

A Productive Job Search

Productivity is a necessity within all aspects of life. Whether old or young, employed or unemployed, productivity is key. That being said, for those seeking employment productivity plays an exceptionally important role. Having a high level of unemployment means that when a job opening exists, hundreds, if not thousands of individuals will be found applying for the same job. It should therefore be the objective of each applicant to ensure that their respective applications are set apart from all others thus securing them a place in the interview process and ultimately success in landing the job.

In the interim, ensuring positive results begins with a 'productive' job search.

A productive job search must be handled like a full time job, with schedules and varying strategies being adopted. The process may be time consuming and a little stressful, but the end result will be well worth it as the objective is to ensure that the job seeker gets employed.

There are ten basic parts to a successful and productive job search. They include:

- 1) Networking; maintaining current contacts and making new ones.
- 2) Monitoring of Online Presence; Most companies effect online searches on their prospective employees therefore it is important that your online profile exhibits a positive portrayal of yourself.
- 3) Searching For Jobs; An active effort must be made to constantly check listings and other avenues for employment opportunities and job openings.
- 4) Researching Companies; Be knowledgeable of the companies for which job openings exist. Ensure that you align yourself with the work of the company and its vision.

- 5) Updating Resumes; Your resume must be constantly updated to include new and relevant information.
- 6) Writing Cover Letters; Your resume must be accompanied by an eye-catching, well written cover letter. This document must articulate your potential as the right candidate for the job.
- 7) Applying To Jobs; Unwavering pursuit of employment must be evident in the approach to writing and dispatching job applications – remain actively engaged in this practice.
- 8) Following Up on Applications; Never assume that your application was received. Follow up with a short email or a phone call to confirm receipt.
- 9) Interviewing For Jobs; Be readily available when called upon for job interviews.
- 10) Following Up on Interviews; Always thank the organisation for having made the time to see you and enquire about the next stage of the hiring process.

Alongside the aforementioned, there are other strategies that aid in making the process of looking for a job more productive. For example, a job seeker should:

- **Make Plans**

Allocate certain days for certain activities and stick to the schedule. For example make Mondays, and Wednesdays the days to follow up with networking contacts and Tuesdays and Thursdays the days to research new companies worth applying to. Fridays could then be reserved for following up on any job applications sent off the previous week.

- **Maintain a Spreadsheet of Activities**

Information spreadsheets are a vital aid for jobseekers. They help by keeping them up to date and on track of where they are within the whole job seeking process. Included should be all information relating to all jobs applied to. Note down the names of the companies contacted, the date applications were sent off, the individuals contacted and the dates when

follow up activities should begin. It is also advisable to have a networking spreadsheet which should contain all relevant information pertaining to all networking carried out.

- **Always Rework Resumes and Cover Letters for Specific Jobs**

It may not be necessary to rewrite an entire resume and cover letter for every job, but certain keywords, the summary of qualifications, and the letter's content should be updated for each job. This will take longer than sending out the same standard cover letter and C.V but applications will be much more targeted, making them more effective.

Anyone who has ever been unemployed would agree that when looking for a job, it can be disheartening when applications are continuously sent out with there being little to no positive feedback. However, the key is never to give up! Persistence coupled with a productive action plan will help bring about a productive output. One which will give rise to the right person being hired for the right position, within the right organisation.

(For more information on productivity contact The National Competitiveness and Productivity Council on the Second Floor of the Financial Centre, Bridge St at 468 5576. You can also visit the Council's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/stluciancpc> or email them at stluciancpc@gmail.com).