



# **17 TOP TIPS FOR JOB HUNTING SUCCESS**

## **PRESENTED BY GRAHAM MARTIN**

### **ORCHARD RECRUITMENT**

1. Think about the type of job/company you want to work at.

Too often people apply for a position that they have not really thought about, or the type or culture of the organisation they want to work for. In my experience, people spend more time researching what type of holiday and the destination they wish to visit, than they do contemplating where they will spend 2200 hours a year. (for an average 4 years!)

2. Approach companies directly, not simply via email/web

Assuming you are already talking with recruiters; don't simply rely upon them! Recruiters and job-boards do not have access to ALL the positions on offer. Ask friends, look in local newspapers, Facebook, LinkedIn or company websites and APPLY direct, either in person or by good, old fashioned post.

3. Tailor your CV & cover letter specifically for each job

Whilst it's important to have an up to date generic CV ready 'for action' at all times, tailor your CV and cover letter to suit the role and organisation.

Make your CV relevant. Avoid clichés. Use spell check but ask others to proof read it. Don't confuse stationery with stationary for example. Then address your applications to a specific individuals rather than 'dear sir or madam'. Avoid email applications if you can!

4. Follow up each application with a phone call.

This is such a simple thing to do, and yet most people don't do it. You have submitted your application form and that's it...you wait? Wrong! After 3 days pick up the phone and enquire regarding the progress of your application. Often it's those who are proactive, who take action, appear enthusiastic, that go on to 'win the day'



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#### **5. Research each company prior to interview.**

With Google, Facebook and LinkedIn it's easy to know what type of organisation you have applied to, their USPs (look it up!) and to do some research.

#### **6. Create a list of questions to ask/be asked at interview**

One of the best ways to impress a prospective employer is to have a list of questions ready prepared to ask the interviewer. After all, it's a TWO WAY process and you need to know if the company you are interviewing with are suitable for you. It's a bit like speed dating if you like! Write a list of questions you want to have answered about the role, the company, the prospects and training opportunities. Avoid asking about sick pay and such negative subjects. And remember; think about the questions from the employers point of view; how will YOU come across asking them? Then, and this is very important; draw up a list of 50, yes, 50 questions you might be asked. Include the obvious strengths and weakness questions of course but work hard at the other 49! Such hard work will pay dividends because you must now prepare your answers ON PAPER. Take your time, and really think about your answers.

Yes, this is hard work BUT it is worth the effort! Do you REALLY want your ideal job? Of course, but so do YOUR competition! You have to be beat them!

#### **7. Role play your interview responses with a friend**

Before you attend an interview it is crucial that you prepare properly. To do this, and YES, I am serious, role play the questions you may have to answer AND those you would like to ask yourself. I suggest spending 4 hours (8 x half hour sessions). Practice asking questions and answering them. Take it easy to start with and then push yourself harder. Likewise ask your friend to get tougher and tougher with you, but...have some fun with it! After a few hours your answers will become a reflex AND you will become more confident in asking your questions.



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#### 8. Check out how to get to the company before the day

Honestly, I am amazed how often exceptional candidates blow it by not turning up on time; because they get lost or miscalculate the time needed to travel to the interview. Check out where the company is and how to get there in RUSH HOUR TRAFFIC. A Sunday afternoon drive is not the same as catching two buses. Plan in advance.

#### 9. Know the name/position of your interviewer

This is so obvious but the onus is upon you to establish who your interviewer is, their position, responsibilities and if they are the REAL decision maker. Use Facebook, Google & LinkedIn.

#### 10. Dress smartly irrespective of the position

Whether you are applying for a director level role, an accounts trainee position or a job in the warehouse or the factory, DRESS SMARTLY.

Nobody was ever refused a position just because they wore a suit, smart jacket & tie or blouse and skirt with well-polished shoes.

#### 11. Have a hard copy of your CV with you

No excuses. Sorry. Don't take a USB, take the real thing

#### 12. Turn your phone off

Honestly. People still forget. Don't mute it! Actually turn it off. Simple..

#### 13. Use a hard back book to make notes.

Let's be clear. You want to impress. You want to stand out. You want to be taken seriously. There is no way that you will remember everything that you hear. You need to have your questions prepared in advance on paper. Invest a few pounds or dollars in a smart HARD BACK book. Simply doing this will set you apart.



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#### **14. If you like the job , TELL THEM**

Often candidates forget to tell the interviewer that they are interested in the position, even when it's PERFECT. Don't be shy, say you'd like the job if offered to you and explain WHY it suits you. In a sales job, go one better, show your sales skills by asking WHEN CAN I START?

Not the strategy for accounts staff, but essential for sales professionals. If you can't sell yourself...you won't be able to sell for the company!

#### **15. Follow up your interview with a thank you LETTER**

This is a simple courtesy. As above, explain your enthusiasm. The best and most effective way to do this is by writing and posting a letter. Classy! Avoid emails if possible.

#### **16. Learn from 'turn downs' by asking for feedback**

Sadly, not all recruiters or employers will offer feedback. But DO ask for it. Learn from it and don't take it personally by becoming angry or frustrated. It's better to know that you yawn at interview and be able to deal with it than not! Not that YOU'D EVER yawn at an interview, but you appreciate the concept I hope.

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#### **17. Repeat until you are working**

Yes, keep at it. If you are NOT working then you should spend 8 hours a day on this project. If you ARE working set aside 4 hours a week, over two nights or at the weekend.

Good Luck

Graham Martin

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