

Job Link

Bringing You News You Can Use

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JOB QUEST: 5 STEPS TO YOUR NEXT JOB

by Amy Lindgren and from ivillage.com
Continued from the July, 2002 issue of JobLink

STEP FOUR: Targeting Companies

The next step is to decide which employers to contact. If you did steps one and two, (goal setting and market research), this step will be a breeze. You've already done most of the work!

If you have researched already, make a list of the companies that are likely to have a job like the one you want. It doesn't matter if that job is open right now. List the company, because eventually every job becomes open.

Target employers to get the names of people who work in each company. It's best to get the name of the person who would be your supervisor.

You can usually get the person's name by calling the company and asking the receptionist. If that doesn't work, ask your friends and family if they know anyone at that company. Then ask that person for the name you need.

STEP FIVE: Contacting Employers

At last! You're finally ready for the step most people think is first: contacting employers. Now that you know what you want, what the employer needs, and where you fit in the industry, you're ready to tell others. If you've completed step 4, you have a place to start. Now you need a strategy.

The best job search plan is based on a simple rule: **Job offers come only from interviews.**

Since employers only hire after they've met you, you know your goal

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NOTABLE QUOTABLE

"People forget how fast
you did a job -- but they
remember how well you
did it."

—Howard W. Newton



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NRI CUTS THE WORK

Wow! That was a long feature article; but it was full of very useful information, so we thank you for hanging in with us to the end!

As mentioned in the summary, there is a great deal of work involved in finding a new job. The bright spot is that NRI can help cut that work down for you. At NRI, our primary goal is to find the best person to fit any position within a company. That does not just mean finding, say, an Administrative Assistant that has all the skills a client is looking for; it means finding an Administrative Assistant with all the skills a client is looking for whose personality, past experience and future goals mesh the best with the client's culture.

Fitting square pegs into round holes goes against our philosophy because it almost always turns into a lose-lose-lose situation: you are unhappy, the client is unhappy and NRI's reputation is hurt with both of you! We derive satisfaction pleasing both you and the client.

When you have defined your goal (see *July 2002 JobLink issue*), NRI is the place to help you accomplish steps four and five of our feature article, targeting companies and getting interviews. When you know the type of work you want to do in the type of company you want to work for, our clear mission is to get you the interviews. We will help guide you through the interview process, including representing you to potential employers, securing desirable interviews for you and preparing you for who you will be meeting. And after all, isn't that the worst part of looking for a job? Let us do it for you!

7 TIPS TO WRITING GREAT COVER LETTERS

By Liz Benuscak

One of the biggest mistakes that job seekers make today is underestimating the importance of cover letters. The cover letter is the best way to get noticed and should be given just as much attention as your resume. Here are some tips to make sure your cover letter sends the right message and gets you the interview:

- 1. Use the right format.** A cover letter should follow the format of introduction, sales pitch, call to action. That means that, in a succinct manner, you should tell the reader who you are, why he needs you and when *you* are going to contact him.
- 2. Get a name.** If you have no other option, then use the "Dear Sir or Madam" greeting, but if at all possible, find out the name of the person hiring for the position and use it.
- 3. Make sure the letterhead on your resume and cover letter match.** You are trying to project an image with these documents, and matching letterhead shows professionalism and attention to detail.
- 4. Avoid starting every sentence with "I".** A cover letter can get very monotonous when each statement begins with I did, I do, I feel...be creative and you will keep the readers attention. Try phrases like "My responsibilities included..." or the descriptions of the results of your projects.
- 5. Refer to your accomplishments in the cover letter.** Qualifying and quantifying your accomplishments in your cover letter is just as important as doing it in your resume. It will make the reader want to learn more about you and why you are the best candidate for the job.
- 6. Make sure that you set a follow-up date at the close of the letter.** Instead of saying that you are looking forward to hearing from the person, say you will be contacting her office on a specific date to set up a mutually convenient time to meet.
- 7. Proofread, proofread, proofread.** If there are typos in your cover letter, you are not going to get called for an interview. It is as simple as that.

DO YOU HAVE THE TIME?

NRI's launch of E-Time has been a great success. Each week, more and more clients join our service that allows our temporaries to submit their weekly hours over our website. Both our clients and temporaries have found it to be a convenient, hassle-free method for submitting and approving work week hours.

However, not every client is ready to join E-Time yet. Sometimes you will need to submit a paper timesheet on a given assignment. To make this process easier, we have revamped our printable timesheet that is also available to you on our website. Simply go to the site map at www.nri-staffing.com and click the "Printable Timesheet" button at the bottom of the page. Fill it out and fax it to the NRI office that assigned you by 6:00 P.M. Monday. And don't forget: *Call to confirm that we received it!!*

JOB QUEST: 5 STEPS TO YOUR NEXT JOB...CONTINUED

From Infoplease.com

is to get as many meetings - interviews - as possible. Your job search strategy should be focused on getting interviews and on following up after the interview to get the offer.

Here is one process for contacting employers. It's not easy, but it does work. Try it your self, and get ready to juggle the job offers!

A. Initial Contact

- Purpose:
 - To introduce yourself
 - To tell the employer you're available
 - To ask for an interview
- Method:
 - Telephone call
 - Letter with a resume
 - Casual meeting at a professional association
- Success Rate:

You will need about 50 initial contacts to receive one interview. That's because you're introducing yourself to people who may or may not have an opening or have time to meet with you, or learn more about you. Don't be discouraged! Your follow-up contacts will be more rewarding, but you have to start here. Some employers will "shut the door" by saying there's no point in contacting them further. Thank them and, if their company is important to you, follow up in one or two months. Otherwise, drop them from the list.
- Schedule:

Make at least 12 initial contact a week to yield one interview a month.

B. Follow Up (2nd Contact)

- Purpose:
 - To remind the employer of your earlier call or letter
 - To answer questions they asked earlier
 - To ask for an interview

- Method:
 - Telephone
 - Letter with a resume
 - Casual meeting at a networking event
 - Drop by

The trick with follow up contact is to choose a different method than your initial contact. If you dropped by last week, follow up with a phone call or letter. If you called, send a letter referring to that call and include a resume. You are trying to establish a relationship so the employer knows you are interested and that you will stay in touch.

- Success Rate
Because this is the second contact, expect to make about 25 follow-up contacts to get one interview. That's twice as good as the initial contact, so that's progress! But remember: in order to get an interview, you have to ask for one. Make that request part of every contact with every employer.
- Schedule
Try to make 12 follow-up contacts a week, to get 2 interviews a month.

Interview Follow-Up

- Purpose:
 - To thank the employer for the meeting
 - To express interest in working for them
 - To give information you may have forgotten in the interview
 - To ask when a decision will be made (if a job's currently open)
- Method:
 - Telephone call
 - Letter with a resume
 - Casual meeting at a professional association
- Success rate:

Depends on how the interview went, and whether a job is open

right now. Expect one job offer for every 4-5 interviews.

- Schedule:

Mail a follow-up/thank-you letter within a week of each face-to-face meeting, whether a job is open now or not.

Summary: How long will it take?

That's a lot of work, isn't it?

Seriously, how much time are we talking about? It depends on the method you choose for your contacts. Expect phone calls to take about 15 minutes each. Letters will take longer, because they need to be typed - count on one hour per letter. And drop by visits will surely take an hour, when you count travel time. So your first two weeks will take up to 12 hours each week. After that, you could spend up to 35 hours a week on a system of initial contacts, follow-ups, and extended follow-ups. Your interviews will probably take a half-day, because of transportation and getting dressed up. That's still about 5 hours less than you'd spend in a job - use the extra time to go to a matinee or visit a friend!

Of course, if you're currently employed, you have less time available for job search. In that case, you will need to stretch this strategy out over a longer period of time. Don't worry. This method will still work. You will just need to work around your current job. If you can manage it, consider changing your work schedule to give you some free time during the day. This makes it easier to schedule meetings and make calls.

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