

Career Search Campaign

With hundreds of thousands of resumes available through the Web, a systematic approach is required. . .

Conducting The Job Search Campaign

By Diane Hudson Burns (2000)

Statistics

Everywhere you look there are posters that read: "Now Hiring" or "Immediate Employment Opportunities." The major Internet career web sites boast thousands of open positions updated daily (monster.com, careermosiac.com, careerbuilder.com, etc.). Sunday classifieds are full, and job unemployment is a record low. The average American accepts a new job about every 3.6 years; those in dot.coms change jobs about once a year. AT&T receives an average of 3,000 resumes daily, and Microsoft received 1.5 million resumes in 1999. The incredible increase in companies receiving so many resumes is due to the advent of career job boards. When candidates input their resumes to an Internet job board, they are sending them to potentially hundreds of recruiters or companies, depending on matching keywords.

Monster.com conducted a survey of 54,000 people in spring 2000 and 13% reported receiving their last job from the Internet. This number is high, considering most jobs (80-95%) are still obtained through networking. Due to the high number of resumes being received, creating an almost overwhelming task for recruiters and hiring managers who review resumes, job seekers still need to network their way into the Human Resources department of the company they wish to work for.

The Resume

As you prepare your career search campaign plan, the first step is the design and circulation of a superior resume. Meeting people through community volunteer work is an excellent channel for making new contacts. Carry your networking cards (with mini-resume) and develop a 60-second infomercial describing your qualifications (in an interesting and attention-getting manner), in case someone around town asks, "What do you do?" or "Tell me a little about yourself?" or "Who do you work for?" You will be surprised how many people will respond with, "Hey we are looking for someone with your credentials right now."

When you are sending resumes via the Internet, place a cover letter in the body of the e-mail, followed by a "key word/plain" version of your resume; then attach (in word, unless otherwise specified) your "attractive" resume. Be careful to indicate job codes, if required on the announcement, so they know which job you are applying for. All resumes sent via snail mail should contain a cover letter expressing interest in a specific job. As resumes are circulated, candidates should follow up with a telephone call whenever possible. This is a proactive approach to job seeking and ensures that the company received your resume--and it gets your name across the decision-maker's desk more than once.

The Interview

Today, many initial or screening interviews are held on the telephone. The recruiter will call the candidates to determine if they still have interest in the job, review basic qualifications presented on the resume and decide if the candidate's "phone personality" is positive and upbeat. Once the recruiter has "screened" the candidate, the candidate is then invited for a face to face interview.

Preparing for an interview is critical to a job seeker's success. Interview preparation includes dressing for success, interview role playing and reviewing possible questions, understanding the dynamics of the interview, learning the various interview processes that may come up, and being prepared for salary negotiation. Much of the interviewing process is to determine if the candidate will "click" with the current personnel. Some interviewers will ask a predetermined list of questions; others will engage the candidate in casual conversation, which leads to the candidate explaining various career accomplishments. Some interviews involve a panel and some consist of visiting with a new interviewer every hour.

Collateral Marketing Documents

Candidates are required to complete job applications, even when they present a resume. The job application is a legal document that requires a signature. A resume on the other hand is not a legal document and is an overview of accomplishments and career history. Recruiters use the resume and the application together to corroborate information, dates, previous employers and education. Most companies check references prior to presenting an offer of employment. Candidates should prepare reference lists in advance of interviews. Those listed should have already given permission to be used as a reference and the chance to indicate the best time and place to be contacted. Recruiters will check references, degrees and licenses. Most employers hire candidates on a conditional or probationary basis for three to six months, allowing time to conclude all reference checks and review the candidate's job performance.

There are many components of obtaining employment. Being prepared ensures greater success against the competition.