

HOW TO GET A JOB

Some people think that getting a job is simple, or at least it ought to be simple: Just find an employer, tell them how much you need a job, maybe fill out an application, and show up for work, right?

Unfortunately, getting a job is usually more complicated than that. This might be clearer if we look at the hiring process from the employer's point of view.

While all employers hire people, none of them is in the business of hiring people. For example, the business of a hospital is not to hire people, but to care for patients. The business of an auto shop is to fix cars. The business of a grocery store is to sell groceries.

That's why no employer will be very concerned about how much you need or want a job. Employers are not generally cold or uncaring people. It's just that your needs don't have much to do with their businesses.

The success of their businesses mostly depends on meeting the needs of their customers, not the needs of job applicants. To get a job, you must convince an employer that you are ready and willing to meet the employer's needs.

And please keep in mind that you usually cannot get a job just because you are capable of doing the work. You must convince the employer that of all the people who are capable, ready and willing to do the job, you are the one person who would be the best choice.

Getting a job is competitive. And it is complicated because most employers use formal competitive processes designed to help them identify the best applicants. It is a lot like the rules of a sports tournament, which are designed help ensure that the best athletes win.

Like any good athlete, you need to know the rules and to get every possible advantage at every stage of the hiring process. The process usually includes three stages:

- Find job openings that you want to pursue, and which you have a reasonable chance of pursuing successfully. In other words, you should find jobs that you want to get, and employers who may want to get you.
- When you find a good job opening, apply for it. The purpose of applying is not to get the job, but simply to get the employer's attention and encourage the employer to invite you for an interview.

- Your job interview is like the championship game of a tournament. If you have a good interview — and if throughout the hiring process you communicate that you are reliable, honest, and skillful — you may be offered the job.

The Pitt Community College Human Resource Development program offers an excellent series of short courses on effectively navigating the process of finding, getting, and keeping a job. To learn more about these courses, please call 493-7576 or email mhiggs@email.pittcc.edu.

Level 8.9