



Job Search Dos and Don'ts - How to find the RIGHT JOB

We all want to find the RIGHT JOB but most of us have not been taught how to do this. Typically, we have learned how to find A JOB and are usually successful. I have interviewed thousands of people for positions as varied as a delivery truck driver to administrative assistant to CEO; in my experience, people looking for new employment frequently have overlooked some simple factors that could make their work life fulfilling and rewarding on many levels.

1. Not being honest with yourself about the quality of life you seek
2. Not selling yourself in your resume
3. Not being prepared for interviews
4. Making decisions based on money alone

Most of the people I speak with who are looking for a job have either been laid off due to economic issues at their company, burned out due to overwork or feel they are not being properly compensated for the work they do. In the process of my interviews I try to help people clearly identify the work/life balance they are seeking and how they want to be compensated for that work/life balance. Some of the most important factors are obvious: commute time, amount of travel, benefits provided, telecommuting opportunities or home officing.

What many people fail to truly identify is the kind of environment they thrive in, and as with all things related to people there is no right answer. Some people thrive in demanding, deadline-driven environments with very strict guidelines while others do their best work in loosely-defined, entrepreneurial organizations with a goal to hit and free reign to achieve it. Critically looking at your past employment and dissecting the environments where you did your best work, because that ultimately is where people are happiest, is a key step to finding the next right job.

When we do know what kind of job we want to target, we then need to craft our resume to sell our experience. You must include numbers! My clients are looking for people who can generate revenue or create savings. If you can include concrete numbers that you can back up then your resume will get to the top of the stack. Compare the following: "created operational efficiency in call center" with "implemented new call center equipment and procedures resulting in 40% phone cost savings and reducing call wait times from 4 minutes to less than 25 seconds" or "strong salesperson with long standing client relationships" with "sales professional who has averaged over 200% of quota for the last five years with C-Level contacts in Fortune 1000 accounts". Which do you think will give you the best response from your targeted potential employer? We have been taught to be modest - this is a time to clearly state your accomplishments so you can find the job you want.

Now that you have attracted the interest of a hiring manager in a company for whom you want to work, you have to make a strong impression. The most important part here is to be honest in your interview. We all have the tendency to interview to get the job - to say whatever we think the hiring manager wants us to say; this sets us up for failure. I have interviewed so many people and I can tell when this is happening. It was and is the biggest turn-off for me and it is for many hiring managers. Being honest means being willing to ask questions about how you will fit into the environment, to answer questions about how you like to be managed and in what kind of circumstances you thrive. Also it is critical to be prepared; study the company's website, Google them to learn more about how they are perceived in the marketplace and be ready to ask questions about the company. If you are not prepared, you will be passed over.

So you now have an offer or offers to consider. Unfortunately, we all tend to measure our success by the amount of money we make so we ignore quality of life issues to be successful. But when "success" means that you alienate your friends and family and work becomes an obsession or compulsion, then have we really succeeded? Especially in the economic environment we face now, money can be seductive but I have spoken with many people who felt they gave up part of their souls for a job - I am one of them. Take the time to prioritize why you work and what "success" means to you and that will help you find the right answer. When you are in a job that feeds you on all levels of your life you will feel fulfilled and will not be in a position to burn out or feel you are being taken advantage of.

Most of us have a comfort level with what we have been doing to get jobs in the past. I challenge you to make the time and effort to find a great fit for your life.

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