
Eating the Elephant one bite at a time: Job Search Activities that Lead to Employment

The concept of finding a job can be overwhelming to anyone. The job search takes an individual who is resilient to rejection and can maintain a level of motivation throughout the process. However, when we approach our job search by only concentrating on the end result, it can seem at times that we're trying to eat the whole elephant at once. This can affect our motivation in negative ways as the time it takes to find a job can go on for many months. So what do you do? The first thing you need to do is break down your ultimate goal of finding a job into sub-goals. Structuring your job search this way will allow you to accomplish goals that support your main objective of finding employment. If you take one bite at a time, or focus on accomplishing one task at time, psychologically you'll be able to maintain your momentum in finding your job.

Below are some exercise that you can do that will lead you to your ultimate goal of employment:

Activity 1 – Identify 3 people that you know, visit them and start to explore who they know that may lead you to job related information. You can focus the conversation on who they know and where they work.

Goal: Explore your network for potential contacts

Activity 2 - Bring your resume to an organization that you want to work at but who are not presently hiring. If they have a Human Resources Department, ask to meet with the person responsible for interviewing and ask to get some feedback on your resume. You'll be surprised what people are willing to do to help out!

Goal: Get feedback from individuals who actually do the hiring

Activity 3 – Research an organization that you would like to work for. How long have they been in existence? What is their primary service/product? How large is their workforce? What are the different types of positions they have? These are just a few of the questions you want to answer.

Goal: Find information about an organization that will help you determine if you want to work there.

Activity 4 – Call 5 organizations that won't hire you. This may seem like a waste of time, but the point of the activity is to provide you with the opportunity to practice your cold calling. Thinking that you don't have an opportunity to get a job will lower the anxiety you may have about making contact with the employer. Give it a try. It's a great way of practicing your approach without effecting your chances for getting an interview at an employer you really want to work for.

Goal: Work on your approach to contacting employers.

Activity 5 – Before you go on your next interview, ask yourself 'why you might not get the job'? Try and think about the risk the employer might face in hiring you. Are you new to the job of interest? Do you lack some of the skills required for the position? Do you live far from the place of work? Does your experience match what they are looking for? You can think of other questions to ask yourself. By

focusing on the risk factors, you can proactively develop a plan on how to deal with any 'hidden objections' the employer may have and deal with them straight on.

Goal: Assess the employers risk on hiring you.

Activity 6 - Come up with a Job Search script. For example, when you tell people you're looking for a job, what do you tell them? Hi, my name is John, I've been trained in the culinary field and am in the process of conducting a job search. I was wondering if you or anyone you know is presently looking for a chef? Develop your own script that you feel comfortable with. The key here is to get comfortable communicating what your intentions are and letting people know that you're in the 'process of conducting a job search'.

Goal: Develop a job search script

The six activities listed here are examples of taking the challenging task of finding a job and breaking it down into manageable pieces. Keep in mind that if you focus on each of the individual goals from the activities it will be much more manageable.