

Introduction



Congratulations for choosing this book. You've made a great start. You may have decided to find a new job, or you may have had no choice – you were laid off, moved or have some other reason to look elsewhere for work. Whether you chose the change or were forced into it, people at all levels have used the opportunity of a career transition to find the job of their dreams. Maybe you can, too.

You may feel positive and looking forward to a change one minute and down in the dumps the next. These feelings are normal. When you take some action in your job search, you'll start seeing new opportunities and feeling more optimistic and confident of finding a new job. Sometimes that may mean just taking your clothes to the cleaner to be ready for the next interview. Other times it may mean going to a networking event. Eventually you'll find a job.

Getting Help

One of the most important activities for finding a new job is networking – finding as many of the right people who can lead you to your next job as possible. If you don't know what you're looking for in your next job, avoid broadcasting your availability far and wide until you've had a chance to define your career goals and formulate a job search strategy.

But once you are clear and focused, ask for the help you need. There are dozens, possibly hundreds, of people who are willing to help you. Some you know now and others you'll meet in the job search process. The clearer you are about what help you need, the easier it is for people to help you. This is no time to be timid about asking for what you want.

While you may expect family and friends to be helpful and supportive, be aware that the opposite is also possible. They may be worried for their own

reasons about you not having a job and can't really be there to help you. They may, in fact, be negative influences on you, draining you of optimism and the energy you need to focus on your job search. Explain to them the actions you are taking and reassure them that you WILL find a new job. Ask for their support, and, if they can't give it, spend as little time as possible around them.

Join or create a job search support team that will be there for you. Most large cities have organizations that sponsor job search groups and state-supported agencies also have such resources. Check your local telephone directory or search online for one near you. Check out Barbara Sher's book, *Wishcraft* ASIN: 0345340892, for ideas about starting a success team.

How long will it take?

There's no one answer for this question. The two things that make a difference are your attitude and how hard you work at your job search. If you are a pessimistic person and everyone can see that in your behavior and your negative talk, your job search will take longer. Also, if you are putting in 20 hours a week only answering ads and waiting for phone calls, your job search will take a lot longer! Think and act positively and work hard AND smart, spending time doing the job search activities that have a high return – research, networking, writing effective cover letters and résumés, and interviewing well.

You WILL get a job -- it's just a matter of how long it will take. If you truly want to work, you will find a job, guaranteed. It may not be your ideal job, but all jobs can teach you something. And a paycheck will put food on the table. If it's not your ideal job, keep looking and networking with all the new contacts you'll be meeting in your new position.

The Real Reason You Get Hired

You may be the perfect candidate on paper, with every skill a job requires, yet you don't get an offer. People hire people they know and like. This may not seem fair, but since the people hiring you probably have to spend a lot of time with you, they want to like you. Of course they won't say, "I just don't like you, so I won't hire you." Instead, they'll say something like, "We've found another candidate who's a better fit for the position."

So what can you do about this? Since people hire people they "know," it's important for you to become "known." You do this through networking. If someone can recommend you to someone else, you've become known and you're no longer just a stranger who sent in a résumé. (The value of effective networking can't be emphasized enough. It's probably THE most important factor in getting a job.)

You can also work at being "likeable." In interviews, be positive, look interested, smile and nod on occasion, and take notes. Try to recognize common thoughts or points of view. If you're interviewing with a team, try to establish good rapport with each of the members. If you hear something like, "I like your thinking." or "Just what I would've done." then you stand a good chance of being invited back for another round of interviews. Look around. Are you like the other people in the department, the company? If so, again there's a good chance you'll be invited back.

Once you're hired keep looking for things you have in common with your co-workers and stay upbeat. If this seems like too much work, it's probably not the right place for you to be working. Keep interviewing until the "fit" seems right. (Or take the job and keep your eyes and ears open for another position that will be a better match for your skills and style.)

Step 1: Preparation

Taking the First Steps

The first steps to finding a good job fit are to learn about yourself. With that knowledge you can then look for the kinds of jobs that match your interests, use your skills, are in alignment with your values and match your personality.

Discovering Your Interests

If you're unemployed, it might seem like a luxury you can't afford, but taking the time to find out what you really want to do, your "calling," does make sense. For one thing, you'll be more focused in your research of what companies or organizations to work for. And you have a much better chance of aceing the interview because you'll be talking with passion. Even if it seems like a long shot, you'll still be ahead if you take the time to discover your passion.

How to go about it? Here are some ideas to get you started. Take some time to answer these questions in the space provided.

- ▶ If you could teach courses on any subject, at any level, what subjects would you teach?

- ▶ If you had \$1,000,000 to invest in 3 business ventures, what kinds of business(es) would you invest in?

- ▶ If you were to produce a documentary film, what would the subject be?