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## **JOB HUNTING STRATEGIES**

Hunting for a job is a full time job.

Don't take the whole summer off.

Employers know when you're graduating. They are waiting for you to apply ... really!.

"On a good day", statistically it takes about 3 months to find on a job.

Be strategic in the "hunt" – don't take the first job that is offered just because it is offered – if the job is not a good fit, you only wind up showing up to your job everyday as an organizational robot, feeling miserable

## The Game Plan

1. Identify what you want to do, where you want to live, and the type of company you want to work at.

Discover your gifts and talents by cataloging your successes and achievements

Ask yourself the following basic questions:

What can you tell us about yourself?

Why are you interested in a job with this company?

What do you consider your greatest strengths and weaknesses? (Be prepared to answer both)

What is one of the hardest situations you have faced at work or in school, and how did you resolve it?

What accomplishments are you most proud of, and why?

This exercise helps you speak confidently about yourself – that’s one of the hardest things for anyone to do, not just college students.

2. Network with those who can help you – mentors, alumni, professors, officers in professional and other volunteer organizations, ESF & SU career centers – everyone knows someone ... the Law of 250 states that every person knows at least 250 other people
3. Tell everyone about your target jobs and employers
4. Don't be afraid to ask for advice – most people are happy to help you in your job search, all you need to do is ask, but you have to ask
5. “Strategic hiring” is a buzz word now a days. What it means is that companies want specific characteristics and specific skills not necessarily a lot of job experience. But, you have to be able to prove you have those skills.

There is another intangible to “strategic hiring”. How will you fit into the “corporate culture” ... their style ... their personality.

6. Be aware of employer's needs - If you see a posting that asks for specific experience, be sure it's on your resume, but also be prepared to talk at an interview about your past accomplishments and failures, how you approached a problem, how you got by it, and what you learned from it. Be able to answer “behavior based questions”.

## The Resume

1. Stick to one page and a simple layout that notes:

Your college and degree – don't list your GPA if it is below 3.5, if an interviewer asks about your GPA, you can soften bad news with an in-person sincere explanation

An objective – sounds as if you know what you want ... “My goal is a job that will lead to a career in urban planning.” Don't worry if you are not, your first work experience won't lock you into a lifetime choice.

Work experience – don't just list job duties. Describe the results you achieved ... “Senior Day Camp Counselor: I wrote, directed and produced a play featuring 15, 6-year olds, on a limited budget”

Strength – What are you good at? Meeting deadlines, organizing, creative thinking? These abilities should tie into your job and personal achievements.

Skills – knowledge of computer programs, fluency in a second language, etc.

Extracurricular activities – You never know when you'll connect with someone just because you're both interested in building for Habitat for Humanity. Your interests help a company get a better handle on who you are and may separate you from the competition.

A great resume may not get you the job, but a poor resume can keep you from getting the job.

## **The Cover Letter**

1. It must be specific to each company or job you apply for.

It should be enthusiastic, grammatical and fit on one page.

Ask someone you respect to proofread it.

End the letter by saying you'll follow up with a phone call, but even if you emailed it, wait three days before you call.

## The Interview

1. Practice - with friends and family
2. Do your homework. Be prepared like it's a final exam.

Many recruiters say job applicants are clueless about the companies they interview at. There's no excuse for that. You can find everything you need to know on a company's web site.

Don't wait until the first interview to find out about the company. If you do, there might not be a second!

3. Be prepared to answer questions and ask a few questions about the firm and job. Be prepared to say why you're interested in the company, what appeals to you about the job, and where you see yourself in 5 years.
4. Be prepared to ask questions -
5. The ability to write and speak is a plus. It helps to be able to improvise too.
6. Ask what's next – process and timing of decision making
7. Ask for the job! – this step seems so obvious, but most candidates skip it. Employers value sincere enthusiasm. If you're qualified and you really want the job, chances are you won't have to sell too much. Just say, "I would really like to work here."

## Follow these Basic Rules

1. Record new voice mail greetings – replace “Yo, dude, leave your digits!” with “This is John Smith. Please leave a message. I’ll return your call as soon as possible.”
2. Don’t use an email address like honeybunny@xyzmail.com – create one that uses your first and last names
3. Proofread your email to employers – use the same rules of punctuation, grammar and style that you would use on paper
4. Keep your cell phone off during job interviews –
5. Never be late – this one isn’t rocket science, but you’d be surprised how many people still do it
6. Address the interviewer as Mr. Smith or Ms. Jones – unless you’re asked to use his or her first name
7. Dress conservatively – no jeans, t-shirts, funny ties, low necklines or sandals, no face piercing, tattoos, very little jewelry – wear good footwear, well groomed hair, overall demure attire (black, grey and navy) – you want them focusing on your face and you, not what you’re wearing
8. Put your best foot forward – be energetic, be enthusiastic, be positive, be polite, be humble, keep negative feelings to yourself, avoid criticizing anyone in public – even if asked about a former boss or professor, stay clear of vulgar language – think of it as a first date – do not fidget, smile – you want to make a good impression
9. Don’t fib or embellish -
10. Make a Good Impression! - \

Leadership is all about attitude. Being a “class act” is all about attitude.

“Winners” create heat on their competitors because of their energy and air of confidence they exude.

Attitude is all about being fair, discrete, sportsmanlike, respectful of others, dignified, willing to tackle just about anything, saying “please, thank you and excuse me”, and being positive

The **handshake** - staple of modern communication (at least in this culture). Practice it. No limp fish, sweaty palms, or white knuckling.

11. Send thank you letters after interviews