

PLAN TO GET HIRED BEFORE YOU GRADUATE

I love working with young talent. It's one of the reasons I left my corporate marketing and advertising job to start More Than A Resumé. What I love most about working with college students like you, is that you are an expert at learning. You have no bad job search habits. You're resilient.

The other reason is that the job search and job outlook for graduating seniors and recent grads sucks. I don't need to tell you the statistics about the jobless rate of college grads or repeat what has been written about the value of a college degree. I love sharing what I've learned to help you get past this and get you hired.

So here's a quick tip sheet to help you create your job search strategy. You'll find more detailed information in [Job Search Strategies for Today's Job Market](#).

These tips will help you take control of your job search and land your first professional job after graduating. **Please pass this on to your friends.**

SET UP YOUR PLAN

You are a business of one and have to go out and market yourself. You can't do this unless you know who you are and what you want.

- **Location.** You can't assume you can work anywhere. That's not effective targeting. Decide where you want to live and work and focus your efforts there.
- **Transferable, hard skills.** These are skills you are going to use on the job that employers value. These are the skills can do regardless of your major. You want to use the appropriate terminology when you market them.
- **Industries.** Identify the kinds of business that do things that matter to you. And you'll need to be able to explain why you fit and the value you offer.
- **Employers.** Now create a list of at least 10 companies in the industries and areas you want to work in. You need to thoroughly research each so you can market yourself effectively.

MARKETING MATERIALS

When marketing yourself, remember you are a new professional with lots to offer. Present yourself as that person. First impressions matter.

- **Resumé.** You're starting out so your resumé should be 1-page, fact and accomplishment-based, clear, concise and with industry keywords.
- **LinkedIn Profile.** This is a must. It's the #1 professional networking tool that employers and recruiters use to find talent. Have a keyword headline and summary. Join groups.
- **You need a cover letter.** Original cover letters make a difference. You are writing an introduction about yourself so use *your* style and tone of voice.
- **Interview preparation.** It starts now. You need to be prepared to answer any and all interview questions. Write down your memorable stories and answers and start to practice your answers. You want to be ready for your first interview.

RELATIONSHIPS

Looking for the good jobs—those hidden jobs is hard work. It requires you to put on your sales hat. Here's a way to sell you'll be comfortable with.

- **Networking Introductions.** LinkedIn provides ways to connect with people in your industries and at employers. You'll need to find an interesting way to connect using only 300 characters.
- **Informational Interviews.** People want to help. They need to know how. Informational interviews are the best way to gain insight on how people get started in a certain field; what employers look for in a candidate; and what you can do to get your foot in the door. Reach out to as many people as you can.
- **Thank you.** Thank you emails say thanks, go out within 24 hours, keep you top of mind and create opportunities to stay in touch.
- **Stay in touch on a regular basis.** Find your way to stay top of mind. Let people know you are out there and where you've landed your first job.

FOCUSED & MOTIVATED

It's time to put it all together and do it. You'll need to stay focused and motivated.

- **Activity plan.** Create a plan that has you doing something each and every day. Set goals, assign tasks and deadlines. Get things done.
- **Knowledge is your weapon.** Every day you must read up on your industry. Set up alerts and RSS Feeds for blogs. Create a file for articles. Sending links to your network signals you are staying current and is a way to help those that have helped you.
- **Motivational tools.** Rejection happens. There are forces you can't control. Do whatever it takes to keep you motivated and working on your job search every day.
- **Reward yourself.** You are a business of one. Be a good boss to yourself and reward good performance.