



## RSP Recruitment May 5, 2014

# Career Boot Camp: Job Seeking Basics



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By Lisa Quast Contributor at Forbes.

This month I want to take it back to the basics with my “Career Boot Camp” blog series. First up, ensure you have your job search fundamentals down!

Over the last few years I’ve seen and heard it all when it comes to the crazy things people have done to get a job, everything from auctioning themselves off on eBay to purchasing online ads boasting their work skills to singing their résumé in a YouTube video, even mailing hiring managers their name and contact information in frosting on top of a gigantic cookie.

I don’t disagree that these are creative ideas, but while sending hiring managers your résumé in a pop up box that explodes glittering stars when opened might get you noticed, it probably won’t get you hired if you haven’t already mastered the job seeking basics.

Make 2013 the year you get the basics right when it comes to obtaining your dream job:

**Update your résumé:** Think of it as a personal advertisement that sells you and your skills as the perfect ‘product’ for the job. Use strong action words such as created, implemented, or achieved instead of words like assisted or helped. Quantify your accomplishments, ensure there are no spelling or grammar errors, and ask family or friends to review and provide feedback.

**Connect the dots:** Know the job you are applying for by reading the description carefully and thoroughly, and then boldly call out the skills and experience you embody in your résumé. If there are gaps, be prepared to address them in your résumé, cover letter, and during potential interviews.

**Use LinkedIn to create a highly professional electronic résumé:** This includes writing a succinct profile summary, adding current job information, past job experience, education, skills, awards, uploading a professional-looking profile picture, and obtaining recommendations from previous managers, co-workers, or direct reports.

**Research, research, research:** Educate yourself on the company and industry by conducting research. The knowledge you gain will help you sell yourself as the best candidate for the position and help you prepare questions to ask the interviewer.

**Find an insider:** Using your networking skills, try to track down at least one or more “sponsors” or “internal coaches” who can provide inside tips about the company and potential position. Your insiders can also serve as your advocates or references as you compete for a position.

**Conduct mock interviews:** Think about the questions you might be asked from the following five categories: 1.) Background, 2.) Job/Company/Industry, 3.) Style/Personality, 4.) Skills/Experience, and 5.) Future Goals/Aspirations. Then create answers and practice conducting the interview in front of the mirror or with a trusted friend or family member.

**Dress for positive impact:** Use your attire to create the right image of the type of person you are and how you’ll fit into the desired position. Need help with your wardrobe? Go to a large department store and request a personal shopper, or hire a personal stylist. Once that’s done, assess your hair and makeup to ensure both convey that you take pride in yourself and stay on top of current trends.

**Be highly prepared for job interviews:** Show up with all the documents you’ll need for your interview (copies of your résumé, reference list, letters of recommendation, driver’s license, social security card, passport, fact sheet, portfolio of work, paper and pen to take notes, etc.) and bring questions to ask the hiring manager.

**Bottom line:** Before attempting any new or trendy job-seeking tactics, first ensure you have the basics covered. The basics are the “must haves” whereas creative maneuvers should come only after the basics are well executed.

~ Lisa Quast

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