jump out, it's vital to optimize your layout,? says von Ahlen. ?Use bold fonts, bullet points, and headings to emphasize key sections and accomplishments. Strategic use of whitespace can make your resume easier to skim, enhancing readability. On the other hand, I usually advise job seekers to avoid creatively-designed resumes. While many of these look nice, in practice applicant tracking systems can struggle to ?read? them, and let's just say that not everyone has an eye for picking out a professional design that complements their level of expertise!?

5. Utilize the Power of Reciprocity

Reciprocity, a fundamental principle in marketing psychology, can be applied to your job search as well. In marketing, when a business provides value or benefits to its customers, those customers are

more likely to reciprocate by purchasing products or services from that business. In your cover letter, provide value by demonstrating your understanding of the company's challenges and outlining potential solutions. This showcases your initiative and commitment, making the hiring manager more inclined to reciprocate by considering your application more closely. "Clever job seekers understand that reciprocity isn't just a concept for marketers; it's a golden ticket to capturing a hiring manager's attention," asserts von Ahlen. "By showing genuine interest in understanding and solving the company's challenges in your application, you're suddenly not just a random applicant – you're a problem-solver in waiting. Your proactive approach speaks volumes about your potential impact. It's a magnet that draws hiring managers closer to your application."

6. Leverage the Scarcity Principle

Creating a sense of urgency can be an extremely effective way to grab a hiring manager's attention. Showcase your availability or unique skills in a manner that conveys scarcity. For example, mention a specific timeframe in which you're actively seeking new opportunities, or highlight specialized skills that are in high demand. "Cultivating a sense of scarcity in your job search is like lighting a fire under your application – it urge hiring managers to act, not tomorrow, but today. By suggesting that your unique skills and availability are limited, you're not just a candidate; you're an opportunity that can't be missed. In the race for top talent, your scarcity becomes their priority," von Ahlen points out.

Key takeaways:

Apply marketing psychology principles to your job search strategy. Craft your resume and cover letter to engage and persuade hiring managers, just as marketers engage consumers. By tapping into psychological triggers like storytelling, social proof, and reciprocity, you can create a more persuasive job application that increases your chances of success

Craft a compelling headline for your resume or LinkedIn profile that succinctly communicates your unique value proposition. Just as in marketing, a captivating headline is your first opportunity to attract the hiring manager's attention

Quantifiable Achievements Make a Difference: Highlight your achievements in a way that includes specific numbers, percentages, or metrics. This not only demonstrates your past success, but also communicates the powerful impact you could have on their organization, too

In your cover letter and resume summary, use storytelling techniques to present your career as a journey of growth and transformation. Show how you've overcome challenges and developed skills that uniquely position you for success in that specific role

Apply design principles to create a visually appealing resume that guides the recruiter's attention to key sections and accomplishments, thus enhancing readability and engagement

Demonstrate your understanding of the company's challenges and propose potential solutions in your cover letter. The principle of reciprocity not only showcases your initiative, but also encourages hiring managers to "return the favor" by considering your application more closely

Create a sense of urgency by highlighting your limited availability or specialized skills. This encourages recruiters to act quickly on the unique opportunity you present in a competitive market

Overall, the ultimate goal is to make your application resonate with the hiring manager and leave a lasting positive impression. Applying marketing psychology principles to your job search can be extremely effective tools to achieve that goal. However, it's crucial to strike a balance between creativity and professionalism. You need to ensure that your marketing-inspired approach aligns with the specific industry and position you're applying for. It's a fine balance between being persuasive and being too hard to believe.

"Leveraging marketing psychology isn't just a strategy; it's your secret weapon in the job search game. In a world where first impressions matter, it's about crafting a narrative that speaks directly to what employers are seeking," emphasizes von Ahlen. "Everything you write must be authentic, yet compelling. By applying these principles, you're not just a job seeker: you become the solution they've been searching for. It's the surefire way to not only land a great job faster, but to truly stand out and leave an indelible mark on your future employer's mind."

By applying these marketing psychology principles to your job search, you can make your

application more compelling, engaging, and memorable to hiring managers, ultimately increasing your chances of landing the job you desire.

If you'd like to get a resume pulse check, JobLeads offers a review service at no cost. Our team of career coaches will assess your resume and give you specific feedback on how to make it even more compelling. Go to www.jobleads.com to claim your free review now.

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Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

35. Title: Job Search

Sep 6, 2023

How to Follow a Targeted Job Search Strategy

In the ever-evolving landscape of job hunting, there's no one-size-fits-all formula for success. However, there are several methods that have been proven time and time again to land you a dream job faster, especially when pursued in tandem. With nearly two decades of experience in coaching professionals, JobLeads shares 6 highly reliable methods to find that dream job ? the 6 Pillars of Job Search Excellence.

More ?

Content: Listen, we're not here to tell you that you must only do this, that, and the other, exactly as prescribed, to land that dream job.

Every situation is different, including where you're at in your job search journey, how already prepared you are, what type of role you're looking for, how much time you have to invest each day in your search, and so on.

But here's the thing. Even the most detail-oriented, user-focused job seeker may not have all their boxes ticked without a little guidance.

That's where JobLeads is here to help.

You see, we've been coaching job seekers for nearly twenty years. We've seen their ups, supported them through their downs, and we've been thrilled when they snagged that fabulous job.

And what we've learned along the way is that those with a clear job search strategy, one broken down into different aspects that they pursue simultaneously, are the ones who often get there faster (and better).

Why a multi-pronged job strategy works best

Finding a job isn't about jumping onto sites like Indeed, Monster, or LinkedIn and instantly landing something. It rarely works like that. And a narrow approach, only concentrating on one potential job source, will definitely not uncover all possible opportunities out there.

Fact.

It would be terrible to think of that dream job passing you by simply because it didn't come up on your radar. We don't want that.

This can happen when you're not looking in the right places, at the right time. But by having a strategy in place from the very beginning, you're going to be much more successful. In fact, our experience from those two decades in the career support space has shown that there are 6 highly reliable ways to find jobs.

Yet the thing is, a particular job may only be available through one of those avenues. The point is, though, if you just stick to one or two job-hunting methods at a time, you may miss out because you weren't looking when that dream job was actually on that method's radar.

Here at JobLeads, we recommend applying those 6 specific methods simultaneously to broaden your horizons.

So, what are they?

You probably know most of these six methods already. But perhaps you hadn't thought about applying them in tandem. Maybe you're currently focusing on only one or two of them, and figure you'll check out the others if your original methods aren't working out.

These 6 elements of the job search fishing net are what we refer to at JobLeads as the 6 Pillars of Job Search Excellence. Based on years of coaching professionals just like you, we know each of the 6 pillars is absolutely essential for an effective job search.

Used together, they'll massively increase the number of job opportunities you'll find.

Let's take a look at each.

The 6 Pillars of Job Search Excellence

Pillar #1 ? Active Jobs

Active jobs are where most professionals typically focus first - job boards, LinkedIn, and company career pages. It's definitely an important aspect of any search, because some companies will always post there. These sites attract a very high number of applications, however, which equals more competition. It's common for public job postings to receive hundreds of applications! Not only

that, but applying to jobs across multiple sites can be time-consuming (time that you can invest in other pillars). You can slash that time investment by using JobLeads? one-stop jobs portal instead. We aggregate postings from hundreds of sites globally, and feature them all in one place.

Pillar #2 ? Headhunters

Headhunters are a special type of recruiter who work with companies to find the right candidate for their open positions, especially when it comes to hard-to-fill or specialist roles. Kind of like a Sherlock Holmes of hiring. These roles may never be advertised and are part of the hidden job market. That?s why it?s important to know how to identify and select headhunters in your field, so you can tap into all those opportunities you?ll never find online. Plus, once you?re on a headhunter?s radar and have built a relationship, they?ll consider you for new vacancies passing their way. Even years down the line. You?ll find hundreds of high-quality headhunters at www.jobleads.com. We analyze and vet the best headhunters globally, enabling you to search for and get in touch with those best suited to your next career move.

Pillar #3 ? LinkedIn

In today?s job market, LinkedIn has become an essential tool for recruiters, headhunters, and hiring managers to find and evaluate potential candidates. This means that having a meaningful and well-crafted LinkedIn profile is more important than ever. A strong profile that showcases your experience, skills, and achievements can catch the attention of recruiters and make you stand out from the competition. Not only that, a complete and professional-looking profile can demonstrate your credibility and help build your personal brand. So it?s important to invest time and effort into creating a LinkedIn profile that accurately reflects your professional identity and increases your visibility in the job market. By doing so, you?ll enhance your chances of being discovered by potential employers and ultimately land your dream job.

Pillar #4 ? Networking

Did you know that as many as 85% of jobs are filled through professional and personal connections? That means there?s a strong chance that your network will lead you to great jobs. Just imagine all the opportunities out there right now in your own network. Lots of people have no idea

how to leverage their connections to find work, or feel embarrassed about doing so. That's why it's good to know that many companies compensate staff for referrals. That's because someone who's been personally vetted by an existing employee saves the company time and money on recruitment. So in many cases, your contacts may welcome the opportunity to receive a bonus while doing you a favor!

Your network can include college or university alumni, former colleagues and managers, fellow professional organization members, friends, family, and neighbors, people you share a hobby or interest with, other parents at your children's school, members of social or professional platforms (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn), or even casual acquaintances. Depending on how well you know them, you can approach them via messaging, phone, or in person.

Pillar #5 ? Trend Companies

Trend companies are consistently found on "Best Places to Work" lists. They're the organizations everyone wants to work for because of their culture, reputation, products, or job benefits. It's actually easier than you think to find them. For example, do a quick online search with keyword strings like "best employers in the US" or "Top 10 companies in Los Angeles" - or wherever you happen to live. Focus on lists by major business or career sites like Forbes, LinkedIn, Fortune.com, and Glassdoor. They have the resources to carry out the broadest and most impartial research. For example, Forbes publishes annual lists of best employers by popular search categories, including World's Best Employers, Best Large Employers, Best Mid-Size Employers, and Best Employers by State. They even spotlight Best Employers for New Grads, Veterans, Start-ups, Women, Diversity? you name it. Compilers usually explain their methodology and how they came to their conclusions. That way, you learn a huge amount about trend companies before applying.

Pillar #6 ? Dream Companies

Is there a particular company you've always admired? Maybe you like them because of their specific products. Perhaps their mission aligns with your own values or interests. Or maybe you've heard great things about them. Why not contact them about potential job opportunities? Don't think about how unlikely it is. Great jobs can be found by approaching those dream companies direct. You

might already know about them, or you may discover them during your job hunt research. Even if they're not advertising, that doesn't mean there aren't opportunities. It's all about knowing how to approach and attract them. First, check out their website's career page and apply directly. You can also check LinkedIn to see if you know anyone working there. They might be able to refer you to HR or a hiring manager. Another method is to find their HR or recruiters on LinkedIn, their website, or by phoning reception. Then write to them directly, attaching your resume and explaining what you're looking for.

The 6 Pillars of Job Search Excellence: The Complete Job Strategy Jigsaw

As you can see, each of the 6 pillars are really strong job sources by themselves.

But you'll find that amazing job much more quickly ? and not miss out on great opportunities ? by applying each pillar in tandem.

Think of it like a jigsaw puzzle. 1 piece isn't going to show you much. 2 or 3 pieces, maybe you'll start to scratch the surface. 4 or 5 pieces, the available job pool is getting a lot broader. With all 6 pieces, you'll uncover virtually every path to your ideal job and company.

The more pillars you leverage simultaneously, the more likely you are to find that dream job ? and find it faster.

In fact, job seekers who use all 6 pillars are 5 times more successful than those who don't. We've seen it happen, time and time again.

If you'd like to learn more about each pillar, and how to strategize your job search effectively, then we have loads of resources for you. Check out www.jobleads.com to learn about our on-demand digital masterclasses, downloadable job search-related guides, webinars, headhunter and job listings, personal coaching plans, and so much more.

We wish you the best of luck with your 6 pillars job search!

Key takeaways:

Every job seeker's situation is unique, including their progress, preparation, desired role, and time

availability. Therefore, a tailored approach to the job search is essential for success.

While there's no rigid formula for landing a dream job, a little guidance and strategy can significantly enhance your chances of success.

A clear job search strategy involves pursuing different aspects simultaneously - those who follow this approach are more likely to achieve their goals quickly and secure better job opportunities.

The 6 Pillars: JobLeads identifies six pillars of job search excellence that are highly reliable ways to find jobs: Active Jobs, Headhunters, LinkedIn, Networking, Trend Companies, and Dream Companies.

Diversification Matters: Relying solely on one or two job search methods can lead to missed opportunities. Ideally, you should apply all six pillars, concurrently, to expand your horizons.

Think of it like a jigsaw puzzle: Each pillar contributes to the overall job search map, and using all six pillars is akin to completing a jigsaw puzzle. The more pillars used, the broader the available job pool, leading to faster and more successful job searches.

Related questions

How can I effectively tailor my resume and cover letter for each pillar of the targeted job search

strategy?

To tailor your resume and cover letter for each pillar of the job search strategy, understand the unique requirements for each channel. For Active Jobs, highlight relevant experiences and skills. For Headhunters, showcase achievements and leadership potential, as they often look for candidates for high-level positions. On LinkedIn, create a comprehensive profile. For Networking, show versatility. For Trend Companies, align your resume to their current projects. For Dream Companies, show passion for the company's mission and how your unique skills can help achieve their long-term goals.

What are the best tools and platforms for tracking and managing applications across the 6 Pillars of Job Search Excellence?

Organizing your job search across the 6 Pillars of Job Search Excellence requires a structured approach. You can use job search management tools like JibberJobber or a spreadsheet to track your applications, including the date of application, contact person, responses, and notes. This helps you follow up and assess the most effective channels.

How to measure the effectiveness of my targeted job search strategy and make adjustments?

Track your progress and outcomes across the different channels. Keep a record of the number of applications sent, interviews received, and offers made for each pillar. If certain strategies are not yielding results, it's important to reevaluate your approach. Regularly review your job search strategy to identify trends or areas for improvement. Regularly review to pivot strategy towards fruitful channels.

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Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

36. Title: Job Search

Sep 4, 2023

Overcoming Age Bias in the Job Market

Age bias in the hiring process is real. So too is your power to do something about it. In this blog post, we explore what age bias in recruitment looks like and the reasons why potential employers may discriminate against more experienced workers. We then share 7 straightforward tips that you can instantly implement to avoid age discrimination in your next job application.

More ?

Content: Strategies for ?Older? Job Seekers to Land an Interview

Are you worried about, or have you ever experienced, age bias when looking for a job?

At some point in your career, you may start to wonder if the lack of interviews is due to age discrimination. Age discrimination or bias refers to prejudice individuals may face during the hiring process due to their age. While ?too old? is a relative term, it typically refers to job seekers aged 40+.

Although a lot of recruiters deny they consciously discriminate based on age, there does seem to be plenty of anecdotal and statistical smoke to the fire.

A recent study by career training non-profit organization Generation, for example, discovered that anywhere between 40% - 70% of long-term unemployed professionals (out of work for >1 year) are aged 45 and older.

Another study by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco tested the response to 40,000 dummy job applications. Despite similar qualifications, resumes representing those aged 64-65 got 35% fewer callbacks than those aged 29-31.

What does age bias look like in the recruitment process?

Age discrimination in the workplace is not directly based on one?s age as such, but rather the perceived cons of hiring someone of a certain age.

This attitude is a hangover from a time when people tended to stay at the same company for the long-term (if not for life). If an organization was going to invest in someone, they wanted to ensure a long term ROI. The older the hire, the less ROI in theory.

However, we still see this attitude playing out today, despite job hopping every 2-3 years is quite common.

Age discrimination is most prevalent during the resume assessment stage, when the recruiter is looking for ideal candidates. It can also happen during the interview stage as well, especially when making a final decision about which candidate to offer the job to.

But first, if we want to tackle these perceptions, we must first look at the reasons for age bias through a recruiter's eyes:

Stereotypes and assumptions: There are widespread stereotypes and assumptions about "older workers", such as being less adaptable to change, resistant to new technologies, or lacking energy and ambition. These biases can lead recruiters to overlook or undervalue the skills and experiences that more seasoned candidates bring to the table

Perception of productivity and potential: Some employers may believe that younger candidates are more productive or have greater potential for growth and development compared to older peers. This bias can lead to a preference for younger candidates, particularly for positions requiring long-term commitment or career progression

Cultural emphasis on youthfulness: Society often places a strong emphasis on youthfulness, associating it with vitality, innovation, and modernity. As such, older candidates may be seen as less desirable, even though they may possess the extensive knowledge, expertise, and stability the company needs

Cost considerations: Hiring managers may perceive older workers as being more expensive due to higher salary expectations, increased benefits, or potential healthcare costs. This financial concern can influence recruitment decisions, favoring younger candidates who are often viewed as more cost-effective

Technological proficiency: The rapid pace of technical innovations can create a perception that older

individuals may struggle to adapt to new tools and platforms (we've all got our favorite joke about a parent or grandparent and their lack of technical skills). This assumption can lead to age bias, particularly in industries that heavily rely on technology or digital skills

Workplace dynamics and team cohesion: Some hiring managers may believe that older candidates may not integrate as well into a predominantly young workforce or might have difficulties collaborating with younger colleagues. This perception can therefore lead to age bias, favoring younger candidates who are seen as a better social and cultural fit for the team

Unconscious bias: Recruiters, like all individuals, can possess unconscious biases based on age. These may lead to unintentional discrimination during the recruitment process, where older candidates are systematically disadvantaged due to implicit assumptions or preferences

7 tips for job seekers to protect themselves against age bias

1 Remove earlier experiences from your resume

These days, resumes tend to focus on specific areas of someone's expertise, particularly as career pivots are so common. Older workers can take advantage of this trend to lop off earlier experiences, thus placing emphasis on more recent experiences. This gives the impression of a "younger" job seeker, while not detracting in any way from your actual experience. A good rule of thumb is to go back no further than 10-15 years (and you can safely remove job descriptions for jobs going back 7-10 years, if you've held a few roles in that period).

2 Remove graduation years from any degrees or professional qualifications

What's important here is the knowledge you gained, not when. It's common practice to remove the graduation year to avoid the qualification (and thus the individual) becoming dated in the hiring company's eyes.

3 Don't mention your marital or parental status in your resume or cover letter

This one goes almost without saying, but in many countries these days it's highly advised to not mention your marital or parental status in your application documents. Although anti-discrimination legislation can be fairly robust, it is still a good idea to avoid potential discrimination related to age, gender, family status, sexual orientation, and so on by not referring to these in your resume or cover

letter (unless it's specifically related to the job).

4 Update your job title

Occasionally, we may have outdated job titles in our resume. For example, Y2K Technician (an IT person involved in upgrading computer software ahead of the Year 2000 bug). These can be age giveaways. Instead, modernize the title to avoid any potential discrimination (e.g. Software Programmer).

5 Use an ATS-friendly resume template

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) have become hugely common in recruitment over the past 15 years. These tend to favor a clean, simple, single-column resume style to avoid parsing errors. Younger job seekers seem more aware of these than older job seekers, hence why the latter may use an older resume style and attract potential age bias. While creative resumes are also becoming popular, these aren't always ATS-friendly (and not everyone has good taste in template style). We recommend avoiding these as well.

6 Use a modern font

Unless you're in academia or publishing, Times New Roman screams 1990s. Stick with a clean, modern font such as Calibri or Arial to avoid giving an old-fashioned impression.

7 Remove obsolete knowledge from your resume

This one's self-explanatory. While you may have been brilliant at Microsoft FrontPage or Lotus Notes, including obsolete skills in your resume will instantly date your resume. Check your listed technology and other skills and remove anything that is no longer used.

While it's not always possible to avoid age discrimination when you're looking for a job, there are several things you can do to minimize it (although, it might be argued that a company which discriminates against you based on age is a major red flag, and is doing you a favor if they do show bias towards your application).

Key Takeaways

Age bias is where 'older' workers (generally, those aged 40+) are unfavorably considered in the

recruitment process compared to younger workers.

Age discrimination is often based on outdated stereotypes and assumptions from a time when people worked for the same company for life, and were seen through the lens of long-term ROI.

Age bias in the recruitment process can be conscious or unconscious. Recruiters may not even be aware that they're doing it.

While it's not possible to avoid age bias entirely, there are several tactics you can use to minimize it in your application. For example, remove earlier experience (>10-15 years) and graduation years, don't mention family status, give modern job titles, use an ATS-friendly style and modern font, and don't include obsolete skills.

If you choose not to adapt your application to avoid age discrimination, some job seekers deliberately use this as a red flag screening tool: if a company discriminates, the job seeker avoids working for a company that participates in these practices.

Related questions

How can older job seekers effectively use social media and online platforms to enhance their job search?

Older job seekers should first ensure their profiles on sites like LinkedIn are up-to-date, showcasing their professional experiences, skills, and accomplishments. Engaging with content related to their industry, sharing insightful articles, and participating in relevant discussions can demonstrate an active involvement in their field. Creating content that reflects their expertise and perspectives on current developments can further establish their thought leadership and digital savviness.

What specific steps can older professionals take to negotiate salary and benefits?

To negotiate salary and benefits, older professionals should research standard compensation for their role in their industry and region. Emphasizing experience, skills, and results can counteract biases employers might have. Practicing negotiation conversations with mentors or peers can also boost confidence, allowing them to articulate their value proposition more effectively during actual discussions.

What industries are the least likely to practice ageism?

Sectors like consultancy, education, and certain areas of healthcare value experience and maturity, making them less affected by age bias. Job seekers can consider pivoting towards these areas where their experience offers an advantage. Networking, attending workshops, and engaging in volunteer work can provide a pathway into a new career while minimizing the impact of age bias.

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37. Title: Personal Branding

Aug 24, 2023

How to Address Career Gaps in a Resume

In our latest blog post, you'll learn how to effectively explain your career gaps to recruiters. Learn why you shouldn't fear the judgment of hiring managers (and how to use gaps as red flag alerts for potential employers). We offer practical techniques to efficiently address gaps on your resume, with straightforward advice about how to highlight these to your advantage. From family leave to career pivots, we share real examples for inspiration. Don't let career gaps hold you back - leverage them as opportunities for growth and success!

More ?

Content: Don't panic: career gaps are common. Here's how to positively present them (+ examples)

Gaps in your employment history are very normal. Unfortunately, many job seekers are concerned about how gaps will look to potential employers.

Hiring decision-makers don't always make things easy, either: some have been conditioned by outdated thinking to assume that a gap in someone's resume means they're hiding something.

People have gaps for lots of good reasons. Family leave, travel, the pandemic, redundancy, disability, a saturated candidate market, simply not finding the right opportunity? the list is endless.

It's also normal these days to remove certain experiences not relevant to the job you're applying for, which may introduce a gap on paper.

Sensible recruiters will probe the reason, rather than make assumptions. Even then, their questioning is more out of curiosity, not as a way to filter you out of the process.

So, fear not! In this blog post, we'll show you some techniques to positively address any gaps, which usually avoids any further questioning by hiring decision-makers.

When can a gap be ignored?

In general, if the gap was more than 5 years ago, it's not really necessary to give a reason in your

resume. What you did half a decade ago or more has no connection to your more recent experience.

If a recruiter does ask, you can simply tell them it was family leave or that you were searching for the right job. Unless it's a reason that needs to be disclosed during a background or reference check (e.g. imprisonment), then there's little point bringing the reason up.

How to Include a Gap in Your Resume

The first thing to remember is: you don't need long-winded or apologetic explanations. Keep it factual and concise. Include the dates and reason.

A brief description of your activities can be included if needed. For example, if you were on maternity leave, but you kept up-to-date with industry trends and training during that time, it looks proactive to mention this. You'll find some example wording in the sections below.

Family Leave

What this includes: Taking time off to care for ill family members, maternity/paternity leave (if you don't want to specify which for some reason), taking a break after marriage, bereavement, or other life event.

Example resume entry:

Career Pause/Pivot

What this includes: This approach is appropriate for reasons that were beyond your control, such as a pandemic redundancy or other unemployment. It also addresses a pause between jobs when you took time to explore alternative career paths (this will also help explain why your previous and following roles were in different spheres).

Example resume entry:

Maternity / Paternity Leave

What this includes: Time taken off to care for a newborn or young child (e.g. through adoption).

In this case, unless you have pursued studies or kept up-to-date with industry trends at that time

(see example for ?Family Leave? above), then no description is needed.

Example resume entry:

Study Leave

What this includes: Just as it says on the box, this is best for times when you took time off to pursue a degree, re-training, or other qualifications. This type of entry is best for mid-career studies; if referring to your pre-career studies, then leave these details to a separate ?Education? section instead.

Example resume entry:

Conclusion

Remember that gaps over the course of your professional life are very normal. While employers in the past used to be suspicious of these (back in the days when people tended to work for the same company for many years, or even for life), contemporary recruiters tend to view the occasional gap neutrally (or even positively, depending on the reason).

Key takeaways:

It's very common to have employment gaps for various reasons, such as family leave, travel, the pandemic, redundancy, disability, or not finding the right opportunity. It's essential to understand that they're normal, not something to be overly concerned about.

Some employers may still hold outdated beliefs that career gaps imply something negative about a candidate. However, most sensible recruiters will inquire about the reasons for the gap rather than immediately dismissing them based on it.

Be concise and factual when addressing resume gaps. Mention the dates and the reason, but avoid long or apologetic explanations. If necessary, include a brief description of your activities during the gap, especially if they demonstrate proactivity and industry engagement.

Ignore older gaps: If a career gap occurred >5 years ago, there's no need to explain it. Older

experiences have little relevance to your recent work, and most recruiters won't ask.

We give specific examples and tips on how to present various types of career gaps on your resume, including for career breaks/pivots and family or maternity/paternity leave.

Be honest and transparent about your career gaps while emphasizing the value you bring to the table with your skills and experiences.

Related questions

How to address a career gap due to mental health issues?

Addressing a career gap due to mental health issues in a resume requires a delicate balance between honesty and maintaining privacy. It's important to remember that you're not obligated to disclose specific personal details about your health. Instead, you can frame this period as a time taken off for personal health reasons, focusing on your readiness to return to work and any relevant skills or knowledge you may have gained or maintained during this time. Emphasizing your commitment to your professional development and how you've prepared to re-enter the workforce can also be beneficial.

What are specific strategies for explaining a career gap that resulted from unsuccessful job searching?

When explaining a career gap that resulted from an extended period of unsuccessful job searching, it's crucial to highlight how you've used the time productively. You might discuss any freelance projects, volunteer work, courses, or certifications you pursued during this time. The key is to show potential employers that you've remained engaged in your professional development, even if you were not employed in your field. This demonstrates resilience and a proactive attitude, qualities that are valuable to employers.

How to address personal development gaps positively on a resume?

If you took a gap year for personal development, you can highlight your skills and insights on your resume. For instance, traveling can enhance cultural awareness, adaptability, and communication skills. Pursuing a hobby might also demonstrate dedication, creativity, or leadership. Draw clear

connections between these experiences and the job you're applying for, showing how they've contributed to your personal and professional growth.

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38. Title: Personal Branding

Aug 15, 2023

How Long Should My Resume Be

Demonstrating the impact you've made on an organization is crucial to standing out from your competition when searching for a new job (or aiming for a promotion or pay increase). Showcasing at least 2-3 relevant achievements in each recent role is a great way to do this. In the following blog post, we explore the importance of including achievements in your resume, and offer guidance plus real examples for how to measure both quantifiable and seemingly non-quantifiable accomplishments.

More ?

Content: Clearing up the common confusion over ideal resume length

As long as there have been resumes, there has always been the burning question: how long should mine be?

You'll see lots of conflicting advice out there about what length is best, which only adds to the confusion.

In fact, there's even a current trend towards "1 page is best" from many so-called career experts, who may base their advice on what they prefer, rather than what works for companies and job seekers.

Yes, it's true that recruiters spend only a few seconds deciding whether or not to read on. But let's not assume that they have short attention spans! Your resume should immediately capture their interest, which has little to do with if it's one or two pages long.

And while getting everything neatly onto one page sounds great in theory, this trend doesn't take into account what actual recruiters and hiring managers think, or make allowances for different levels of experience.

On the one hand, packing your resume with too much detail over many pages won't do you any favors. On the flip side, lopping off valuable experience can actually lead to lost job opportunities,

even if a shorter resume is easier to maintain.

So: don't blindly follow trends. Use common sense.

In this blog post, we'll explore when you should use a 1-page, 2-page, or even 3-page+ format.

Not only do we have a team of career coaching experts here at JobLeads; but we're also constantly in touch with hiring decision-makers, headhunters, and agency recruiters. This article will share what resume length is best for you, based on what real companies are looking for.

Bear in mind that while the following is internationally applicable advice, there may be certain country-specific variations. Always double-check the conventions for the country you're applying to, to be on the safe side. In general, the advice in this post is

What should my resume include?

Before diving into recommended resume lengths, let's remind ourselves of what a standard resume should (and shouldn't) contain, so we know what should be dedicated to that valuable resume space. That way, you won't be overcrowding it and making it unnecessarily long ? or making it too short by leaving out useful details.

Generally, your resume or CV should include:

A name / contact details section at the top

A headline under your name (e.g. your current job title, or your desired job title)

A short summary statement about who you are professionally

A key skills box (highlighting your relevant hard skills for the job you're applying for)

Your career history (we'll discuss what and how much to include in the following sections)

Your education / qualifications

Any awards or professional recognition

Technology skills

Languages

Professional memberships (if applicable)

The precise order of these sections will depend on the job you're applying for. For example, if you work in the tech sphere, then your technology skills will often go above your career history. If you're a doctor or an accountant, your qualifications will also be mentioned before your professional experience.

Optional sections may also include volunteering and hobbies & interests. Whether or not you include these depends on if you feel these add value to the type of job and company you're applying for.

If you have a degree and/or professional qualifications, you can safely leave out earlier certifications (e.g. high school). The same advice applies to any clubs or activities you did in your earlier years: unless directly relevant and fairly recent, then there's no need to include that spelling bee you won in Grade 12 or your cheerleading activities during university.

Tip: these days, resumes tend to be focused on specific expertise, rather than a complete and detailed career history. In general, you can reduce or even remove job descriptions from 8-10 years+ ago, as well as jobs not relevant to your current career focus. Your more recent roles are a better indicator of your seniority and current skill set. Hiring decision makers tend to focus on this, rather than earlier work.

When can I have a 1-page resume?

Very generally, a 1-page resume is best for students, recent graduates, or those with very little work experience. By very little work experience, this is (very roughly) 5 years or fewer.

In this case, the 1-page format gives you the space to expand upon your responsibilities and achievements authentically, whereas the 2-page format in this case the white space would visually draw attention to your relative lack of experience.

Certain common sections such as professional memberships can also be left out in this format, as they may not be relevant for more junior professionals.

Another time that a 1-page format can be appropriate is if you work in purely technical roles, for example in software engineering. As your tech skills, qualifications, and project types/achievements are of more interest to recruiters than lengthier job descriptions, these types of resumes can be kept fairly to the point.

Exception: if you've had many roles in a short time period (for example, noteworthy internships or multiple contract roles), a 2-page format may be more appropriate. Otherwise, the 1-page format can actually work against you, as it doesn't enable you to fully showcase your relevant skills and expertise.

When is a 2-page resume best?

The 2-page format is the most common resume type.

It's usually best for those with 6+ years of experience, i.e. mid-level professionals and above. That's because it provides enough space to include the most essential sections listed at the beginning of this post, as well as any optional sections such as volunteering.

By this stage of your career, you have plenty of skills and accomplishments to highlight, and recruiters want to see this.

Another advantage of this length is that you can also include a brief company description (1-2 lines maximum). While this is not essential, a company description can help to highlight your industry or sector expertise, and pack in some additional keywords the recruiter may be looking for (e.g. SaaS). Just because you have more space with this format, everything you include should be relevant and to the point. Consider reducing or cutting out job descriptions for roles going back 8-10 years or beyond, as these are less relevant to your current abilities.

What about 3+ pages or more? Can my resume ever be that long?

Yes.

Longer resumes are more common in academia and for project-based work.

For academia (e.g. adjunct professor, Head of Department, Principal, scientists, etc.), these tend to be much longer than standard resumes, as they may include sections for publications, extended professional development, research, presentations, and so on.

For project work, we recommend a standard 2-page resume, with any project summaries forming an

appendix from Page 3 onwards. That way, hiring managers can easily skim through your professional history and qualifications first, then delve through your extended project experience if of interest.

Conclusion

To summarize: a 1-page resume is suitable for entry- and junior-level professionals, while the 2-page format is best for mid- to senior-level professionals.

Remember, these guidelines are a general rule of thumb. While some hiring managers may express specific preferences, the above advice reflects international standards.

If you'd like feedback on your resume/CV to see how it can be improved, take advantage of JobLeads' FREE resume review. Our career coaches will share their insights on how to make your document even more impactful, so you can land that dream job faster!

Good luck with your future role!

Key takeaways:

A 1-page resume is usually best for students, recent graduates, or people at the early stage of their career (roughly under 5 years of experience).

A 2-page resume is the standard length. It's generally suitable for mid- and senior-level professionals (with, say, 6+ years or more of experience).

A 3-page (or longer) resume is acceptable in academia and for project-based roles.

There will always be exceptions to these rules, and certain hiring managers might have specific preferences. Unless stated otherwise, however, we recommend following the standard guidelines outlined in this post.

JobLeads offers a free, no-obligation resume review service for professionals eager to get feedback on how their current document stands up. Find out more at www.jobleads.com.

Related questions

How can I prioritize content if I have a lot of experience but want to keep my resume to 2 pages?

To prioritize content for a resume, focus on relevance and impact. Highlight experiences that align with the job you're applying for and emphasize roles/projects with significant impact. Use quantifiable outcomes where possible to demonstrate your contributions. This ensures the most compelling information is presented within a constrained space.

How can I identify industry expectations for the ideal resume length?

Different fields may have their own resume length norms. For instance, academic and scientific professions expect more detailed CVs, while business, technology, or creative industries tend to value brevity with impactful content. Knowing your industry's expectations and the company's preferences can help you determine the appropriate length and detail for your resume.

How can I effectively incorporate keywords into my resume?

To effectively incorporate keywords into a resume, start by carefully reading job descriptions and noting the skills and qualifications that frequently appear. Use these insights to tailor your resume, ensuring that your language mirrors the terminology used within your industry and the specific job listing. This approach not only helps in passing applicant tracking systems but also in demonstrating your suitability for the role in a way that feels organic and meaningful. Remember, the goal is to weave keywords into your narrative of professional achievements and qualifications, making your resume both ATS-friendly and compelling to human readers.

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39. Title: Personal Branding

Aug 4, 2023

Help! I Don't Know How to Quantify My Achievements in My Resume!

Demonstrating the impact you've made on an organization is crucial to standing out from your competition when searching for a new job (or aiming for a promotion or pay increase). Showcasing at least 2-3 relevant achievements in each recent role is a great way to do this. In the following blog post, we explore the importance of including achievements in your resume, and offer guidance plus real examples for how to measure both quantifiable and seemingly non-quantifiable accomplishments.

More ?

Content: Why should I include achievements in my resume?

Before we dive into quantifying your accomplishments, let's take a look at why these are important to include in your resume at all.

If you're looking for a new job, you've probably heard that resumes have shifted from focusing just on responsibilities, to including your major achievements as well.

That's because hiring managers these days want to know not just what you were hired to do, but how you personally took that job and made an impact on the organization. As past performance is a good indicator of future performance, this tells them how you could potentially benefit them as well.

The easiest way to showcase this for recruiters is by including 2-3 (or more) accomplishments you achieved for each of your recent jobs.

For example, these might include particularly successful projects, portfolio values you managed, sales targets you smashed, a complex problem you overcame, new processes you introduced, significant cost savings you effected, how many accounts you oversaw, or the growth of a team that you steered.

Whichever achievements you decide to include, ensure these are relevant to the job you're applying for, and that they clearly demonstrate your impact on that organization.

Why should I quantify my achievements?

In the examples of accomplishments mentioned above, you may have noticed that we included clearly quantifiable achievements (e.g. sales figures), as well as seemingly non-quantifiable achievements (e.g. a complex problem you overcame).

However, even non-quantifiabiles should ideally be quantified for maximum impact.

Why?

Because quantifying information makes it much easier for skimming recruiters to absorb. It also has a very clever way of making the achievement sound much more impressive.

Consider this example from a property development specialist's resume:

Managed a national portfolio of shopping centers, as well as a team of direct reports

or

Managed national portfolio of 9 shopping centers (total value \$600M), including 43 direct reports

Which one sounds more powerful? To a hiring manager, the second point gives much more insight into the person's leadership and portfolio management experience. Quantifying it has also made it easier to comprehend the portfolio values and team sizes the job seeker is familiar with handling.

In the following sections, we'll show you how to easily quantify any type of professional accomplishment so that your resume helps you to immediately stand out from the competition.

What's the best way to showcase my quantifiable achievements?

Usually, the most straightforward (and fastest) way to highlight your quantifiable accomplishments is to convert these to a currency (e.g. \$), size, or % value.

Obtained development approval for a 25-level tower in Dubai with GFA of 68,000m²; led sale negotiation resulting in asset on-selling for \$35M

If you aren't quite sure of the metric, then it's also possible to use expressions such as "millions", "dozens", or "hundreds". While not as catchy as exact numbers, the recruiter still gets good insight into the approximate figure.

Partnered with 100+ national/global organisations including Lockheed, Robust Learning, Sprint, T-Mobile, Nestle, United Airlines, CNB Software, Ohio County Health, and government entities

Let's take a look at some more examples of quantified accomplishments that you can use for inspiration:

Saved clients accumulated total of \$1M+ annually thanks to meticulously designed and implemented workforce planning strategies and systems

Championed execution of innovative talent optimisation strategy that cut turnover by 30%, improved leadership bench strength by 20%, and increased diversity in leadership roles by 25%

Managed ~20 enterprise accounts with multiple business lines including social media networking platforms, pharmaceuticals, and financial institutions; portfolio value \$2.1m

Participated in Office Supplies Program initiative to consolidate operations and manage supplies ordering for the entire head office to reduce spending; led to cost savings of ~100K

As you can see, in each example the job seeker has converted these figures into precise numbers (e.g. \$2.1m) or, when they weren't entirely sure, into an approximate value (e.g. ~20, 100+).

How do I quantify "non-quantifiable" achievements?

Quantifying "non-quantifiable" accomplishments can seem a little trickier at first, especially if the achievement is not something you would usually measure.

First of all, start by writing down a list of your major accomplishments. Then, when trying to quantify a "non-quantifiable", think about aspects such as:

Did you achieve it in a certain amount of time?

How big was the project, event, or space?

How large was the team you managed or worked within?

How many stakeholders, partners, vendors, offices, clients, customers, agencies, or countries did you engage with?

Make a note of each achievement. Then, play with the wording until it has been turned into a quantifiable accomplishment.

Here are some examples of how other job seekers managed this:

Launched new satellite office in first 30 days; hired/managed 7 teams (Customer Support, Product Support, Equipment Service & Repair, Field Service Engineering, Business Analysis)

Led project team in all aspects of construction from production to architectural drawings, cost estimates, and scheduling for high-end single-family residences (70 sq m ? 1200 sq m)

Automated marketing campaign setup; decreased manual data entry by media buyers from 1 hour to 10 seconds; created audit reporting to catch additional errors within 1 business day

Lead team of 7 in-house specialists and supervise outsourced services with 14 partners and contractors

Analyse test results and provide executive recommendations on web page strategy for 15 countries

It's almost always possible to quantify an achievement, even if no measurable metrics were involved.

But if you struggle to turn your accomplishments into a measurement, don't panic. It's much better to include achievements, even if they're not quantified, than to skip these altogether.

Key Takeaways

Hiring managers want to know not just what you were hired to do, but how you personally took that job and made an impact on the organization (i.e. your accomplishments).

Include 2-3 (ideally quantifiable) achievements for each of your most recent roles.

Quantifiable achievements are usually showcased in currency (e.g. \$), percentage (%), statistic, or other digit format (e.g. 15 direct reports).

Even ?non-quantifiable? achievements can often be quantified in some way, for example by mentioning how many clients you worked with, how many offices or partners you engaged with, and so on.

If an accomplishment truly can?t be quantified, don?t worry: what?s important is that you?ve highlighted your achievements.

Related questions

How can I quantify achievements if I work in a field where results are not easily measurable or quantified?

In fields where results are not easily measurable, it?s possible to identify impact through indirect measures. For instance, creative roles might reference the reach of their work (e.g., views, shares, or mentions in the media) or the success of projects they contributed to (e.g., revenue generated by a marketing campaign they designed). Humanitarian workers could quantify their achievements by citing the number of people who benefited from a project or the amount of funds raised through their efforts. It?s about framing your contribution in a way that highlights its impact.

Are there industry-specific examples or templates for quantifying achievements on a resume?

Industry-specific examples or templates for quantifying achievements can be invaluable for job seekers. It?s essential to understand what metrics each industry values to create a standout resume. To find relevant examples, research job descriptions within your industry, consult professionals in similar roles, or explore professional forums and LinkedIn profiles. Industries value different metrics such as project completion times, cost savings, efficiency improvements, customer satisfaction ratings, engagement rates, or publication citations.

How can I address potential concerns from employers about the accuracy of quantified achievements?

During job interviews, an applicant should be prepared to discuss the details behind the numbers of their achievements, providing context and evidence where possible. Discussing the strategies employed to achieve these results, the challenges overcome, and how teamwork and collaboration played a role can be helpful. Maintaining a portfolio or collection of references who can vouch for your contributions can also be a powerful way to substantiate your claims.

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40. Title: Job Search

Jul 24, 2023

Between Hope & Hired - The Emotional Rollercoaster of Job Seeking

If you're finding your job hunt stressful or even traumatic, you're not alone. It's a little acknowledged but highly common aspect of putting yourself out there and searching for a new role. In this blog post, we delve into the most frequent causes of stress, and share 10 awesome pieces of advice from our career coaches about how to cope constructively with the job hunting process.

More ?

Content: The importance of self-care during your job search + 10 coping strategies to get you to the other side faster and with less stress

There's a little acknowledged but highly common side effect of job hunting that few people want to talk about.

When we start off looking for a job, usually we have a very positive outlook. We update our resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn. We start applying, and hope that one of these will land us an interview.

Then the problems start.

Applications quickly get rejected, or not even acknowledged. Interviews may take place, and then comes the ghosting. You may even get so far as to have multiple interviews, complete take-home assignments, and psychometric tests, all for it to end with a lowball offer or nothing at all. After sending out up to hundreds of applications, eventually you land a job. It may not be your dream job, but it sure looks great in comparison to the job search process you've just gone through.

It's hardly surprising that a significant number of job seekers report feelings of stress, frustration, or, in some cases, even trauma.

Yet they're expected to just keep trying, because what's the alternative?

At JobLeads, over the past two decades we've supported thousands of job seekers on their job search journey. We've been with them through their struggles and cheered them on in their

victories.

To help you cope with the ups and downs of job hunting, our career experts share 10 powerful tips to help you maintain your well-being throughout the journey.

10 Coping Strategies to Keep You Motivated and Support Your Mental and Emotional Health During Your Job Search

#1 Don't let your job search take over your life

While it's totally understandable that you want to find a new job ASAP, don't let other aspects of your life (such as your family, sleep, diet, and hobbies) be impacted by your determination. One of the very best ways to manage this (and to find a job faster) is to have a job search strategy. This can be as simple as a 1-page plan with to-dos to optimize your resume and LinkedIn profile, a list of job sources, a rough schedule for how and when you'll carry out job search activities each day, and space to keep notes on your progress and any action points.

Sometimes we can become stressed when things don't happen as quickly as we expect. But unless you're very lucky, it may take weeks (or sometimes months) to find a new job. That's just the reality of job hunting and it has nothing to do with you personally. Although you may be ready to start immediately, companies still need time to post the job, review applications, discuss these internally, set up and conduct multiple interviews, narrow these down to a shortlist, have more internal discussions, agree on an offer, have all this signed off by leadership and HR, wait out the successful candidate's notice period, and get them on board. Keep on searching and applying until you finally receive a concrete offer. That way, you'll always have something in progress, and if an offer falls through or you get ghosted, another offer won't be too far behind.## #2 It's very normal to feel stressed

Finding a new job can definitely be highly stressful. And it's totally OK to admit that. Instead of avoiding it, instead find ways to address it. For example, after achieving a goal (whether that's hitting a certain number of applications sent out each day, or preparing for an interview), indulge in something you enjoy. This could be a massage, reading a book, going out for coffee and cake, or taking a hike with a friend. Just do what you love! Micro rewards along the way are a great method

to keep you motivated and distract yourself during those stressful moments.

#2 If you feel out of your depth, reach out to an expert and do some research

Perhaps you don't know where to start your job search or why Applicant Tracking Systems could be the reason for all the rejections. Maybe you can't find sufficient job opportunities or have no idea how to prepare for an upcoming interview.

Take some time to do your research. There's thankfully loads of helpful material out there on the internet. Whether it be YouTube videos, online courses, guides, templates, or one-on-one career coaching, there are many options to choose from. Just be careful and check the quality of the source, as there's also a lot of false information spreading in the online space from so-called experts looking to make some quick money but without the background to support their claims.

That way, you'll cut down on wasted time and rejections by knowing the rules of the game. I recommend you check out JobLeads as we have invested almost two decades to develop tools and guidance to help job seekers land a better job faster. Starting with a job search that aggregates the job market across various industries with millions of the latest job offerings, a database with relevant headhunters in your field, MasterClasses, guides, and webinars. Or if your resume is bothering you, our career experts will analyze it and give you detailed feedback about necessary changes. Just check our [FREE RESUME REVIEW](#). Jobscan is also a great tool to help you optimize the keywords in your resume for each job listing you want to apply for.

#3 Have a schedule and take regular breaks

One of our strongest pieces of advice is to have a job search schedule in place, and to take frequent breaks. For example, perhaps you'd like to search every day from Monday to Friday in the mornings. So, prepare a schedule for each day, breaking it down into specific activities and approximate timings. These could be searching on JobLeads, optimizing your documents, sending applications, reaching out to your network on LinkedIn, or practicing your elevator pitch to present yourself better. We recommend no more than 2-3 hours a day in total, depending on your other commitments. Use the rest of your day for family, relaxation, or your current job. 2-3 hours might sound a lot, but if you consider that you'll work about 90,000 hours over your lifetime, that

investment is worth it, don't you think?

#4 Seek therapy

If you're finding yourself super stressed or even traumatized by your ongoing job search, don't ever feel like you have to do this alone. As well as your support network, there are plenty of in-person and online therapists who specialize in helping you work through your feelings and uncover any deeper issues. This can be especially useful for job seekers who suffer from anxiety in other situations.

#5 Set realistic goals

When you first start looking, you'll be full of energy and enthusiasm. You'll want to spend hours a day pursuing job opportunities, hoping it will get you there faster. Maybe it will, but more likely you'll burn yourself out in a matter of weeks. See #1 and #4 above when setting your job search goals. Ask yourself, is your plan achievable? Have you set realistic goals and a realistic timeframe? Run your plan by a friend to get their feedback.

#6 Acknowledge that your job search will take time

Sometimes we can become stressed when things don't happen as quickly as we expect. But unless you're very lucky, it may take weeks (or sometimes months) to find a new job. That's just the reality of job hunting and it has nothing to do with you personally. Although you may be ready to start immediately, companies still need time to post the job, review applications, discuss these internally, set up and conduct multiple interviews, narrow these down to a shortlist, have more internal discussions, agree on an offer, have all this signed off by leadership and HR, wait out the successful candidate's notice period, and get them on board. Keep on searching and applying until you finally receive a concrete offer. That way, you'll always have something in progress, and if an offer falls through or you get ghosted, another offer won't be too far behind.

#7 Don't take rejection personally

It can be very hard not to take rejection personally. It feels like hiring companies just can't see your great experience and culture fit and give you a chance. In actual fact, they may indeed appreciate all this. Rejection doesn't mean you aren't a great fit. It usually means that someone else was an

even better fit (and when you land that job, you'll be a better fit than the other great people who were rejected only because you stood out more). Rejection also happens because (and this is quite common) the hiring manager's budget is pulled, the recruitment process is put on hold, or an internal candidate appears. None of which has anything to do with you personally and is no reflection on your excellent potential fit. If job hunting is getting you down in the dumps, remember that you're not alone. By prioritizing self-care, implementing coping strategies, and fostering a positive mindset, you can navigate the potentially traumatic aspects while minimizing stress and finding that new job faster.

#8 Improve your job search skills

An essential component to accelerating your job search and securing a fantastic role is the continual enhancement of your job search skills. This means not only the mastery of job searching techniques, but also the broader commitment to lifelong learning. An investment in your skill set is an investment in your future, yielding dividends that extend far beyond just your job search. By staying current with industry trends, advancing your qualifications, and proactively seeking out learning opportunities, you'll increase the efficiency of your job search and become a more compelling candidate. This commitment to professional growth ensures you remain competitive in today's rapidly evolving job market and improves your potential for securing a better position more swiftly. Remember, lifelong learning isn't just a personal investment; it's a career strategy that pays off.

#9 Leverage the power of networking

Networking is a cornerstone of effective job searching. Building and nurturing a broad professional network opens doors to opportunities that might not be publicly advertised. It's through these connections that job seekers can gain insider perspectives about companies, discover potential job openings, and even receive recommendations that can increase their chances of securing an interview. Networking isn't just about attending industry events or job fairs; it also encompasses online platforms such as LinkedIn, where job seekers can engage with industry professionals, join relevant groups, and participate in discussions. Remember, networking is a two-way street: it's

about forming genuine, mutually beneficial relationships. As you help others, you'll find that others are often willing to help you in return, creating a ripple effect of opportunities in your job search journey.

#2 It's very normal to feel stressed

Finding a new job can definitely be highly stressful. And it's totally OK to admit that. Instead of avoiding it, instead find ways to address it. For example, after achieving a goal (whether that's hitting a certain number of applications sent out each day, or preparing for an interview), indulge in something you enjoy. This could be a massage, reading a book, going out for coffee and cake, or taking a hike with a friend. Just do what you love! Micro rewards along the way are a great method to keep you motivated and distract yourself during those stressful moments.

Key takeaways:

Job hunting can be emotionally challenging. Acknowledge the impact it may have on your well-being. There's nothing wrong with the way you're feeling.

Establish a routine that incorporates activities promoting mental and emotional well-being. Implement coping strategies such as setting realistic goals, seeking support from your family and friends, and celebrating small achievements to manage stress effectively.

If your job hunt becomes overwhelming, seek professional support from therapists who can guide you through the emotional challenges, trauma, or anxiety that may arise during the process.

Make time to surround yourself with a supportive network while also taking advantage of the job

hunting period to enhance your job search knowledge and skills.

Cultivate a positive outlook, set realistic goals, and stay resilient in the face of setbacks or rejections.

Don't take it personally!

Investing time and effort into continuously enhancing your job search skills and pursuing lifelong learning can significantly accelerate your job search.

Effective networking, both online and offline, unlocks a wealth of hidden job opportunities and provides invaluable industry insights, thereby significantly amplifying your job search potential.

Related questions

What specific self-care activities are most effective for mitigating the emotional toll of job seeking?

Regular physical exercise, such as running, going to the gym, or playing team sports, along with practicing meditation and mindfulness, and pursuing other hobbies or interests can be helpful in managing the emotional challenges that come with job seeking. These activities can serve as a healthy distraction and provide a sense of accomplishment outside of the professional realm.

How can I effectively measure and recognize the signs of job search-related stress or trauma?

Signs of job search-related stress include physical symptoms like headaches, sleep and appetite changes, and emotional symptoms like irritability, anxiety, or feeling down. You may also lose motivation, procrastinate, withdraw socially, or change your routine. To manage stress, keep a mood journal, use scales like the Perceived Stress Scale, or seek feedback. Take care of yourself by exercising, practicing mindfulness, and seeking support. If overwhelmed, seek professional help.

What are effective networking strategies to use during the emotional ups and downs of a job search?

It's important to approach connections with authenticity and a mindset of mutual benefit rather than seeing each interaction as a means to an end. Leveraging platforms like LinkedIn to share insights or engage with content relevant to your industry can attract positive attention. Participating in professional forums or attending webinars not only expands your network but also keeps you informed and engaged with your field, potentially opening up new opportunities. Moreover, setting small, achievable goals for networking, such as reaching out to a certain number of contacts per week, can make the process feel more manageable and less daunting.

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41. Title: Job Search

Jul 13, 2023

8 Common Job Search Mistakes

Are you getting really frustrated by your job hunt, and you're not sure what to do about it? We hear you. JobLeads has coached thousands of job seekers just like you over the past 15 years, so we know what you're going through. While there's definitely a lot of competition out there, often it takes just a few simple tactics to turn your job search luck around. Our career coaches have put together 8 of the most common mistakes to avoid, plus 11 steps to take right now to increase your dream job odds.

More ?

Content: You're reading this because you can't find a job. Or you're about to start looking, and want to be as smart as possible about your job search approach.

Great decision! This article will get you there faster.

Here at JobLeads, we've worked with thousands of job seekers over the past 15 years. 99.9% of the time, our no-nonsense, easy-to-implement fixes based on years of expert insights help them to get their job search back on track in no time.

So - are you ready to join them? Keep reading to discover 8 things to stop doing right now, and 11 things to start doing now to land that dream job ASAP.

#1 Not understanding how ATS work

An Applicant Tracking System (ATS) is a recruitment software that streamlines the recruitment process for companies. They speed up the "best fit" identification process by drawing attention to top-ranking applicants. This means low-ranking resumes may not be double-checked by a human. Over 90% of medium- to large-sized organizations use ATS. ATS can "read" a high volume of applications, filtering out those which don't match the job requirements, while flagging up those that do. ATS use algorithms to read and rank applications based on how closely they match any pre-set keywords and criteria by the recruiter. This usually includes major hard skills and knowledge areas,

education, and years of experience. If you don't understand how ATS work, you run the risk of not being considered.

What you can do about it

Most ATS are designed to read resumes left to right, line-by-line. So that means a clean, simple style works best. Avoid creative resumes as these aren't always ATS-friendly. No columns, no text boxes, no graphics to avoid ATS "reading" errors. In fact, 21% of resumes submitted through an ATS include graphics or charts that are unreadable to the software. And another thing: ATS can't see information that's not there (or embedded in graphics/text boxes). As they are designed to look for pre-set keywords and criteria, it's important to tweak your resume for every role you apply for.

#2 Only applying to jobs through online job boards

A high proportion of jobs are filled through professional or personal connections. Headhunters also play a significant role, because they're gatekeepers to exclusive and better-paid positions. In other words, you can't access all opportunities by just applying online. Not only that, many people stick to 1 or 2 job boards only, which narrows their odds considerably. After all, there are thousands of job sites out there, from the global ones to your local online classifieds. Yet, even if you're on 100 job boards, the basic fact remains: a significant number of jobs are filled through connections, headhunters, or resources you hadn't thought about.

What you can do about it

Instead of solely relying on 1 or 2 job sites to find opportunities, add several other methods to your job search plan. For example, consider:

www.jobleads.com - We search millions of opportunities from job boards, agencies, and headhunters globally to identify suitable vacancies for our clients. It's like hundreds of sites rolled into 1!

Headhunters and recruitment agencies - Target those that specialize in your area of expertise. For example, JobLeads allows you to identify agencies relevant to your specific location, industry, and expertise in order to connect with them

Checking out company profiles on LinkedIn - Companies often cross-post vacancies on their profile

Leveraging your network - Former colleagues/managers, family, friends, university alumni, professional organizations, clients, industry contacts, etc. can refer you to companies they work at

Approaching specific target companies (i.e. companies that you'd love to work for)

#3 Blanket applying

Blanket applying means applying to any and every job, regardless of if you're a good fit or not. It might seem like you're increasing your odds by applying for more jobs and saving yourself the time needed to review job descriptions and tailor your resume. But you're just increasing the odds of rejection. While job descriptions are generally "ideal wish lists" rather than inflexible absolutes, you should still meet at least 80% of the essential and desirable requirements.

What you can do about it

If you're applying to jobs you don't truly qualify for on the off-chance a recruiter will say, "Yes!", then you're almost certainly wasting everyone's time and increasing your rejection rate. Read the job description carefully. If you meet a high percentage of the requirements, then ensure that's reflected clearly in your resume and cover letter.

#4 Assuming the application deadline is a given

When posting a job online, most sites (including the company's own site or ATS) require an expiry date. This prevents ads from remaining online forever. The hiring manager can always renew or delete the posting at that time.

What you can do about it

Even though there may be a deadline listed, it may not be the actual deadline. The general rule of thumb: if the job is still online and is reasonably young (<2 months), send in your application anyway.

#5 Not explaining transitions clearly

Career pivots or even complete career changes are very common these days. Unlike a decade or two ago when it was expected for people to stay in the same career for their entire working life,

moving around every few years and changing your career path are generally viewed positively. However, sometimes job seekers are so afraid of how they'll be perceived, that they don't edit their job descriptions to showcase synergies, or lop off certain experiences altogether.

What you can do about it

It's important to explain your motivation for changing paths, and show how this builds upon your previous experiences. Use your resume summary and cover letter to positively (and briefly) focus on synergies. Tailor your resume to highlight transferable skills and experience so it's easier for the recruiter to envision you in the role. Where relevant, explain that you're pursuing qualifications or training in your new field.

#6 Not identifying keywords and essential criteria in the job description

Every job description outlines essential and desirable requirements. Major keywords (e.g. project management, team leadership) and necessary criteria (e.g. minimum 4 years' experience, or a certain degree) are clearly indicated. Recruiters and ATS use these as a way to standardize and speed up the filtering process, by comparing your resume to the job description wording. If you send in your resume without customizing it for a specific opportunity (incorporating the major keywords and criteria, where relevant), then you drastically reduce your chances of being considered.

What you can do about it

For each job you'd like to apply for, firstly go through and underline the main keywords and responsibilities (this will get faster, the more often you do it). Focus on hard skills (e.g. scheduling, program development) rather than soft skills (e.g. time management). Then, if you have this knowledge, make sure these are authentically sprinkled throughout your summary, key skills section, job tasks, and accomplishments. Don't overdo it, as some ATS can detect keyword stuffing and will flag your resume accordingly.

#7 Using a creative resume

If you've searched online for current resume styles, you may have noticed an increasing trend for creatively designed resumes. These are resumes that use graphics, icons, color, columns, text boxes, and so on to liven up the traditional plain black & white format. Fans claim that a creative

resume will stand out and is more likely to score you an interview. Yes? and no. These are great for roles requiring creativity, such as graphic design or the fashion industry. They can also work well if you're applying for jobs with small companies (e.g. start-ups), which are more likely to manually review your resume or find unique looks appealing. Unfortunately, not all of us are good at resume design. Or picking out existing designs that won't give the impression that we're just out of college. And as we mentioned earlier, many ATS struggle with anything other than clean, simple styles. So in general, it's best to avoid creative resume designs.

What you can do about it

Unless there's a specific reason otherwise, use a clean, simple style:

Single-column format

No text boxes

Few-to-no icons or graphics (limited use is OK for manual review, but ATS can't "see" these)

Concise bullet points to describe responsibilities/accomplishments (1-2 lines each)

Use a clean, modern font such as Calibri, Arial, Verdana, or Tahoma

The ideal font size is 10-12 points. Headings can be 12-14 points (smaller for more experienced resumes, larger for less experienced, for space considerations)

Bolded headings and sub-headings (ATS can't detect bolding, but it makes it easier on the recruiter's eye during manual reviews)

Color should be avoided or tastefully limited (ATS can't detect it anyway)

Margins: .5, .75, or 1-inch (resumes with less text can have a 1-inch margin; those with more can be .75 or .5.)

Avoid placing important text in the header or footer (many ATS can't read these sections)

Use commonly-understood headings (ATS can struggle with interpreting which section is which if you use unusual headings, e.g. "Snapshot" instead of "Summary")

Use a universal document type such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs

#8 Not reviewing your social media or online footprint

Around 90% of employers check your social media and/or online presence to learn more about you and to see if you're a good culture fit for their organization. Fact. Sometimes they do this before even contacting you for an interview. If they find anything questionable (for example, extreme religious, political, cultural, or other views), there's a high likelihood that your application will end up in the rejection pile. For example, one new hire had their contract cancelled when HR belatedly did a social media search and found racist comments by that person (made even worse by the fact that they were working in a multicultural team).

What you can do about it

Is your personal social media visible? If yes, you may want to make it private. Will anyone find unflattering articles or posts by you online? If yes, either take these down, or be prepared to explain if asked. Ask a friend to search online for you as well, to make sure nothing is missed. Conversely, ensure your LinkedIn profile (if you have one) is up-to-date, professional, and complete. This can help to enhance the recruiter's positive impression of your application.

Conclusion

These are just some of the many common mistakes that people make when they're searching for a job, and what they can easily do to fix things right now.

We'll throw in 3 more pieces of advice to help slash your job search journey time:

Be flexible: Just because something worked for you the last time you looked for a job, that doesn't mean it will again. Times change, and so do technology and sources. For example, we've coached many clients who are resistant to tweaking their resume for ATS, because they don't understand how it works. Or job seekers who are reluctant to tap into their extensive network because they don't know how to ask, instead relying on 1-2 job boards instead of seeking quality referrals.

Have a plan: It might sound like a bit of hard work to put together a job search plan, but actually, that hour (or less) that you spend creating one, will knock hours, days, or even weeks off your job hunt because you're not rambling down random paths. At its simplest, a job search plan lists all the places you'd look for opportunities (e.g. online job boards, JobLeads, your network), how long

you'd like to spend on each activity per day, and space to take status/action point notes to keep track of everything.

Don't be afraid to ask for help: If you're not sure if your resume is up to scratch, ask a resume professional to polish it for you. If you're uncertain about your next job move, a coaching session with a career counsellor can give you a sense of direction. Reach out to your network (LinkedIn is a fantastic resource for this) to ask for referrals at dream companies. If you're struggling with your job search, remember that you're not alone. There is always a solution if you look for one.

We hope these top tips will help you to refine your job search strategy and find a better job faster.

If you want to learn more about other common job search faux pas, check out our Ultimate Guide to Job Hunting Mistakes. We share 95+ common mistakes + what you can do about it, including advice on your job search, job descriptions, resumes, cover letters, interviews, virtual interviews, and job offer stumbling blocks.

Download The Ultimate Guide to Job Hunting Mistakes

Good luck ? we wish you happy job hunting!

Key Takeaways:

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are software used by companies to streamline the recruitment process. Learn how they work to ensure your resume is ATS-friendly.

Diversify your job search methods: Don't rely solely on online job boards. Explore other avenues such as networking, headhunters, recruitment agencies, LinkedIn, or approaching target companies directly.

To avoid rejection, apply only to jobs that you are a good fit for and meet at least 80% of the essential and desirable requirements. Tailor your resume and cover letter accordingly.

Don't assume the application deadline is fixed: If it's still online, it may still be open for applications.

Clearly explain career transitions: If you're changing careers or industries, highlight the synergies between your previous experiences and the new path. Showcase transferable skills and mention relevant qualifications or training.

Pay attention to the keywords and requirements in the job description. Customize your resume for specific applications by incorporating these keywords authentically throughout your resume.

Avoid using creative resume designs, as they are not always ATS-friendly. Stick to a clean, simple style with a single-column format, concise bullet points, and commonly-understood headings.

Employers often check social media and online profiles to assess candidates. Ensure your personal accounts are private or present a professional image.

Bonus advice: Be flexible and adapt your job search strategies to current trends and technologies. Develop a job search plan to stay organized and focused. Seek help and guidance when needed, whether from resume professionals, career counselors, or your network.

Related questions

How can I effectively tailor my resume for each job application to ensure it passes through the ATS while still maintaining a personal and unique touch?

Make sure to strike a balance between customization and clarity. Identify the key skills and phrases by reading the job description thoroughly. Use a clear, professional format that highlights your achievements and experiences relevant to the position. Add a personal touch by including a well-crafted summary at the top that reflects your career aspirations and how they align with the company's goals. This section can be slightly adjusted for each application to show you've researched the company and understand its mission.

What are some specific strategies or tools to effectively use social media for job search purposes?

Use social media to your advantage for job search purposes. Engage with industry-related content and individuals, follow companies, join groups, share articles, and participate in discussions to increase visibility and establish expertise. Network with professionals by connecting, asking insightful questions, and seeking informational interviews. This approach can uncover hidden job opportunities and get you noticed by recruiters.

Can I find examples or case studies of individuals overcoming job search challenges by correcting common mistakes for more concrete strategy insights?

The many real-life job seekers that Jobleads has coached over the past twenty years - and whose experiences are drawn upon in the article - customize their applications, network, and improve their online presence. They share an awareness to understand the job market, continuously learn, and are resilient. A strategic approach includes targeting applications, professional development, and networking. Learning from unsuccessful applications through follow-ups or informational interviews is important. Adaptability, persistence, and willingness to learn are crucial in the job search process.

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42. Title: Job Search

Jul 5, 2023

Why Recruiters Look for Purple Squirrels

Ever heard of a purple squirrel? If you want your resume to land in front of a hiring manager, this post will tell you everything you need to know about why recruiters put so much energy into seeking this elusive creature. We'll show you how to carefully analyze the job description and tweak your resume to shine as the ideal candidate (AKA purple squirrel) and land your dream job faster!

More ?

Content: 5 definitive tips to be a hiring manager's ideal candidate

When companies post a job description online, they sit back and wait for a purple squirrel to apply (or sometimes a unicorn).

But we all know ? and so do they ? that purple squirrels and unicorns don't exist. Nor does the 100% perfect candidate who matches all their requirements + salary range + culture fit + availability timeframe = a purple squirrel.

But all too often, a really great candidate ? a lilac or pink squirrel, let's say - is passed over because their match on paper isn't fully clear to the hiring company. The applicant might meet most or even all of the requirements for the job, but either hasn't included it in their resume, or have used wording and acronyms that the recruiter or Applicant Tracking System (technology that filters applications prior to a human eye seeing it) miss.

Alternatively, they assume the recruiter will read between the lines (they're too busy for that) or will search for transferable skills in the resume (they won't).

Both the Applicant Tracking System (ATS) and recruiters typically review a resume by assessing how closely it matches the job description wording. Very specifically, what they're initially looking for at this stage is (hard skill) keyword and criteria alignment.

In other words, do you have the required experience, education, and skills mentioned? And is it

100% clear that you do?

If the recruiter or ATS has to do some guesswork, your application will more than likely be put aside while they search for better matches. They have to. With many jobs attracting dozens if not hundreds of responses, it's unreasonable to assume that companies have time to engage in assumptions.

Thankfully, making yourself a more colorful squirrel is a relatively easy fix if you're already a good fit.

Let's take a look at important keywords and criteria in an actual job description

If you want to be a hiring manager's purple squirrel, your resume must reflect what they're looking for. To do that, you need to thoroughly understand the job description, and then ensure your resume closely mirrors this.

The role below is for an IT Program Manager. We've highlighted keywords and phrasing that an ATS or recruiter would likely look for during the first review.

As you can see, only the most important hard skill keywords and essential criteria are highlighted. At this stage, ATS and recruiters aren't interested in soft skills (e.g. time management, ability to work under pressure) when they're scanning a resume to assess your likely fit. As soft skills are more subjective, these are usually assessed during an interview or through references.

So before you apply to a role, read through the job description carefully and note all the essential and desired requirements. Focus on hard skill keywords and any experience or education criteria, such as a particular qualification. Then, take a few moments to ensure these are explicitly mentioned in your resume if applicable, with particular focus on the summary and key skills sections. But these keywords should also be scattered throughout your resume as well to increase your legitimacy. Although including these in your summary and key skills section will definitely boost your match ranking, an eagle-eyed recruiter may notice that these aren't reflected in your job description bullet points or other sections. Where relevant, insert these keywords to give your resume a more natural feel.

Below, we'll walk you through how to quickly make any necessary edits to your application [by the way, if you're already a good fit, then these tweaks should take mere minutes to do].

3 How to tweak your resume to be that elusive purple squirrel

Here are 5 simple steps you can take to ensure your resume is the closest fit possible for what the ATS or recruiter are looking for.

#1 Does your professional experience match their stated requirements?

Perhaps they're looking for an accountant with 20 years of experience, but you've lopped off anything older than 10 years ago to streamline your resume. So they might not be aware of how much experience you actually have. There are two ways to address this. The first is to mention your length of experience in your resume summary. The second is to add earlier roles back in, in the correct chronological order, but simply remove the job description to keep your resume length manageable. That way, both their ATS and the recruiter will see you meet their experience requirements.

#2 Are any stated qualifications clearly mentioned in your resume?

Sometimes, hiring managers want certain degrees or certifications. For example, an accounting degree or a project management qualification. Check your resume to ensure the wording matches that in the job description (e.g. if they want a Bachelor of Business Administration and your resume says BBA, edit it to reflect the company's wording).

#3 Do your buzzwords and keywords match the job description?

Related to #2, skim through the job description to ensure that your keywords and industry terminology match theirs. If they want project management and team coordination experience, make sure these keyword phrases are clearly reflected in the company's specific lingo. Hint: also check that your English spellings match theirs (e.g. programme, program; specialisation, specialization).

#4 Does your summary text reflect what the company is looking for?

Usually, the first paragraph or two of the job description is a general introduction to the role and what that person will be responsible for. Use this as inspiration for your own summary. For example, if you're a Senior Marketing Specialist who has worked with agencies and stakeholders in the

entertainment industry, and the job you're applying for wants a Marketing Manager who is familiar with liaising with external agencies to design and produce collateral for festivals and other public events, you can honestly tweak your summary text to reflect their wording.

#5 Do you meet any ?desirable? requirements?

Most job descriptions list both essential and desirable requirements. While the must-haves are obviously very important to include in your resume (as far as is relevant to your actual experience, of course), the nice-to-haves will also help you stand out from the competition that neglects to include this. Usually, the desirables are additional software programs, or a certain language. If you can have them, or can learn them quickly (in the case of a program, for example), include these.

As you can see, being the hiring manager's purple squirrel is a lot easier than you think. We promise. By reading the job description carefully, identifying the essential (and desirable) hard skill keywords and experience/education criteria, and then following the 5 steps above, you have a much greater chance of jumping out as that rare perfect candidate and landing an interview.

3 Key Takeaways:

Purple squirrels (candidates who perfectly match all the requirements), don't exist. But recruiters and ATS may still overlook great candidates who meet most of the requirements, but fail to communicate it clearly on their resumes.

Recruiters and ATS primarily focus on hard skill keywords and criteria alignment when reviewing resumes. If there's ambiguity or guesswork involved, the application is more likely to be set aside.

To increase your chances of being a purple squirrel, thoroughly analyze the job description and ensure your resume closely mirrors it. Pay attention to hard skill keywords and essential criteria,

explicitly mentioning them in your resume's summary and key skills sections.

While the summary and key skills sections are crucial for boosting your match ranking, scatter the relevant keywords throughout your resume to enhance its purple squirrelness.

Follow our 5 simple steps to tweak your resume for a closer fit with what recruiters and ATS are looking for.

Related questions

How do recruiters balance the search for purple squirrels with the practical need to fill positions?

Recruiters face the challenge of finding the ideal candidate, known as the purple squirrel. However, the need to fill positions in a specific timeframe requires a balance between searching for perfect matches and progressing with the best available candidates. Strategies such as widening the search criteria or considering transferable skills are used to mitigate the scarcity of perfect matches.

What are the success rates of candidates who follow resume optimization strategies?

While success rates are hard to quantify, job seekers who optimize their resumes to highlight relevant skills and experiences have a better chance of passing Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS). Although this approach can increase the likelihood of being shortlisted for interviews, success also depends on interview performance, cultural fit, and competition.

How do resume optimization strategies apply to more creative fields?

In creative industries, candidates should include portfolio links, project examples and testimonials that showcase their creativity and success. In addition to using keywords and aligning with job descriptions, they should also highlight their problem-solving skills, innovative thinking, and ability to contribute to projects in a meaningful way. By doing so, they can stand out as a dynamic and

creative individual capable of bringing unique value to the role.

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Upskilling while you sleep? AKA The world of hypnagogic learning

Here's how to fight age bias against your job application!

43. Title: Interview Questions

Jul 5, 2023

Answering The Common Interview Questions Tell Me About Yourself

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More ?

Content: Introduction

The standard getting-to-know-you interview question "Tell me about yourself" can be daunting to even the most seasoned job seeker. Unfortunately, most fail to answer it properly because they struggle to find the right words. Despite its simplicity, "Tell me about yourself" requires a delicate balance between being concise yet informative, as well as honest but not too personal.

By planning ahead with clear examples of your qualifications and experience aligned with the role you're applying for, you can easily set the tone for a positive interview with a thoughtful and engaging response.

Common variations of this question

Before we dive into how to answer this question, let's become au fait with its variations. Because different recruiters may have their own forms of the same question. For example:

"Walk me through your experience?"

"Describe who you are professionally?"

"Tell me a little bit more about your background?"

"Share a bit about yourself?"

"I'd love to learn more about your journey,?"

"Describe yourself.?"

Potayto, potato. They're all the same potato, metaphorically speaking.

Why do hiring managers ask this question?

Hiring managers ask this question for a few reasons. Firstly, it helps them gain better insight into your professional background and capabilities to gauge if you're a strong fit. Secondly (and this is important to know from an interview psychology perspective), passing the "strong fit" assessment as they quietly sit back and weigh up your response is crucial to the rest of the interview going well. After all, if you aren't perceived as a strong candidate at this stage, the remaining questions may be a mere formality to the interviewer.

Why so many interviewees fail to answer the question properly

1. No clear understanding of what the recruiter wants to hear

When you're asked the "Tell me about yourself" question, remember that it's being asked to get a better understanding of your professional experience and qualifications as they relate to the role. The interviewer also wants to gain insight into how you think and communicate. So, before the interview, closely study the job description summary and essential criteria. Then, formulate a 60-second response that mirrors what they're looking for (don't repeat it word for word, of course). Concisely touch upon any relevant education, work history, accomplishments, and other experiences that demonstrate why you reflect their needs. By the way, while it can be tempting to talk about hobbies or private life matters, don't. Stick to business during the interview.

2. Lack of preparation and research before the interview

You might feel confident enough to wing the interview without preparation. One word: don't. Experienced recruiters can see right through it, and won't be impressed by your lack of specific detail. So, familiarize yourself with the company, interviewers, and requirements of the role you're applying for before going to the interview. Make notes about how your experience and skills meet these. Another smart step is to identify any gaps in your experience or knowledge related to the position beforehand, and come up with answers that positively address these. By taking time beforehand to prepare, you'll always have a well-rounded response to this question.

3. Mistaking "Tell me about yourself" for a personal vs professional question

If you're not prepared for this type of question, it can be easy to mistake it for a personal one. Although you might have a very interesting life outside of work, what the interviewer wants to know at this early stage of your relationship is what you'd be like as a colleague. Now's not the time to share details of your partner, kids, pets, or hobbies (as fascinating as these may be). Instead, give them a very concise overview of your professional experience, skills, qualifications, and accomplishments as they specifically relate to this role. Save the details about your expert brownie making skills for a later interview.

4. Not tailoring your answer to the job offer you're applying for

As mentioned in #3, it's super important to tailor your answer to the role, company, and culture you're applying to. Instead of giving a generic answer that could be used for any old job interview, customize it based on the position and organization. Highlight your strengths as they relate to the role by mentioning skills or experiences that demonstrate how you can contribute to the team (remember, they're not only an interviewer; they're a potential future colleague). Additionally, emphasize your enthusiasm for the future role and organization by referencing any research that you may have done about them, linked back to their job description requirements. By tailoring your response, you'll stand out from other candidates and underline why you're a great match.

5. Not knowing your audience

If you really want to up the ante, research your interviewers to learn more about who'll be on the other side of the table. Understanding their backgrounds and motives allows you to adjust your answers based on what they're likely seeking. For example, if you're having a panel interview and an HR member asks you a question, giving an HR-angled response will speak their language. This can help create a more meaningful dialogue during the interview, as well as give you the opportunity to even more conclusively show why you're a great fit for the organization.

6. Providing too much irrelevant detail about your career history

On the flip side of structuring a concise yet comprehensive answer is going overboard on the latter. When answering the "Tell me about yourself" question, avoid giving too much detail at this stage. Focus specifically on what's most relevant for the role you're applying for. Taking them on a guided

tour of all your experiences or accomplishments can be viewed by the interviewer as a side-tracking. Instead, focus on experiences that specifically and concisely draw links between your knowledge/skills and the position. Doing so will help keep the interviewer's attention and give them a conclusive understanding of why you're qualified for this role.

Sample Answers

The following sample answers can be used for inspiration to help you effectively answer the question "Tell me about yourself". Please note: these are only examples. Adapt your answer to the real interview, based on your background and experience as well as the position you're applying for.

Example Answer #1 - Sales Manager

"I'm a Sales Manager with 6 years of experience in the SaaS solutions sphere. In my most recent role, I led a team of 6 across 2 locations, plus 15 indirect reports in 4 other locations. Similar to your job description, I've led cross-functional teams through all stages of the sales lifecycle. Despite the pandemic, I personally increased our revenue by 25% in the EMEA region in 2021. My ability to quickly build strong B2B relationships has helped me close deals at twice the rate of my peers. In fact, I exceed my targets over 90% of the time. On top of that, my expertise in managing complex SaaS projects to very tight deadlines is closely aligned to the essential requirements for this job."

Example Answer #2 - Financial Controller

"I'm a Financial Controller with a Master of Finance and 10 years of Fortune 500 experience, including five as Controller. Mirroring your needs, I've been responsible for the successful delivery and management of large-scale financial operations, including budgeting, forecasting, auditing, and cash flow. Something I'm particularly good at is identifying potential cost savings while enhancing service quality. For example, last year I saved over \$250K by automating some of our manual processes and reallocating certain resources. I won a couple of internal awards for those efforts. I'm looking for similar freedom to innovate in my next role, which is what attracted me to your job description."

Example Answer #3 - HR Manager

I'm an HR Manager with a Master's in HR and both the SHRM and HRCI qualifications from CIPD. I have 7 years of experience working with start-ups, so I'm super familiar with the process of implementing foundational policies and procedures, establishing a coherent work environment, and fluidly scaling upwards as we expand. In my current role at Kemp Industries, I've handled all aspects of HR from our beginnings with 3 employees through to the current team of 103. What attracted me to your role is the need for an HR Director who's familiar with the complex, rapidly evolving people environment of start-ups and who can help you to smoothly get established. I'd love to be a part of that!

Sample Answer #4 - Online Marketing Manager

I'm a Marketing Manager with 8 years of digital marketing experience in the luxury fashion & lifestyle spheres. Exactly like in your job description, I'm a natural storyteller and digital native who loves producing captivating digital content about fashion, the arts, travel, lifestyle, luxury, and culture. Actually, my current company just won an award for a really cool campaign I did all the content for. I'm really proud about that. I'd be happy to send you a link if you like. So as you can imagine, I love coming up with compelling content ideas, and I really enjoy working in fast-paced environments where I'm producing meticulously crafted text to strict time constraints.

Sample Answer #5 - Software Developer

As a software developer, I've 10 years of experience with different languages and technologies, including Java, Python, C++, and Ruby. I've also recently started working with PHP and Go, which I saw in your job description as nice-to-haves. For the last 5 years, I've been involved in some really cool game development projects, including Legends of Asria for Lucka Games. In my spare time, I take part in loads of hackathons to keep up with the latest trends and technologies in the industry.

Conclusion

When armed with the right tips, answering common interview questions such as "Tell me about yourself" is a breeze! You'll be able to highlight your experiences and qualifications for the role, as well as flaunt your communication and interpersonal skills. With some planning and practice, you can make yourself more noticeable than other applicants and ultimately increase your chances of

getting hired much more quickly.

Good luck with your future role!

Related questions

How can I effectively incorporate my non-professional interests or hobbies into my answer?

Including your non-professional interests or hobbies in your answer to "Tell me about yourself?" question during a job interview can make you memorable. Briefly mention interests that demonstrate qualities relevant to the job or company culture, like participation in team sports, keeping it concise and complementary to your professional narrative.

How do I tailor my answer for a career change or if I have gaps in my employment?

Use the "Tell me about yourself?" question to proactively and positively address career change or gaps in employment. Focus on relevant skills gained during the transition or period of unemployment. Emphasize your enthusiasm and fresh perspectives. Be honest but brief about the gaps, highlighting productive use of the time to upskill, volunteer, or undertake projects to prepare for the next step in your career.

How to adjust the "Tell me about yourself?" answer for different levels of experience?

Tailoring the "Tell me about yourself?" response to different career stages requires a nuanced approach. Entry-level candidates should focus on education, internships, and relevant projects. Mid-career professionals can highlight key achievements and demonstrate expertise. Senior professionals can provide an overview of significant milestones and leadership experiences, focusing on strategic insights and vision for the future.

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Jun 16, 2023

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Culture fit is the idea that the "ideal" employee possesses a set of behaviors, values, and beliefs that align with the organization's own.

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Content: What is culture fit - and why is everyone talking about it?

Culture fit is the idea that the "ideal" employee possesses a set of behaviors, values, and beliefs that align with the organization's own.

If both have similar preferences, then employees typically perform better and stay longer.

This is why many companies put a lot of effort into defining their culture, showcasing their values, and attracting like-minded people. Finding great fits can slash their long-term hiring budget and help retain loyal, motivated workers.

If you've ever heard a business describing itself as fast-paced, transparent, inclusive, challenging, progressive, and so on ? that's corporate culture. Closely linked is the image we have of a typical employee there.

To test this concept, let's play a little game.

Google

Goldman Sachs

Chrysler

Tesla &

NASA

KPMG

When you read each of the names above, a mental image of the stereotypical "employee" probably

sprang to mind.

For example, if I say NASA, you might picture a nerdy, driven, collaborative person used to working hard and being passionate about very long-term end goals. Google? You're probably imagining a brainy, youthful, casually dressed "Googler" solving complex digital challenges in between ping pong and massages.

It's not enough to assume one-culture-fits-all

When you're looking for a new job, most people apply to anything and everything. They leave the guesswork about the company's culture to the interview stage or beyond. Or never think of it at all.

Time and time again, it's been proven that productivity and performance generally increase when everyone's on the same page. You're also more likely to stay longer if you're working in an environment that reflects what's important to you.

That's why you need to assess the company's culture before applying. What's the point of considering a business that has a "work hard, play hard" mentality if you value a more relaxed approach?

Now that it's clear why culture fit is crucial in your job search, how do you figure out which companies you're a great fit for?

3 ways to identify the company's true culture

1. Assess their values

Most companies publish these on their website, usually in the career portal or "About" section. Their values give loads of insight into what type of culture they promote.

For example, Amazon is well-known for pushing its people to be super productive and take risks. Just doing what you were hired to do isn't going to fly. You have to be constantly thinking about the next big idea. When you take a look at their values, it's all there.

They are:

Customer Obsession

Ownership

Invent and Simplify

Learn and Be Curious

Hire the Best

The Highest Standards

Think Big

Bias for Action

Earn Trust; and

Deliver Results

Amazon's values scream loud and clear that they demand hard work and big results. If you're looking for a laid-back workplace, this probably isn't it.

2. Check out employee review sites such as Glassdoor.

These are great platforms to learn what it's really like to work there. Of course, take the most negative and positive reviews with a pinch of salt. Look at the majority experience to get an overall feel.

3. Finally, ask culture-related questions during the job interview.

For example, ask "From your perspective, what's it like to work here?" or "How would you describe the company's culture?". If the interviewer tell you, "We all work hard here, but we also play hard?", that probably means they pull long hours in a tense environment, then party hard on Friday night. Is that a great fit for you? Or would you run the other way?

By learning more about the company's culture before applying, you could save yourself months or even years spent in an environment that won't deliver career satisfaction.

Interested in learning more? Check out these fantastic resources by JobLeads:

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[How do companies measure or evaluate culture fit during the hiring process?](#)

[Companies evaluate culture fit during the hiring process, using specific language in job postings and](#)

asking questions during interviews about values, behaviors, and work style alignment. Behavioral interview questions, hypothetical workplace scenarios, and questions about past work experiences are common methods used to gauge culture fit. Some companies involve multiple team members in the interview process for a broad perspective on candidate integration.

Can a company's culture change over time, and how does this affect employees who were initially a good fit?

A company's culture can indeed change over time due to various factors such as leadership changes, significant growth or downsizing, or shifts in the external business environment. Such changes may affect employees who were initially a good culture fit, potentially leading to reduced job satisfaction or alignment with the company's new direction. Companies can undertake change management strategies to help employees adapt to the new culture, emphasizing communication, training, and support to facilitate the transition.

Are there any potential downsides to prioritizing culture fit in the hiring process?

Prioritizing cultural compatibility in hiring can lead to a lack of diversity and unconscious bias. While aligning with the company's values is important, being too strict with cultural fit can exclude valuable candidates. Balancing cultural compatibility with a commitment to diversity is crucial for a dynamic and inclusive workplace.

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