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On the Hunt for a Job? Build Professional Resources

By Steve Hall

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Searching for a Job? Use Your Time to Build Professional Resources.

by Elizabeth Kirwin

With unemployment figures at 6.1% in August, there is great concern among the jobless about their financial future. Though internet job posting seems convenient and opens up new possibilities, the competition is so fierce, it is not unusual for an employer to receive 300–600 resumes for one posting. Since most companies do not have the staffing or time to answer these inquiries, job seekers tend to feel like they are casting their resumes into a great void. Steve Hall, a 14 year Certified Personal Consultant with Find Great People in Greenville, South Carolina, has witnessed disappointment in internet job hunters. "When job seekers spend a great deal of time applying for jobs and receiving no word, it tends to weaken their self-worth," said Mr. Hall.

Spending five to eight hours per day on-line searching creates a sense of isolationism, too. "Most job seekers would be better served to balance their time behind the computer with an effort to meet with people and build a network of professional resources," said Mr. Hall. He suggests volunteer work geared toward the job seeker's profession with a charitable organization. "For example, an accountant could visit the Red Cross, a state boy's home, or a church and offer to do bookkeeping," Mr. Hall suggested. "This would have professional benefits. It will keep professional skills sharp and enable the job seeker to build a soft skill — which is interacting with people. By volunteering skills and expertise, the person may meet somebody that will lead to employment," added Mr. Hall.

Another activity that could stimulate job leads is participation in a weekly network group. "If you want to start a group in your area, rally a support group through professional associations," recommends Mr. Hall. It's important to find people of like minds, with similar passions, and in close proximity for weekly lunch or coffee meetings. "This interaction with colleagues and peer groups will allow the job seeker to hear about positions that may not be posted." said Mr. Hall.

Belonging to a network group composed of those with similar professional interests could make job hunting a little less stressful. The network group will also help internet job seekers overcome a sense of isolationism. Mr. Hall notes that participation in a focused group will be like "having more than your own two eyes looking for work for you." Job seekers can learn how others interviewed correctly or

incorrectly. Sharing professional resources is also key to success with this type of group. "Say a person in your particular group received a call for a job they were not interested in," observed Mr. Hall, "perhaps the location, hours, or pay were wrong for that individual. It may be just right for someone else in the group." A simple exchange of information could be a hot lead to a new position. "If you are at home alone, you're only interested in yourself," said Mr. Hall, "though it might be noble, it's not always productive."

Another effective strategy is partnering with a mentor or coach. "This person should be candid with you about what doesn't work and what you don't do well. A good mentor will also emphasize what is likeable about you and where your talents exist," offered Mr. Hall. Mentoring and coaching are a focused way to grow professionally. "Try to find somebody who is in the trenches working in your profession," recommended Mr. Hall. "Work with this person to help develop skills or approaches you may be lacking," he added. Paying for a coach is one route, but it may not be an option for those on a

tight budget. Look for coaches or mentors among an existing network of friends and associates, or through a friend of a friend. Aim to work with a professional who you admire and respect.

Combining all or some of the above techniques will help most jobless individuals gain a new perspective on their search for employment. Some of these methods will also expand their network once they re-enter their chosen profession. In an age when computers offer the jobless more access, it is still important to remember the advantages of face-to-face contact.

Steve Hall has been a professional recruiter with Find Great People International (<http://www.findgreatpeople.com>), in Greenville, South Carolina, for 14 years. He specializes in IT and manages consultants in apparel, finance and health care. Steve has averaged a 3 to 1 interview to hire ratio, while the industry standard is 7 to 1.

Top 10 Super Job Interview Tips

By Kathi MacNaughton

Use these interview tips for job hunting success!

It's a tough job market out there today. And getting the job you want requires more than just a killer resume. In other words, you can't just sell yourself on paper. You've also got to be able to do it in person—in a face-to-face job interview.

Here are a few interview tips to help you make a great impression on the person who interviews you.

1. Market your skills and related experience in the field that you are applying for. Be sure to do it in a way that is positive, but not cocky or aggressive.
2. Research the company before your interview. It's a great way to know where you would fit into the organization. It also lets the employer know that you really want to be a part of the company.
3. Prepare answers to common interview questions ahead of time, and practice saying them, so you

aren't stumped during the interview.

4. Dress for success, in the manner you would dress for the position you're seeking.
5. Bring a list of your own questions with you in a folder with the company's name on it, so that you don't forget them. You should keep your extra resumes in there too.
6. Be a good listener and focus. Some job seekers talk too much during interviews.
7. Be prepared to describe your weaknesses as strengths. For example, saying that you are overenthusiastic about performing at your best.
8. Make eye contact with your interviewer.
9. Don't volunteer your personal opinions to your interviewer about any subjects unless you are asked.
10. Try to establish a good rapport with your interviewer. Be casual but professional, and most importantly BE YOURSELF! Take the time to implement these interview tips before your next job hunt. It'll give you a leg up on your competition!

Kathi MacNaughton, a freelance writer and editor, has years of management and recruitment

experience. For tips & advice on writing powerful resumes, see

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Top 10 Super Job Interview Tips
Your Cat The Hunter...
Recruiting Excellent Job Candidates
The Benefits Of An Online It Degree
What a Career Coach Can or Cannot Do For You

Build Your Own Mail Order Empire
Email Spider Software
Character Counter Software
How to Buy a Car Without Getting Ripped Off!
The Great Big Book of Internet Marketing



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