

Getting Started on Your Job Search



Accessful
The right start unlocks success

Resources for
Students



Introduction

Finding a job takes preparation and effort. Once you have created a résumé that highlights your skills and work experience, you are ready to begin your job search. There are generally two different ways to find a job. Some jobs may be posted on job boards or websites. Other jobs are not advertised and you need to find them yourself. This is called the “Hidden Job Market.”

Applying to job postings or ads

- Check co-op or job boards posted at your school, often found in Guidance
- Use programs licensed by your school board, such as careercruising.com to see job descriptions
- Check job boards at local employment agencies
- Watch for signs at stores accepting applications check websites such as jobbank.gc.ca, workopolis.com or indeed.ca for your area

Remember it's always a good idea to ask friends and family to let you know about openings.

Using the hidden job market

- Tell friends, family and teachers what job you are looking for. Ask them to keep their eyes open while you are searching. This is called “networking” and it can work wonders!
- Casually ask store employees if they know of any openings
- Ask to speak with store managers to see if they are accepting applications
- Look for notices at building entrances looking for paid help or volunteers (i.e. places of worship, community centre, youth group centre, libraries.)

When applying to a job posting or ad

When you are applying to a job posting you have more competition, so be sure to use any advantage you can to make a positive impression with an employer.

Try the following tips:

- Find out as much as possible about the company
- Personalize your cover letter.
See Resource: **How to Write a Cover Letter.**
- Make sure you know the name of the hiring manager
- When possible, drop off your application in person.

CAUTION: If the ad gives specific instructions not to come in person, then don't! Respect the employer's preference.

Filling out application forms

Many organizations have their own application forms and may require you to complete one before being interviewed. Here are some tips:

- Take the application home and return it later if possible. Photocopy the form to fill in and then transfer your information onto the original to avoid mistakes
- Read over the entire form and follow instructions carefully
- Print carefully and neatly in black or blue pen
- Under education, list the schools you have attended and any information requested
- Try not to leave any questions blank, write “not applicable” if necessary
- Do not use relatives as references
- Remember to sign your name using your signature, not initials
- Have all the starting and end dates of any work-related experience
- Read over your answers and check for grammar and spelling, or ask an adult to proofread
- Answer all questions in a positive way
- Be careful about what personal information you offer to an employer. It is against the law in Ontario for an employer to discriminate against anyone based on: age, disability, place of birth, national origin, race or colour, citizenship, marital status, or anything else that violates *Ontario's Human Rights Code*.

Handling rejection

Everyone feels differently about rejection and people handle rejection in many ways. It's rare to get the first job you apply for, or even the first job you have an interview for. It is normal that job searching takes time and effort. Try not to get frustrated when you don't get the job after you worked so hard. Some things to keep in mind:

Don't take it personally

- Realize the employer may have hired someone internally
- Your experience was good, but someone else had more qualifications
- They were looking for someone with a different personality. This does not mean there is something wrong with your personality, it means that you may have not been the right ‘fit’ for their team
- You are not alone trying to find work
- Remain optimistic and keep trying

Reasons for rejecting job applicants

If you are experiencing a lot of rejection in your job search, it might be worthwhile to check the following list. Ask yourself if you are giving employers reasons not to hire you. Knowing what you need to work on can be an important step towards finding a job.

- Poor attire, personal appearance and/or hygiene
- Know-it-all attitude, overaggressive, has no areas for improvement
- Poor voice, grammar, inability to express yourself clearly
- No life-goals
- Indifference, lack of interest or enthusiasm
- Too interested in wage, benefits, vacation and other perks
- Not willing to take an entry-level position
- Makes excuses for past work experiences
- Does not look interviewer in the eye and/or poor handshake
- No knowledge of the company
- Cannot take criticism
- Late to interview
- Sloppy or incomplete application form
- Negative comments about past employers