
Career & Employment Center

Job Search Mistakes to Avoid

The best way to avoid these mistakes in your job search is to recognize them and take care to avoid them. You can learn from the mistakes made by those seeking jobs in the past. Here are some errors frequently made by job candidates that can, and should, be avoided.

Assuming “The Best Qualified Person Gets the Job”

Many times, the best job candidate is not hired. Instead, the person who plans the best job campaign often comes out on top. It certainly helps to have strong qualifications, but how you present them is equally important.

The “Standard” Resume

Too many job seekers develop what they feel is their best resume and use it for all positions sought. One of the most distinctive aspects of the resume is the slant you give it to fit the key requirements of each job opening. For example, a key to some jobs may be technical knowledge, while for others organizational skills may be the most important.

Ignoring the Cover Letter

A common error is assuming that cover letters should do little more than transmit a resume. Think of your initial letter to an employer as a “letter of application,” another key tool in your job campaign. Begin by attracting the employer’s attention with a strong opening paragraph and follow this up with several short paragraphs that call attention to qualifications cited on your resume, or that introduce additional strong points.

Focusing Solely on Personal Achievements

Past job achievements and the skills you currently possess are certainly important, but the key to success in today’s business world is in group activities and motivating others. Your role working within or directing groups should be emphasized along with your own work skills.

The “Friendly” Interview

Interviews may seem like friendly conversations between people trying to please each other, but they are far more like a verbal IQ test, and you should anticipate what you are likely to be asked. Look over the kinds of questions often asked in interviews, as presented in many job search books, and make sure you can handle them. It also helps to write down how you might respond to various questions.

Repeating Interview Responses

You may face multiple interviews with a potential employer, so avoid saying the same thing to each interviewer. Otherwise, when they sit down to compare notes, you may sound one-dimensional. Try to tell each interviewer at least one distinctive, strong qualification or anecdote about a past achievement or group success.