

SMART JOB SEEKERS DO THESE 10 THINGS

CareerBuilder posted a great article on what "smart" job seekers do, it seems simple enough, but I see these mistakes made over and over again. So, what separates the smart job seeker from others looking for employment? Oftentimes, it is one of these 10 things:

1. They realize a potential job lead could be anywhere.

Smart job seekers aren't afraid to mention occupational aspirations to their book club, their parents' friends or their dentist. (One never knows whose golf partner might be the ticket to getting a foot in the door.) Caroline Ceniza-Levine, a partner at SixFigureStart — a career coaching firm in New York City comprised of former Fortune 500 recruiters — recommends putting your LinkedIn public profile hyperlink in your automatic email signature. "This is an elegant way to attach your résumé to every correspondence you send. Even friends who think they know you may click through to your profile, learn more about you and perhaps think of you for a job or lead that they might have overlooked."

2. They surf job boards for more than just open positions.

Ceniza-Levine calls job boards "goldmines" for research. "You might see companies you didn't know before — add these to your list of targets. You might see the same requirements again and again — this indicates a standard for the job you want, so incorporate these items into your pitch and cover letters."

3. They put adequate time and effort into their applications.

"Spend time to make your résumé the best possible written advertisement of you," says Lisa Quast, author of "Your Career, Your Way!" and founder of Career Woman Inc., a Seattle-based career development consulting company. "Analyze the job requirements against your own skills and abilities, and customize your cover letter."

Obviously, all correspondence should be free of errors and typos. And before sending off the application packet, look at the job posting one last time to ensure all desired material is included.

4. They do their homework.

It seems logical to smart applicants to know something about potential employers. From Googling a company to checking out its financial statements, they learn what they can — and use the information to enhance their correspondence.

5. They know employers do their homework, too.

"According to [a] Coremetrics [study], 75 percent of companies require recruiters to research job applicants online, so you'll want to be sure you know what they'll find," states Sherrie Madia, co-author of "The Online Job Search Survival Guide." Besides thinking twice about what you choose to post, she suggests doing a Google search on your name. If you find something undesirable, try to have it removed.

6. They make their value known quickly.

"An employer gives each résumé about a three-second window of time before he decides to either 'delete' or read further," says Patrice Rice, author of "How to Interview" and president of the recruiting firm Patrice & Associates in Dunkirk, Md. A smart applicant answers the "What can you do for me?" question right off the bat with a summary of strongest accomplishments at the résumé's top.

7. They look and act like a professional.

Simple but effective: A smart applicant arrives on time, dresses appropriately, both talks *and* listens, displays confidence and minds his manners.

8. They show that they want *this* job.

Smart job seekers are not "tire kickers." They focus on the needs of the employer and demonstrate how they are perfect for this particular position.

"Show enthusiasm during the job interview," says Rice. "Always make certain that the company you're interviewing with feels as if it is your first choice, no matter what other companies are involved in your job search."



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9. They don't get ahead of themselves.

As much as she may be dying to know about promotions, raises and vacation time, a smart candidate doesn't jump the gun and tackle these issues during the first interview. She focuses on landing the position, then on whether the package is suitable.

10. They ask for the position, follow up and thank.

"As strange as it sounds, you need to ask for the job," says Catherine Jewell, author of "New Résumé New Career: Get the Job You Want with the Skills and Experience You Already Have." "At the end of the interview, sum up your strengths, tell the interviewer that you are excited about the position and say, 'I would really like to contribute to this company. I am hoping you select me.'"

Then, a smart interviewee keeps his name in the game with a follow-up note reiterating interest and offering thanks — knowing that a great last impression can seal the deal.

