

THE 10 STEPS OF AN EFFECTIVE ONLINE JOB SEARCH

The internet is a great tool for finding jobs. But there are right ways and wrong ways to use it.

The biggest mistake is relying solely on the internet to find and get a job. Many job opportunities are never even posted on the internet. Even when they are, you may need the help of friends, family, acquaintances, and sometimes people you don't even know.

This is called networking. It's often what turns a job seeker into an applicant, and what gets an applicant an interview. After several applications and a few interviews, you are likely to get a job offer.

The key is persistence. Looking for a job is almost always a hard and discouraging journey. And you never know when you will arrive at your destination. But if you take the steps below — and keep on taking them over and over — you will almost surely get there.

- 1. Think carefully about the types of jobs you want, and the types of jobs that are available near you.** What do you enjoy? What are you good at? What training do you already have, and what training would you need?

Research the jobs in which you are interested. Remember, getting a job and being successful at it means that you will provide services for your employer. What services will you choose to provide?

- 2. Find the websites of employers that need the service you want to provide.** Find an employer's website by typing the employer's name into your browser's keyword search area. Then look for a link to the page of the website where available positions are listed. The links will usually include the words "jobs," "careers," "opportunities," or "employment." You can also use multi-employer websites.

- 3. Scan the available jobs.** When you find the available positions on a website, look down the list quickly to see if any of the jobs look like ones that would interest you. Most will not apply to you. That's okay. You don't need to find a thousand jobs. You only need to find one job. And it has to be the right one.

Most of the time when you scan a page of job postings, you won't find anything interesting. That's okay too. Move on to another page. But come back within a few days to check for new postings.

- 4. When you find an interesting job posting, read it carefully.** Each job posting will have a few basic parts: 1) a job name; 2) a job description, which may include a job number; 3) a list of responsibilities, which are the specific tasks you would be expected to do in the job; 4) a list

of requirements or qualifications, which describe the education, skills, and experience that the employer is looking for; and 5) a link to apply online, which may require you to set up an account with a user name and password. Write down your user name and password, and keep them.

Finally, please keep in mind that there are scam artists who use fake job postings to take advantage of job seekers. Learn how to protect yourself against job search fraud.

5. When you find a job posting you want to apply for, take time for a little more research.

Who else holds that job? Who supervises them? What are their backgrounds? Is there any recent news about the employer? Re-read the posting and circle key words. These are terms which look like they may be especially important to the employer. Your research will help you understand what to emphasize about your background and abilities when you are building your application.

Also, if you are using a resume and cover letter, be sure to get the name and title of the person to whom the letter should be addressed. If there is a job number as well as the job name, include the number on your application or cover letter.

6. Plan and build your application. Most websites allow you to apply with an online form. Some include a link to download a document that you can print, fill out, and return. Others may simply include information about where to send a resume by email or regular mail. Whichever method you use, follow the employer's instructions carefully. Be honest, but put yourself forward in a way that shows how closely you conform with the employer's needs and the job's requirements.

Be brief, clear, and polite. Make sure your application contains no mistakes in spelling or grammar.

7. Keep a record. You will need to do more than find good opportunities and carefully craft your applications. You will probably also need to apply for several job openings before you receive an invitation to interview. This means you should keep a written record of which jobs you have applied for, including a copy of the job posting and your application. Don't rely on your memory.

8. After applying for a job, immediately begin looking for more opportunities. You worked hard on your application, and did your best to convince the employer that you should be invited for an interview. You almost certainly convinced yourself. Don't be tempted to take it easy and wait for that invitation. Go looking for the next good job posting. It's out there. And it might just be the one that will pay off for you.

9. Check with the employer in two to three weeks. If you have not heard from the employer by then (and you probably won't), give them a call or stop by. Find the right manager, introduce yourself, and ask if they need any more information about your application. If they have not yet made a decision about who to interview, give the manager a copy of your application or resume.

Even if you have not been chosen for an interview, thank the manager for their consideration. Keep it short, and don't ask any questions except how you may be able to be of help.

10. Remember that rejection is just part of the process. Nobody likes to be rejected or ignored. But it is guaranteed to happen — probably a lot, but probably politely — during the weeks or months that it usually takes to find a job.

You will almost certainly apply for many jobs, and hear “no” many times, or get no response at all, before you finally get to “yes.” But that one “yes” is all that matters.

Accept rejection as a normal part of the process. Deal with it by spending time with other people who will encourage you. Encourage yourself too. If you need it, get some help to keep your household secure until you find your job. Think of all the people you meet who have jobs, and remember that each of them has walked down this road. If they can get to their destinations, so can you.

Rejection is unpleasant. But it is only a problem if you let discouragement end your job search.