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To Sum It Up
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Introduction

When applying for a graduate job or seeking career advancement, you need to approach your job search or promotion in the most sensible and efficient manner. The first step of any job search or upward move is to clarify your career goals so that you are able to launch a targeted campaign. Targeted search means that you have identified select industries or positions where you will focus your search efforts.

These may be difficult economic times but there are definite strategies you can employ to launch an ultimately successful job search. Below are six factors that often lead to success:

• **Stay Positive:** Maintaining a positive attitude throughout your search will attract other people to your cause, however hard it may seem at times.

• **Take Time to Prepare Thoroughly:** Do not rush throughout the process but take it one step at a time and keep organized (see specific tips below in this e-book). It may seem that by doing so your search will take longer, but in the end, steady progress can result in obtaining a new job sooner than those who do not take sufficient time to prepare.

• **Revise and Refine:** As you progress in your search you will find that you are able to revise and refine your technique; e.g. learn how to effectively network using social media.

• **Be Persistent:** Rejection will likely happen but persistent effort will result in a new job at some point.

• **Be Proactive:** Create a job search calendar with milestones every week for what you hope to accomplish. Record every activity online, in a journal or notebook and mark off as each is completed as this will provide you with a sense of progress.

• **Enlist Help:** This is no time to go it alone. Reach out to your colleagues, associates, family, and friends and let them know of your job search campaign. Realize that everyone you meet or come into contact with is a potential lead for a new job.
INITIAL STEPS

With so many tasks ahead of you it can be hard to know where to begin. Listed below are several steps that will help you get off to a productive start:

• **Engage in a comprehensive self-assessment** of significant career-related factors, such as your major strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, skill-set, and accomplishments.

• **Create your marketing materials** (cover letter and CV) at the start of your search.

• **Develop your personal branding strategy** as it will enable you to uniquely position yourself in the job market.

• **Network in-person and online** to for support and to expand your range of connections.

• **“Recruit”** two or three trusted colleagues or friends as advisors throughout the search.

• **Join or maintain your membership in various online networking groups** on LinkedIn and elsewhere and attend their real world events regularly.

• **Practice psychometric tests** and related **aptitude tests** on a regular basis; you can find lots of **free verbal reasoning tests** and various forms of resources online.

• **Attend as many social functions as your schedule permits.** Do not isolate since it is important to meet people who can possibly assist with your search.

• **Enroll in continuing education courses,** many of these online, to update your knowledge and skills and these to you CV.

• **Stay current in your field** by reading **career books** and subscribing to industry-based journals.

• **Have fun; continue to participate in activities you enjoy** as this will help alleviate some of the stress of job search.

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ORGANISE YOUR SEARCH

A **job search** is composed of many parts so that organisation is critical to eventual success. Before commencing your search in earnest, organize your space to maximize focus and productivity. Designate space in your home or apartment as a “job search office”, which can be a corner in the hall or a desk in your working room. The “office” needs to be separate from areas of high activity such as the TV in the living room which can lead to disruption. Be disciplined by creating a job search schedule and adhering to it. **Finding a job is a full time job in and of itself** and needs to be treated as such. For example, set a time to begin each day, when to take breaks and when to stop. Alert family and friends of your schedule and ask that they respect your privacy. Enlist their support by discussing the progress of your search and asking for their input.

If you have a laptop and cell phone, you might also consider setting up a quasi-office in the nearest library, many of which have a wireless Internet connection at no charge. This method can serve three primary purposes: 1) it allows you to work in a quiet environment so you can focus on your search; 2) it provides the “feel” of a commute as you have an outside destination (important for those who are not currently employed); and 3) it can relieve the sense of isolation you may feel by staying inside a room or curtained-off area during the day.

**Finding a job is a full time job in and of itself**

By going out to the library or perhaps even a small office you rent for the duration of your job search you are acting “as if” you are working. **There is a saying that by behaving “as if” an event has already occurred in our lives, we are much likely to make it happen.** A **successful job search** truly is all about mind-set!

This eBook will provide a total of 99 tips on various aspects of **successful job search**. Most of the principles discussed are universal in nature, although industry specific examples are inserted where appropriate. Use the tips as jumping-off points for commencing your search.
Section One

THE COVER LETTER (10 TIPS)

1. Different types of cover letters serve different purposes

Select the style of cover letter appropriate for your situation. There are basically four types of cover letters:

i. **Application letter** to apply for a specific job opening.

ii. **Referral cover letters** indicates the name of the person who referred you to the job (warm referral).

iii. **Letter of interest** (aka prospecting letter) is suitable to inquire about possible job openings.

iv. **Networking letters** request assistance and advice with regard to your job search.

2. Targeted cover letters highlight why you are a good candidate for the position

Targeted cover letters address the specifics of each job and highlight how your background and accomplishments make you uniquely qualified for the role. They also show that you have researched the company to some extent which most employers will appreciate.

3. Getting personal is important

Before sending the letter, try to determine the name of the hiring manager so you can address this person directly.

4. Warm referrals can get you in the door.

If you were referred to the position by a mutual colleague or someone known to both you and the hiring manager (a warm referral), by all means mention this in your cover letter. Having a mutual contact makes it much more likely that the **hiring manager** will meet you. One caveat: make sure that this contact is someone the hiring manager respects and gets along with.

5. Common salutations can be used when you don’t have the hiring manager’s name

Creating a salutation for your letter can be tricky when you are responding to a “blind advert.” Employers who responded to a recent employer survey\(^1\) by Saddleback College recommend the following:

i. “Dear Hiring Manager;” (38%)

ii. “To Whom it May Concern;” (26%)

iii. “Dear Sir/Madam;” (18%)

iv. “Dear Human Resources Director:” (9.5%)

v. Leave it blank (8%)

\(^1\) [www.saddleback.edu/jobs/documents/2010OrangeCountyResumeSurveyfullpresentation.pdf](http://www.saddleback.edu/jobs/documents/2010OrangeCountyResumeSurveyfullpresentation.pdf)
6. Content is king when preparing cover letters

The body of your cover letter summarizes what position you are applying for; how you are uniquely qualified for the role; and how you will follow-up with the employer after submission. The three sections of your cover letter include:

- **Introductory paragraph:** reason for writing (position applied for). For example, “This letter is to indicate my interest in the position of junior management consultant.”

- **2nd and 3rd paragraphs:** Summary of your skills and accomplishments (use bullet or numbered lists), always linked to the **vacancy** the company is seeking to fulfill and detailing why your skill set would satisfy their need. For example, “With ten years of company-based human resource generalist expertise, I believe that the knowledge, skills and abilities I have developed to date will prove to be a strong asset to your new HR consultancy business line.”

- **Closing:** Offer to discuss your background and the position in greater detail and clarify how you will follow-up. For example, “I welcome the opportunity to further discuss my background and qualifications for this opportunity and will telephone you next Friday, July 11th to follow-up on this submission.”

7. The goal of your cover letter is to complement your CV not repeat it

Your cover letter is a marketing tool used to portray your “unique selling proposition” to potential employers. Suggested strategies:

- Write in a conversational tone to convey warmth and friendliness

- Always mention how you heard of the **job opening** (job board, mutual colleague, etc.) For example, “This is in response to the opportunity of Grants Officer with [insert organisation name] as posted to the www.careergym.com website.”

- Use concrete examples to highlight how your background and qualifications will enable you to meet with a high level of success. For example, “With over 10 years experience in the area of supply change management, I am confident of my ability to find cost-efficient technologies from a variety of suppliers.”
8. **Cover letter presentation** is a close second to the content you create

To better ensure that your letter will be read in its entirety, use some simple formatting to help make it reader-friendly. Considerations such as font type (Arial or Times New Roman), font size (12 pt), and bullet / numbered lists to highlight accomplishments help the reader to quickly grasp the essential points of your professional history.

9. **Use your letter to be proactive in explaining any employment gap**

If there is a gap in your employment history, whether due to a job lay-off, taking time off to care for a family member, or a return to school, your cover letter provides the vehicle in which to explain this gap. This explanation needn’t be very lengthy, perhaps just a sentence or two. For example, “I am proud of my accomplishments with [name of organisation] and resigned so that I may pursue an advanced certification on a full-time basis. Indeed, my record of achievement was a significant factor in providing me the motivation to continue my studies.”

10. **Be sure to follow employer instructions when submitting email cover letters**

*Email submission is very common but be careful to follow the employer’s directions.*

i. If the job posting instructs you to include your cover letter and CV as an attachment, create a Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF, or plain text file.

ii. If you are instructed to type your cover letter in the body of the email message, use a simple font and 12 pt type and remove all formatting. Don’t insert any HTML text.
Section Two

CREATING A KILLER CV (22 TIPS)

It is advisable to tailor your CV to the specific needs of each position that apply for.

1. The purpose of your CV must be clear and match the goals of the position

As with your cover letter, it is advisable to tailor your CV to the specific needs of each position that apply for. For example, you will highlight your skill set and accomplishments differently depending on whether you are applying for a legal affairs position with a trade association, a call centre, an educational institution, a teaching employment or a medical job.

2. Market your CV as a problem-solving tool

One strategy for tailoring your CV to the needs of the employer is to identify a problem that the employer is seeking to solve by filling the vacant position. Many times, important hints may be found within the job description itself. Once you have identified any problem areas, tailor your CV to illustrate how your background and skills will enable you to work through these challenges. For example, “With 15 years experience as an Administrative Project Officer, I am confident that I will be able to effectively streamline improve, and harmonize processes between administrative and research staff to foster improved flow of communication and operational efficiency.”

3. For maximum effect your CV should be based on needs and list the specific accomplishments rather than simple responsibilities

Rather than just listing your responsibilities, mention specific accomplishments that are relevant to the available position. If you seek an advocacy-based job, highlight other work you have performed in this area even if with another type organisation as skill sets developed in one area are often transferable to another within an allied niche. For example, “Maintained and managed existing business partnerships and alliances by identifying and developing new strategic collaborations with Tetra Pak and other providers that directly contributed to a better quality for the company’s soft drinks products.”

4. Use PAR statements for accomplishments

Present your work accomplishments as PAR statements: state the problem, action you took, and result of that action. This strategy gets across your most relevant experience in a succinct yet effective manner. For example, “Initiated an employee absenteeism monitoring program for 325 salaried employees which reduced overall absences 62% over the first year of implementation.” (Problem: high employee absence; Action; monitoring program; Result, reduced incidence by 62%).
5. Focus your CV for maximum effectiveness

To be effective, your CV must have a clear focus. It should show logical progression in your career-to-date. One strategy is to include a Professional Objective section at the top of your CV to provide clear indication of your career goals. This section may be amended for each job you apply to.

6. Attention to detail is essential to successful CV writing

Although you want to capture all of your skills and accomplishments, don’t neglect the basics of good CV writing. Start your CV with a heading that includes your name, address, phone number and email. All should be one type size larger than the remainder of the content and thoroughly proof-read to avoid typos.

7. In a computerised screening era, keywords can make or break a CV

Keywords are typically nouns and verbs, but they can represent any concept or term that the employer is seeking in the candidates’ CV. To determine the relevant keywords for your career goals, simply review position descriptions within your field of interest and note the words that most commonly appear. Read Tapping the Power of Keywords to Enhance your resume (CV’s) Effectiveness to learn more about strategies for using keywords.

8. Avoid the use of pronouns when creating your CV

Your CV should not contain such pronouns as “I” or “me” as it is already assumed that the person performing the actions noted is yourself. Most sentences under job titles should begin with an action verb, adjective, or noun such as “Implemented a new numerical reasoning test method in the HR department”. Although this may seem awkward, it is generally accepted practice with CV writing.

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9. Analyzing job adverts will help you understand the ideal candidate profile for any given role

By analyzing the job adverts for your industry you will be able to develop a sense of the ideal candidate profile. Don’t only peruse the adverts for one company but for different companies so that you are able to develop a comprehensive candidate profile. You can then tailor your CV to reflect these candidate preferences.

10. Your CV needs to capture the attention of a hiring manager in less than 10 seconds

During a first read-through, hiring managers typically scan your CV for about 10 seconds looking for appropriate experience and accomplishments. Be strategic with regard to choice of job titles, being as descriptive as possible in 5 words or less. The goal is to provide sufficient information about the nature of your prior job experience. For example:

**Poor job title:** Project Officer

**Effective Job title:** Project Officer – Information Management and Information Processing

11. Avoid the Europass CV format

Unless specifically required to use Europass CV format, use an intuitive, maximum two-page long CV that is straight-forward and indicates your linguistic knowledge in a way that employers understand (instead of ‘C1’ or ‘B2’, simply put ‘fluent’, ‘advanced’ or other adjectives that don’t need a legend to de-code).

12. Proper formatting is critical in ensuring your CV makes it past an initial read-through

Because CVs are scanned for a short period during a first reading, strategic CV formatting will allow you to highlight your most relevant accomplishments. These accomplishments should be placed within the first 2 or 3 lines under every job title in a bullet-point format using only the most relevant keywords.
13. Format your CV for e-mail

Apart from having a Word version of your CV as an attachment, you should also prepare a plain text or PDF version for submission in the body of an email or paste into an online application form. This ensures that the content is not altered and can be read by the receiving party in the intended format.

14. Presentation can be the deciding factor regarding whether your CV is read

Hiring managers typically don’t like to plod through densely packed content or font size that is too small (nor are they overly fond of all caps). Font size should be 12 point using either Arial or Times New Roman. Spacing should be 1.15 between each bullet point of the same section but 2.0 between different section headings.

15. Stressing benefits improves your chances of getting the job

The candidate who can most clearly state the benefits they will bring to a potential employer is the one most likely to get the job. Rather than just list your skills, state how they can be utilised to benefit the company in some way. For example, “Awarded over GBP 2,000,000 in both private and public funding on behalf of various charities for projects ranging from the building of community health clinics to implementation of IT systems.”

16. Numbers speak louder than words

When listing your accomplishment, try to use quantitative data and figures to verify the information you provide. Numbers tend to carry more weight than words alone as they give more meaning to your accomplishments and are easier to spot during an initial scan. For example, “Developed and implemented a quality control procedure which resulted in a 34% decrease in department errors.”

17. Action verbs grab attention

Action verbs grab the attention of the reader and clearly communicate your experience and accomplishments. Examples include managed, developed, implemented, planned, created, etc.
18. Update your CV and LinkedIn profile regularly so you may apply to relevant jobs quickly

It is a good idea to update your CV and online profile on a regular basis as you complete any training, receive promotions, or add new skills. In this way you will be able to submit your current CV in a timely manner for any relevant job openings.

19. Technical jargon can actually hurt rather than help

While you do want to highlight your knowledge and ability to do the job, avoid the use of overly technical jargon in your CV unless it is obvious for everyone in that industry. Think about the fact, however, that the first person in human resources who reads your CV might not have any technical expertise and be confused by the technical verbiage.

20. Brevity is the key to successful CV writing

The goal with CV writing is to state all essential information in a clear and succinct manner. CVs that run to 3 or more pages are likely to be passed over since hiring managers rarely have time to read a document of that length in any detail.

21. You can avoid age discrimination on your CV

Most experts agree that you need not go back longer than 15 years with regard to your work experience or education.

22. Failing to proof is almost certainly proof of failure!

Even the best CV ever written will be discarded immediately when it contains poor spelling and grammar. Since it can be hard to proofread your own work, have a second pair of eyes review your CV for mistakes before sending it to any employer.
Section Three

COMPLETING (PAPER) JOB APPLICATIONS (12 TIPS)

1. Hard copies are important also for a job interview

At the time of your job interview be sure you have brought along all appropriate documents, such as your CV, the names address and phone numbers of prior employers starting/ending salaries of prior jobs, along with phone numbers of references.

2. Follow the instructions carefully

Before you start to complete a paper based job application, take a few minutes to review each section so you know what information will be required and how the questions are laid-out.

3. Neatness and legibility are important

How you complete the application reflects on your candidacy. Be sure to use an erasable blue or black pen or use white-out for simple errors. Do not bend or fold the application.

4. Tailor your answers to the specific job

Just as you did with your cover letter and CV, provide details regarding your academic and technical knowledge, skills and abilities as they related to the needs of the job for which you are applying. Highlight your unique value that sets you apart from other candidates.

5. The job application should be consistent with your CV

Make sure that all job titles, dates of employment, spelling of names, etc. on the application matches the information contained in your CV. It is generally a good idea to have your CV at your side as you complete the application.

6. Answer all questions in the application document

Rather than leave any space blank respond with “not applicable” (NA). Do not write “see CV” but answer each question in full (although you can attach your CV to the application).

7. Do not include damaging information

As with your cover letter and CV, the goal of the application is to highlight your accomplishments and experience. Including any negative information (such as being fired from a job) can only stop your candidacy in its tracks.

8. Always be truthful

The fastest way to be taken out of consideration for a job is to be caught in a lie. However, this does not mean you need to be completely forthcoming either. Admittedly it is a delicate balance to maintain. Many applications ask “the reason for leaving last job”. If you were fired or downsized you might respond that the “job ended”.

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9. Avoid mentioning specific salary requirements

There is no reason to mention your salary requirements this early in the process. Many employers use this question as a screening tool and you don’t want to eliminate yourself from consideration too soon. Best answer is “open to negotiation”.

10. Include references

References are typically past employers, colleagues, teachers, and friends. Be sure to ask if each person is willing to be a reference before listing them and get some idea of what they will say.

11. Proofread your application

Be sure to thoroughly review your application for spelling and grammatical mistakes before submitting. Taking care in completing the application shows that you are detail oriented and respect the hiring process of the employer.

12. Online applications have their own strategy

For the most part, all of the information supplied above can be applied to online applications. Here are two additional considerations:

i. Create a plain text version of your CV to remove all special formatting which may not show clearly if attached as a Word document.

ii. Make sure that all information is accurate and complete before submitting as you likely will not have an opportunity to go back and correct any mistakes.
Section Four

PERSONAL BRANDING FOR JOB SEARCH (10 TIPS)

1. Highlight your unique value with an “elevator pitch”

An elevator pitch is a brief description of those factors that set you apart from other candidates (a special self-promotional selling that could be done in a 30-second lift ride). The goal is to portray your main skills and accomplishments in a concise yet compelling manner. For example, “Successful junior tax consultant with a strong track record of optimising accounts and identifying revenue sources for both large and medium sized enterprises. Most recently helped a large information technology client obtain €530,000 in funding from multiple sources to supply equipment to a community-based healthcare clinic.”

2. Be genuine with high integrity

Successful branding strategy reflects your core values, beliefs, interests and career goals. Core refers to the fact that they form of these traits serve as the foundation of who you are as a person and not likely to be changed by environmental circumstances.

3. Be different from those seeking employment for the same job

Position yourself differently than other candidates searching for a similar role. Simply reflect on your Knowledge, Skills, Abilities (KSAs), interests, goals, and work experience to date. When combined they will provide a unique mosaic of what you, alone, can bring to prospective employers.

4. Be consistent with your own brand

The goal of a brand is to create a consistent image in the minds of prospective employers. For example, your core image may be “conservative,” “causal,” or “creative”. Make sure this image carries through in your dress, language, written communication, layout of your cover letter, CV, and social media profile.
5. Convey your competencies online and offline

Your competencies include your cognitive ability (logical reasoning, mathematical proficiency, excellent abstract reasoning skills or high scores at aptitude tests) communication skills, technical knowledge, etc. that enable you to perform a job successfully. You are also encouraged to upload the PowerPoint presentations you have made to Slideshare.net and link to it in your cover letter or CV.

6. Dress for success

The style of your dress should reflect the type of position you are seeking. For example, those seeking to work within a legal affairs office may dress very differently from those who work in a social service NGO.

7. Showcase your personality offline and online

Your personality is composed of your values, goals interests, and behaviour. This is an important factor as your personality style will likely be closely linked with your preferences regarding corporate culture. This can be done at the job interview, or via a special introductory YouTube video that you share with your future employer.

8. Include your brand on marketing material

Job search marketing material includes your cover letter, CV, and social media profiles. Each needs to convey your unique brand by listing your professional goals, skills, and accomplishments.

9. Be relevant to employer needs

Before you begin your job search in earnest, research the labour market (or ask for such information at a local career office or the career office at a university) and note where the areas of growth tend to be. This will enable you to target your job search campaign toward those areas and highlight how your background makes you uniquely qualified to assume a role within that field.

10. Incorporate branding into your email signature

Your email signature can be a tool for branding as well. You will want to include your current job title and main responsibilities and areas of expertise.

Linda Smith
Investment Banker
Specialization in healthcare and pharmaceutical sectors
Strong experience with health financing instruments and healthcare providers
[recommended: provide link to LinkedIn profile]
Section Five

TRADITIONAL NETWORKING (10 TIPS)

1. **Even today, 60% of new jobs are obtained through networking**

Even today, 60% of new jobs are obtained through networking. People like to work with people they know. For this reason, connecting with leads through “live” networking events can significantly increase your ability of tapping into the “hidden job market.”

2. **Focused networking is the most effective strategy**

Focused networking is the most effective strategy. The most effective networking efforts will come from engaging in focused networking with those within your target industry (or closely allied field) such as colleagues, clients, key opinion leaders, vendors, association members, etc.

3. **To be effective, networking needs to be reciprocal in nature**

Your goal with networking is to establish a reciprocal relationship creating a win-win situation for each party. For example, if you desire to name the hiring manager from a warm referral offer to provide the name of someone within your circle of influence who this contact may find beneficial to know.

4. **Use a tiered approach to identify possible contacts**

i. **Tier 1** — targets within a company such as hiring managers, employees, or consultants;

   ii. **Tier 2** — those who have some relationship with employees of the company: vendors, suppliers, clients, consultants, etc.;

   iii. **Tier 3** — those who have some type of relationship with the hiring manager but limited company knowledge; e.g., colleagues, friends, acquaintances, members of professional associations, social networking contacts.

5. **You can access hiring managers and possible contacts using LinkedIn**

You can easily find hiring managers or specific LinkedIn groups where people in your target industry are exchanging ideas so that you can make your voice heard and gain visibility. This can be then leveraged to solicit offline, real life meetings for short chats where you can create real personal connections.
6. Do not leave voice mail for contacts

Avoid leaving voice mail messages, as tempting as that may be. You want to establish direct communication in order to obtain needed information in as timely a manner as possible. When the person answers, be succinct and provide the name of your warm referral. For example, “This is Olivia Ducat. We’ve not spoken before but Grace Alderssen with the London office of KPMG mentioned you as someone who may be able to help me to obtain industry information. As your schedule permits, I would like to speak with you further. My number is + 34 (0)1 123 4567”

7. Do not ask for a job when first meeting any contact

The purpose of networking (whether with hiring managers direct or warm referrals) is to build relationships. This is why it is important to begin networking before you need a job. When the time comes that you are engaged in a job search, you will have already developed substantial relationships with those who can advance your cause.

8. Arrange to meet contacts in a relaxed environment

The best place to meet new contacts is in some type of social setting, such as an industry conference or networking event. You can either “accidentally-on-purpose” bump into them at the event or call/e-mail ahead of time to arrange a time to speak. The time-tested best approach is to request assistance or advice of some type. For example, “I understand you are knowledgeable in the area of institutional real estate investments and I was hoping you could help me understand the new regulations as per the UK and Australian market with regard to non-listed real estate funding.”

9. Compose a “solutions provider” letter to the hiring manager

Prepare a letter that conveys that you have done some research on the target company, identified a critical challenge, and that you may have a proposal to this issue.
10. The three I’s of Networking are: 
Information – Ideas – Issues

i. **Information:** This can include learning about industry trends, hidden job opportunities, companies that are experiencing growth, as well as about emerging firms in your industry.

ii. **Ideas:** You contacts may help you learn about executive staff changes in your target companies along with strategies for approaching these new decision-makers.

iii. **Issues and trends:** Issues and trends are uncovered by performing research and due diligence regarding the company’s financial position, long-term strategic plan, and new research initiatives.
Section Six

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR JOB SEARCH (12 TIPS)

1. Employers are watching

According to a survey by CareerBuilder.com, 67% of hiring managers now peruse social media sites to identify viable candidates for available vacancies. With this in mind, it is vital to ensure that your profile is one which you wouldn’t mind a potential employer viewing.

2. Connect with Care

Unless you make your profile private, prospective employers will be able to view your connections and friends list, and status reports. Because we do tend to be “judged by the company we keep,” use a fair degree of discretion when choosing who to connect with.

3. Join groups selectively

While the acknowledged purpose of social networking is to connect with others who share similar interest and goals, you also want to use some caution with regard to the groups you join or the Facebook pages you “like.” However, it will reflect well on your candidacy if you can list professional associations you have joined on Facebook and elsewhere or community groups where you regularly volunteer.

4. Don’t disparage current/past employers

Don’t post any negative remarks about employers, especially if you have a public profile. Not only will your professionalism be questioned but the only purpose it will serve is to plant a seed of doubt in the minds of prospective employers about whether you would one day disparage their firm as well.
5. Do not publicise your job search

In the same way that prospective employers may view your profile, so too may your current supervisor. For this reason, it is a good idea to keep your job search confidential and not post any comments about it to your status updates. The last thing you want is for your current supervisor to discover your job search by perusing your profile as this can pose a serious risk to your continuing employment with the firm.

6. Make your profile private

For the reasons noted above you may just want to make your profile private so that only your friends and connections can read your updates or see your friends/connections list. On the other hand, leaving your profile public increases your ability to network since most people like to connect with others who share common interests and goals.

7. Start with LinkedIn

It may be best to build a presence on one social networking site for recruitment rather than split your focus between three or more. For purposes of job search LinkedIn may be the best option since the site is professionally focused with a membership base that spans every industry throughout the world. You can also create a CV on LinkedIn and update it as you gain new skills or experience, along with special features that can link PowerPoint presentations, documents and other creative content to your online profile. Since most users do create such a profile, it won’t necessarily arouse suspicion in the mind of your current employer if you tailor your profile in this way as well.

8. Industry-based groups are great for networking

Whichever social media site you decide to join, it is a good idea to join at least one or two professional groups within your industry and related industries to network and tap into the “hidden job market”. At first simply sit back and read comments from other group members to get a sense of writing style areas of discussion before contributing your own comments. In these groups, you can also find excellent advice and resources for free psychometric tests, free reasoning tests, online numerical reasoning practice exams or advice on interview testing success.
9. LinkedIn can get you to the hiring manager

Use the job search feature on LinkedIn to locate suitable job vacancies. When the results appear pay closest attention to those listings which show that there is at least one person within the organisation that is no more than two degrees away from you and who may know the hiring manager.

10. Warm referrals tap into the “hidden job market”

Once you establish a presence in various groups, ask those in your network if they may know anyone who can assist in your job search. Don’t ask for a job directly as this can make people uncomfortable is they don’t have anything to offer. Rather, ask for a warm referral to a third party who may be in a position to assist with your job search. Be willing to give something in return (such as an offer to connect this person with one of your own contacts) or send along an interesting story, industry news, etc.

11. Leverage the social nature of Facebook for personal and professional use

Facebook is a useful resource for keeping in touch with contacts that you have made during the course of your career to date. While the site is social nature, it can still be a viable method of obtaining job leads. You can also create a Facebook page for your CV or look for apps like BranchOut to reach career networking goals. This allows you to create two profiles; your personal profile for social interaction and your page for job search.

12. Blogs position you as the “expert”

According to a report by Emarketer Intelligence in 2012, there will be over 145 million people who regularly read blogs of all types (many of whom will very likely be potential employers in your industry). Starting a blog is a great way to position yourself as an expert in your industry and become known to prospective employers. Post questions and invite comments to build loyalty.

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Section Seven

SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILE FOR CAREER SUCCESS (6 TIPS)

1. Use keywords wisely to be searchable and findable

Identify the most relevant keywords for your industry/job title (e.g. “financial analyst”, “business consultant”, “strategic investment advisor”, “junior engineer”, “business intelligence analyst” or other) and liberally spread them throughout your online profile, blog, or other online presence. You can find keywords through a search of job boards, trade associations or industry-based periodicals.

2. Remove questionable content

Your profile picture should be in keeping with your overall brand image. Do not post pictures that show you in revealing attire or with too much jewellery. If you have joined groups or became a fan of pages that are not consistent with the image you wish employers to perceive, be sure to remove them before you begin your job search.

3. Write with branding in mind

The language you use when composing your profile should reflect the image you wish to portray. Be careful to avoid slang and acronyms. Capitalize the first letter of each sentence and end with a period (avoid the use of exclamation marks or special characters). Be sure to check for grammar and spelling mistakes.

4. Highlight your expertise

Create status updates that reflect your knowledge of the industry and show potential employers that you are current with recent trends and issues. Your updates can include links to relevant articles, books, Web sites, or videos which further enhance the impression about your expertise in the field.

5. Networking helps create connections

Build linkages with those associations or organisations for which you would like to work. Join discussion groups that they host and become a known contributor. Ask to connect with or “friend” employees and display these connections on your profile.

6. Recommendations help market your candidacy

Especially with regard to LinkedIn, you can post recommendations from former employers and colleagues. These can then be viewed by prospective employers who will be able to determine if you have the requisite skills and personality to perform the job successfully and fit in with their culture.
Section Eight

INTERVIEW STRATEGY (18 TIPS)

1. Time your arrival to be no more than 15 minutes before your appointment

While you certainly don’t want to arrive late to a job interview appointment, neither do you want to arrive too early. Doing so can make the interviewer uncomfortable if he or she is running behind schedule. It also leaves open the possibility that you will run into a competitor for the position.

2. You have only one chance to make a great first impression

Exude professionalism. Dress for success in a navy or gray business suit and turn your cell phone off. Interview etiquette requires that you stand up when the interviewer(s) enter(s) the room. Be sure to smile, shake hands firmly, and make eye contact as you are introduced.

3. Preparation is key to a successful interview

Bring a sufficient number of CVs to hand out to multiple interviewers. Carry a notebook in which you may jot questions as they occur to you during the meeting.

4. Researching the company beforehand can set you apart from other candidates

Research the company so that you know its core mission and values, primary products and services, and any new initiatives. In this way you will be able to speak authoritatively on why you wish to work for the firm and why you believe that your background meshes with the needs of the position.

5. Use PAR statements for accomplishments

As when preparing your CV, discuss your accomplishments in terms of PAR statements. For example “As Human Resources Director, I initiated an employee recognition and reward program for over 1,200 employees which reduced overall recidivism by 42% over the past two quarters. (Problem: employee turnover; Action: recognition and reward program; Result, reduced incidence of turnover by 42%).

6. Interview simulation beforehand can help sharpen your interview technique

Practicing with a second party can help you prepare for both the routine and more difficult interview questions.
7. **Focus by taking notes and asking questions**

To prevent losing focus during the meeting, actively take notes on what the interviewer is saying and ask for clarification on any comments in which you are unclear. Be sure to wait until the interviewer has finished speaking before asking a question or contributing your thoughts.

8. **Brevity is the key strategy when answering interview questions**

Answer the questions succinctly and don’t veer off into unrelated areas. As noted, PAR statements are very effective for describing past accomplishments. For example, to answer the question of your most significant accomplishment in your current job you can reply, “As budget officer, I developed and implemented a major cost-reduction program organisation-wide which resulted in a significant decrease in overhead costs by as much as 55%.” (Problem: overhead costs; Action: cost-reduction program; Result 55% reduction)

9. **Maintaining eye contact shows honesty and openness**

Be sure to make eye contact throughout the interview as you ask and answer questions. If there is more than one interviewer in attendance, briefly hold eye contact with each one as you speak.

10. **Employers like candidates who are goal oriented**

Many times candidates are asked where they see themselves in 3 or 5 years. **Employers prefer candidates who are goal-oriented and looking for long-term career development opportunities.** Answer with something along the lines of “In that period of time I would hope to have advanced within the organisation to a senior-level project manager role offering greater authority and challenge.”

11. **Passion is contagious**

If you have performed research on the organisation beforehand you can speak with enthusiasm and passion about why you wish to work for that particular company. Your passion can also be indicated by sharing books you read, mentioning professional associations you may belong to, and discussing any blogs you read that are of relevant to that industry.
**12. Bad-mouthing a former employer reflects poorly on you**

Although you may have had negative experiences with past employers, be diplomatic when discussing this during an interview. Speaking poorly of prior supervisors can instil suspicion in the minds of the current employer as they wonder if the time will come when you bad-mouth their company as well.

**13. Asking questions shows that you have interest in the position**

Employers like questions. Your questions can be based on notes you jotted down during the course of the interview or be related to the research you conducted in preparation for the interview. For example, “Based on some research I have conducted I see that new regulations are on the horizon for the pharmaceutical industry with regard to Internet-based promotion of new drugs. I wonder how this development will affect your company’s efforts with regard to market share and growth opportunities.”

**14. Ask about next steps at the end of the meeting**

Before leaving the interview ask if there are any issues you can clarify to better position your candidacy. The purpose is to uncover any hesitations that the hiring manager may have regarding your suitability for the job so you can address them immediately. For example, “Is there any area of my candidacy that you may have a concern about that I can address before I leave today?”

**15. Ask about the process**

Before leaving the meeting, be sure to ask about the organisation’s hiring process and next steps. In this way you can plan your interview follow-up strategy. If you know a second (or third) interview will be required, ask if it might be possible to set that up before leaving. For example, “It has been a pleasure meeting with you and I remain most interested in this opportunity. I wanted to ask about next steps and whether we may schedule any future meeting today?”

**16. Collect business cards**

Be sure to ask for the business cards of all interviewers so that you can properly address “Thank you” notes. The cards will also provide the phone number of the hiring manager so you can make follow-up telephone calls as well.
17. **Thank you notes help to market your candidacy**

Send a personalized thank you note to each interviewer as both a courtesy and also a method of keeping your candidacy forefront in the *hiring manager’s* agenda. Briefly reiterate the main points covered during the interview and why you are uniquely qualified for the role.

18. **Schedule a follow-up call**

Call to the hiring manager about three business days after the interview to indicate your continued interest in the position. Ask if there is any area that might still need clarification. Leave a message if you cannot reach the person. You can make a second call after about another 3 business days if you don’t hear back but stop there as you don’t wish to become a nuisance.
Section Nine

EVALUATING A JOB OFFER
(11 TIPS)

1. Don’t accept an offer immediately

Even if tempted to accept right away, ask for a day or so to consider the job offer. Accepting too quickly may give the impression you are desperate. It will also give you time to consider whether this opportunity is a best-fit for your career goals.

2. Express appreciation for the offer

Even if the offer is below your salary requirements, be sure to thank the company for extending the offer. For example, (combining Tips 1 & 2) “Mr. Gundersen, I am honoured that you believe I am the right person for this job, and excited about getting started on meeting the challenges we discussed. I wonder if I may have a couple of days to review the offer in further detail?”

3. Performing salary research will help accurately evaluate the offer

You will need to determine if the salary offered is in line with your experience knowledge, and skill set. Here are some suggested sites to perform this research: Payscale.com/UK, Paywizard.co.uk, The Riley Guide to Employment Opportunities and Job Resources/International, and Reed.co.uk.

4. Ask to negotiate if the salary is too low

If the salary isn’t what you expected, consider negotiating for a higher figure. For example, “Mr. Gundersen, thank you again for the offer but it is a bit below what my research suggests to be an appropriate range in terms of my skills and experience. I wonder if we may revisit this issue.”

5. Benefits and perks are part of the total remuneration package

In addition to the salary levels for graduates or seniors, evaluate the benefits and perks offered. Find out the details regarding medical coverage, vacation and sick time, and the structure of any bonus or commission programs.
6. Clarify any areas of uncertainty

Be sure that you fully understand the total remuneration package (salary, benefits, bonuses, commissions, responsibilities). In this way you can evaluate the offer fully and see where there might be room for flexibility. For example, if you wish to start at a higher salary you might be able to negotiate a lower bonus or commission structure. For example, “Mr. Gundersen, thank you again for the offer. The salary is honestly a bit below what I was expecting but I wonder if there might be the option to accept a lower bonus percentage in exchange for a higher starting salary?”

7. Analyze the offer in terms of “essential” vs. “preferred” traits

No job will be perfect but make when deciding whether to accept make a list of “essential” vs. “preferred traits”. This helps you to prioritize your thinking when considering the offer. Essential might include salary and benefits, along with company culture. Preferred traits might include commute time and work schedule.

8. Even traditional jobs may have non-traditional hours

Before accepting a job, ensure that the schedule is one that you will be able to adhere to on a consistent basis. Clarify what degree of travel may be involved, along with commuting time. If it will take over an hour to get to work and home can you commit to a job with long hours? If you have significant family responsibilities can you accept a job that will necessitate frequent travel?

9. Company culture is as important as job duties

You may be a perfect match for a job in terms of skills set and knowledge but if you don’t fit in with the company culture chances are you won’t stay very long. Research has shown that the majority of new employees who leave within the first 90 days of employment do so from cultural misalignment rather than lack of technical skill set.

10. Show respect by making a decision as quickly as possible

If you know at the outset that the job is not for you, be upfront and honest so the employer can move on to Candidate B. Try not to take longer than 3 business days to make a decision and if you accept speak to the hiring manager directly rather than leave a voice mail. For example, “Thank you for the generous offer. I appreciate your flexibility and look forward to delivering on the results we discussed.”
11. Get the offer in writing

Once all the details have been finalized ask the company to prepare an official offer letter that you can review. Don’t sign on the bottom line until you have verified that all the terms are accurate as per the verbal agreement.
To Sum It Up

Job search is a marketing campaign with the product being “Brand You!” Conducting an organized campaign emphasizing your unique value to employers will greatly enhance your prospects for obtaining the job you desire. As touched upon in the “Networking” section, the best time to begin a job search is before you need a job. There are two primary reasons for this:

- You can begin to develop authentic relationships based on shared interests and common goals rather than approaching the process with a hidden agenda (which many people can see right through).
- Being in the “pool” of the employed also lessens the anxiety you may feel when actively engaged in job search. This then enables you to more fully evaluate any job offers you receive rather than feeling the need to jump on the first one that comes along.

For those who may not have a job at the present time, know that persistence will pay off. But it takes both commitment and discipline to see results. The best way to establish and maintain both is to build a network of family, friends, and colleagues with whom you may share the ups and downs of job search. Spread the word of your search to everyone you meet.

Viral networking is based on the principle of “degrees of separation”: one person in your network (1st degree) may know another (2nd degree) who may know someone else that can help (3rd degree). Due to the viral nature of networking, everyone you meet is a viable lead to job opportunities.

It is hoped that the 99 career advice and tips presented in this eBook provide you with a good foundation to establish a successful job search campaign. Do not attempt to tackle each section at one time but, as a suggestion, start with Section 1 (Cover Letter); Section 2 (CV); and Section 4 (Personal Branding). Once you have developed your brand and marketing materials, expand your efforts into networking. Start slowly and build momentum as you go. As you move through the process keep in mind the 3Ps of job search success: planning, proactive engagement and persistence. Good luck!

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