

Top 10 Job Search Tips

(Thanks to Lori Kennedy, Director of Alumni Career Solutions and Director of Faculty Dual Career Assistance Program at Lehigh University Alumni Association for sharing these tips)

Job Searching strategies:

- Use multiple strategies – Incorporating multiple strategies effectively utilizes your precious job search time and can increase your success.
- Target your companies - Target companies based on industry, geographic location, size and by other personal and professional preferences. This will help you focus your search and your networking efforts.
- Pace yourself in your job search – A search can take 6-9 months. Managing the time you spend on your search can help you avoid burn out and decrease your frustration. If you are employed, spend 6-8 hours per week on your search. If you are unemployed, spend 20-25 hours per week. Give yourself weekly measureable and achievable goals to keep you on task.

Resume writing:

- Create a distinctive professional summary – On your resume, the professional summary is the most read portion. Your professional summary will include: your professional identity, your expertise, the types of organizations/environments in which you have worked, and your unique strengths that differentiate you from others in your field.
- Load your professional summary with keywords. Use a key word section, which is a short 2- or 3-column list of skills with no descriptions. When developing your list of keywords - think "hard" skills, not soft skills - 80% of all resumes are placed into a resume database and hiring managers will search on mandatory keywords. This list of keywords will help your resume to be retrieved during a keyword search.
- Write an accomplishment-focused resume. Employers are not interested in what you routinely did in your last job, but what you accomplished, how you contributed, and how you successfully affected the bottom line. Be specific and quantify these accomplishments when possible.

Networking:

- Network! – It is the most effective way to job search. Over 75% of positions are obtained via networking. Start with your friends, colleagues, family, and co-workers to begin creating your network. Ask your network for referrals to help you build it and maintain contact with your network. Gain the trust of your networking contacts by helping *them* with advice, information, and providing them with potential leads for

positions and/or candidates for their openings. If they trust you, they are more apt to help you.

- Target your network – Using the targeted company list you created, begin seeking networking contacts in those specific companies. By targeting your network, you can tap into the hidden job market.
- Network online and in person – It's easy (and important) to use LinkedIn and other professional networking sites for networking, but remember to take advantage of and create opportunities to talk with people face to face.

Interviewing:

- Prepare for interviews – Be prepared for the behavioral interview by providing specific examples on how your skills and competencies fit the job and the organization. Research the company and the industry. Prepare questions to ask so you can determine if the job and organization is a right fit for you, too!
- Follow up – In all levels of your search, a best practice is to follow up. When you apply for a position, follow up with the hiring manager. When you conduct an informational interview, follow up with a thank you and keep your interviewees in the loop throughout your search. When you meet someone of interest at a networking event, follow up in a timely manner. When you complete an interview, follow up with a thank you to all with whom you interviewed. Closing the loop in all of these areas is key in demonstrating your interest in your field, a position, and/or a specific company.