



FRONTENAC EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTRE

JOB SEARCH

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Job Search Basics

1. What is job search?

The term 'job search' relates to all the activities you carry out to find the work you want. Job search is itself a full-time job. It takes time and patience. It is demanding, frustrating and sometimes makes you feel like you are on an emotional roller coaster. It requires responsible decision-making, planning and belief in yourself.

Getting prepared for your job search will alleviate frustration. Finding answers to questions that may pop up during your job search will enable you to proceed in a systematic manner.

2. What type of work would you like to do?

Know yourself! What are your strengths, likes, dislikes, goals, interests, and values. Where do you see or envision yourself? Where do you see yourself fitting in? It is very difficult to carry out an effective job search if you don't have a goal. It is like trying to sail a ship with no destination in mind. You are likely to have a rough ride.

3. What are the requirements and qualifications needed for the position you want?

There are many ways to determine what the duties or tasks of the job are, the requirements of the job and the qualifications needed for the job or position.

- a) **Newspaper ads.** Employment ads in newspapers, may display the job duties and qualifications needed for the position.
- b) **Internet.** The Internet will post positions for various companies, organizations, and job-hunting sites and will detail the requirements and qualifications for the positions.
- c) **Informational Interviewing.** You could set up an information interview with an employer to discuss what certain jobs entail and what requirements are needed for those jobs. Please see the FERC Resource on Interviews for more information.
- d) **National Occupational Classification.** The NOC is the authoritative resource on occupational information in Canada. It is used by thousands of people to understand the jobs found throughout Canada's labour market. Here is a direct link.

<http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2006/Welcome.aspx>

- e) **Labour Market Information.** These sources will provide information about labour market trends with indications of what the demand for certain occupations is likely to be in the future.

<http://www.labourmarketinformation.ca>

<http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/ojf/index.html>

4. Who is hiring?

Do your research to learn who is hiring. This means looking well beyond the ads posted in newspapers and online. The advertised jobs make up the **'visible'** job market.

Many employers choose to use referrals and word of mouth to find potential employees. This is the **'hidden'** job market. Research has shown that as much as 80% of the job market may be 'hidden'.

Tapping into that market means doing everything you can to find out what is going on in the job market you want to enter. What organizations are growing, taking on new projects, etc.? You also want to know the names of individuals in organizations that are of interest to you. This will enable you to focus your **networking** efforts so that you can tap into the hidden job market.

Networking

5. What is networking?

Networking is the process of discovering and using connections between people. Networks stem from friendships or business relationships. Everyone knows other people, and thus has a network. But "networking" implies going beyond one's immediate network and involves tapping into other people's networks.

It is a planned process in which you will interact with and become known, through formal and informal settings, to people who can provide information about job openings, leads, personal contacts, employers that are hiring, etc. Networking is about talking with people and obtaining referrals so that every contact you make is a "warm" contact.

6. Why should I network?

Information travels via networks. People exchange information and advice within their circle of contacts. They get the word before the word is out because they are somehow connected to the source. News travels fast, especially when it's employment news. Put yourself in the network and you will be more likely to link up with the ever-growing chain of information. You'll be in the mainstream, not out of it.

There are practical reasons why employers prefer to network. They save money by avoiding the high costs of advertising. They save time and energy by avoiding the large volume of resumes they would receive after advertising. They can get a personal referral from an employee, colleague or friend.

There are practical reasons why you should be networking. You save time and energy by focusing on key contacts. You gain valuable information about job leads. You get personal referrals from people in the know. To network effectively, you need commitment, discipline and perseverance

7. How do I develop a networking system?

- Talk to as many people as possible and tell them you are looking for a job.
- Think creatively about where to find network contacts. You can find people to add to your network almost anywhere.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help. Most people are flattered to be asked for assistance and advice with your job search.
- Don't go anywhere without copies of your resume and business cards or networking cards. You can keep your resume in your car or briefcase, but be sure you can access it easily.
- Join an organization related to your field.
- Volunteer work is a great way to make network contacts and benefit the community.
- Find a mentor. One person who will guide you can be the most valuable kind of network contact.
- Record and organize your network contacts. Use a file box of index cards, a spreadsheet, a three-ring binder, or whatever works for you.
- Consider conducting information interviews, the ultimate networking technique. See FERC's Interview Resource tool.
- Don't forget to thank everyone in your network who has been helpful to you. It's just common courtesy to show your appreciation for peoples' time and assistance. Your contacts will remember your good manners.
- Do keep networking even after you've found a job. Remember it's very important to help others just as you have been helped.

8. Are there any tools I need to network effectively?

- You need a **networking statement**, a brief profile that says who you are and what you are looking for. It should take no more than 30 seconds and present a positive view of your background and skills.
- You need a **networking/contact card** and/or an effective resume, something tangible that you can leave behind. You want to make it easy for new contacts to call you back or pass the word about you.
- You need a **positive attitude**. Look at every source of information and every new acquaintance as an opportunity. You also want to present yourself positively when you're out in the community. And yes, appearance does count.
- You need an **open mind**. You want to look beyond the obvious, to be receptive to people and leads that may not strike you as relevant at first.
- You need an **action plan**. You need to focus on goals and the steps that you need to take to reach them.

Top 10 Job Seeker Mistakes

The following is a shortened version of an excellent article on job search by Fred E. Coon, Chairman, CEO Stewart, Cooper & Coon

So many people wonder why they have trouble getting a job. They go on interview after interview, thinking they did well, but then don't get a call back. This can lead to frustration, anger and depression. Most people do not know why certain people are hired, and why others aren't. Following are 10 mistakes that many people make when searching for their dream job. Hopefully, after reading this article, I can help you avoid these blunders.

1. Mailing Unsolicited Resumes

Unsolicited resumes are garbage, scrap paper, wasted effort and job-search junk according to Jack Chapman, author of "Negotiating your Salary: How to Make \$1000 a Minute." Frank Traditi, Career Strategist and author of "Get Hired NOW!?" feels the same way. He says that people "treat their job search like a direct mail advertising campaign. They expect great response from blindly sending out hundreds of resumes. They wait by the phone and it never rings. They sit at their computer and never get a response."

2. Looking for "Vacancies"

Many jobs are not advertised. Harvard's Mark Granovetter found that 43.4 percent of jobs are created for the applicant, often at the time of the interview. Traditi agrees. "It's no wonder that job seekers spend many months on their job search, or become so frustrated that they give up looking for work. They are looking in all the wrong places," he says.

3. Inept Networking

When people are beginning their careers, asking their friend to get them a job probably works. Once people enter the senior job market this strategy doesn't work anymore. Person-to-person networking is a highly effective way to land a job.

4. Trying to Go After too Many Types of Jobs

My friend Jack Chapman put it best when he said, "Don't confuse a job market with a singles bar." You will not find a job by applying to everything and hoping one lands in your lap. You must pick certain targets and go after them.

5. Losing Your Motivation

It is hard to face rejection on a daily basis, which is what usually happens when people are looking for a job. However, you cannot let this rejection get you down or you will never find a job. If you want your job search to be successful, you must look at life with the glass half-full, not half-empty. The most successful people have a positive attitude, no matter what life throws at them.

6. Thinking a Recruiter is "Working For You"

Recruiters don't work for you. They are paid by the hiring company. Many people think that just because they send their resumes to a recruiter, somehow a job will mysteriously appear. The opposite is actually closer to the truth. Unless recruiters have

a job opening that matches your skills, you go into the computer or dead-letter file, along with thousands of others.

7. Not Preparing for Interviews

Prospective job seekers always tell me that as long as I get them in front of the decision-maker they will take it from there. Most people think the purpose of an interview is to "interview." Wrong. The purpose is to eliminate your competition. If you don't know how to do this, then you will not be successful in securing the position or money that you want. You can never be over-practiced or overprepared for an interview.

8. Talking About Money Too Soon

Employers are quick to ask how much money you want. If your answer is too high, you are too expensive. If your answer is too low, you are not worth it. The key is to focus on value, not money. You should put off talking about money until after you have discussed your skills and their expectations.

9. Not Planning and Scheduling Your Time Properly

Most people spend more time planning vacations than they do their job searches. Like most things in life, if you do not plan properly, nothing will work out the way you want. Imagine if you did not have a plan or schedule for your personal time. You would never know who you were supposed to have lunch with, or what time your son's basketball game was on Saturday. Everyone needs to determine a schedule and have a plan if they want to find a job.

10. Not Asking for Help

There are many myths about conducting a job search alone. Society expects you to know how to find and land good jobs on your own, but no one ever shows you how. There are organizations out there that have qualified people to help you with your job search -- you just need to do your research.

If you avoid these you just might be on the right path to landing your dream job. Good Luck!

To find organizations in Ontario that will help you conduct an effective job search, click on the Employment Ontario link on this website.

Job Search Tracking

The ugly truth is that looking for work is a job in itself and not one that many people enjoy. It requires discipline, scheduling and organization just like any other job. By tracking and documenting your activities, you can reduce stress and feel a sense of accomplishment. You may not be getting paid, but you are working. If you are receiving Employment Insurance, you will have the kind of records they require.

This is a shortened version of an article by Susan P. Joyce found on www.job-hunt.org.

1. Record the following information for each job site you use:

- Name of job site and the date you established an account at that site
- Your account name and password
- Date you posted a resume and the version of your resume that you used
- What job site services you signed up for
- Phone calls or e-mails from potential employers that are traceable to your use of that job site

2. Keep track of each job that you apply for:

- The version of your resume that you used and any cover letter
- Contact information for the employer or recruiter
- The names, titles, and dates for everyone with whom you spoke
- Notes on any discussions you had
- The follow up that you did and the date and action of the next follow up step.
- Feedback that you received

3. Track your networking efforts as well:

- Who you contacted, when you contacted them, and notes on your discussion
- What association or society meetings you attended, when you attended, and who you met there
- Hint: Collect business cards at meetings. Write the date on them, and then follow up!

Yes, the tracking is a pain in the neck, but it will provide you with information on what works and what doesn't work. Keep your records; you will be better prepared if you have to look for work again.

N.B. Don't forget to de-activate your online job search once you have been hired.

How to Keep Your Job

Once you've accepted a job, you can follow some simple steps to protect your job and maintain your employability. By following these steps you'll not only make yourself a valuable employee, you'll improve your chances of getting a raise or a bonus. If your employer has to lay off staff, you may not be chosen. If you are laid off, you will have developed the kind of reputation that employers look for.

1. Make it your goal to work well with others.

Listen carefully to those around you to understand their requests or instructions. Treat others with respect and do not gossip. Avoid confrontations. Make it a point to create good relations with your boss and never argue with a customer.

2. Increase your skills and knowledge.

Get involved in job-related training. Take any job-related classes available and keep records of what you have done. Talk to your employer about the skills and knowledge your job requires. Employers are usually happy to provide training to the right employee. Adult education classes can also help to expand your job skills and improve your employability. Make sure you stay current on changes in your industry. Read newspapers, journals, trade magazines and talk to knowledgeable colleagues.

3. Exceed your employer's expectations and go the extra mile.

Make sure you understand what your employer expects in terms of schedule, dress, attitude, and the amount and quality of your work. Ask your supervisor directly, and read the employee manual. Find out how you can improve. Always be aware of how much you get done each day. If you make a mistake, take responsibility. Take the initiative and look for ways to improve productivity and help make the company more profitable.

4. Develop your networking skills.

Whether or not you're planning to stay with your employer, keep networking. You'll learn valuable information, both professionally and personally, if you make connections with the people you meet. They may provide valuable contacts and information if you do need to look for another job. Keep in mind effective networking is a two way street. The more you can be helpful to others, the stronger your network will be.

5. Be easy.

Always be on time for everything. Leave personal problems at home. Don't complain and never let on that from time to time you find your job stressful. You don't want your employer thinking that you can't handle it. Volunteer to help others and offer to do jobs that others may not want.