

## Tips From Employers That Are Hiring

The best job-search advice comes from the employers that are hiring. If you take the time to follow this advice, you'll be better prepared than your competition for your application and interview.

Here are some things you can do to aid in your job-search success:

### Research the Company

- What products or services does the company produce and sell?
- Where is it located?
- How well did the company do last year?
- What activities by this company have been in the news lately?

Learn something about the company with which you want to interview. Read its website and its annual report. Search for news stories mentioning the company. Use this information to customize your resume and cover letter for the position you want. Impress the interviewer by knowing something about the company. (Learn more: See [Researching Employers](#))

### Perfect Your Qualifications

A high GPA is important. It means you know the subject matter. However, employers are looking for people with "soft skills," too—skills you can learn through extracurricular activities such as leading a team, taking part in a group task, or organizing a volunteer project.

Employers want to find communication skills, a strong work ethic, teamwork skills, initiative, the ability to relate to co-workers and customers, problem solving skills, and analytical skills.

### Get Experience

Year after year, the majority of employers taking part in a survey conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) say they prefer to hire job candidates who have pertinent experience. For college students, typically, relevant experience is gained through an internship.

In fact, an internship can be the "foot in the door" to a job with many employers: NACE surveys show that newly hired employees often come from the organization's own internship program.

## Build a Network

Whether you get the job you want—or even hear about the job opportunity you want—could easily depend on who you know.

Here's where you will find people to build your professional network:

- Business and professional social networking sites
- Professional associations (online and in person)
- Career fairs
- Company information sessions
- Your school's alumni network
- An internship or co-op program
- A student professional organization
- Faculty contacts
- Employee referrals
- Parents of friends who work in your field

## Apply Online

Few employers want a paper copy of your resume in the mail. Many employers want to receive resumes and job applications through their websites.

Here are tips to keep your resume from getting lost in a company's database of applicants:

- Load your resume with keywords: Add job titles and specific skills—especially those that are specific to your field.
- Use jargon and phrases specific to your field.
- List the names of companies you've worked for or interned with: recruiters may look for their competitors' names.
- Post your resume on professional niche websites.

## Make Career Services Your BFF

What is it worth to have someone who is in daily contact with potential employers show you how to write a winning cover letter, critique your resume, practice interviewing with you, connect you with people who are working in your field, and give you access to thousands of job opportunities?

Find the career center on your university or college campus today. Employers use this resource to find new hires, so shouldn't you be there?

## Say Thank You

Stand out among candidates. Send a thank-you note to each recruiter you meet at a career fair; to the employer who practices a mock interview with you; to a hiring manager who spends a few minutes interviewing you for a job; to anyone who serves as a job reference.

- Keep your message short and confirm your interest. "Thank you for the opportunity to discuss [name of the position] at XYZ Company."
- Spell the recruiter's name and title correctly.
- Send your message immediately.

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*Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges and Employers [www.nacweb.org](http://www.nacweb.org).*