

How to Find a Job

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Assumption & Mindset

Organizations, large and small, are always on the lookout for talent. They hire anyone they believe can add value in their setup. Ask yourself, should you focus on non-profits or commercial organizations?

Assume that all potential employers – and there are thousands of them out there - would like to hire you and that too, on mutually favorable terms. Now it is for you to decide where to work and why?

To arrive at a clear answer to where you should work, begin by thinking strategically, and see yourself as a giver of value and a researcher.

Research

Your first task is to carry out research on the internet and shortlist at least ten organizations that appeal to you.

Rank them in order of preference, after learning about them through their websites, print and social media. Also talk to a few

people who work in these organizations. Find out information on their products and services, their customers, their current challenges, and see how you could deploy your skills to add value.

After having done your homework on the organizations you have shortlisted, identify decision-makers in them. Study their profiles on websites and on LinkedIn.

With this level of preparation, you will be more confident and in a better position to have meaningful conversations with prospective employers when you meet them.

Self-Awareness

People will see you as you see yourself. Therefore, prepare yourself prior to lining up any meeting, by becoming more self-aware.

Write down your top-of-mind responses to the following questions and discuss them with a close friend or relative:

1. Who are you?
2. What makes you unique?
3. Why should a potential employer select you from a choice of fifty others?
4. What are you good at?
5. What do you love doing?
6. What is your vision?
7. What inspires you and why?
8. What has been your personal best leadership experience in school, college and/or career so far? Share examples.
9. Are you a team player? What evidence can you offer from your

past experiences that support your credentials as a potential manager and leader? Organizations want to know of your technical competence and your managerial and leadership skills which include, Confidence, communication - both oral and written, interpersonal, analytical and creative thinking, ability to resolve conflicts, negotiation, problem-solving and decision-making, integrity, attitude and initiative.

Reflect on your past experiences and come up with examples which support some or all these skills.

Getting an appointment

When seeking an appointment, you will be asked for the purpose of the meeting. You could state, "I would like to meet Mr or Ms XYZ to discover how I might be able to add value in your organization," or "I want to find out how I could deploy my skills that will benefit your organization."

You can come up with other responses too, so long as you don't mention that you are looking for a job. And at this stage, you aren't! *You are simply exploring possibilities with a few organizations. Based on the information you gather, you'll decide where to work, later.*

At the meeting

Turn up for scheduled meetings on time, preferably 5-10 mins early and be suitably dressed for the occasion. Wear a smile. At the outset, proactively ask, "How much time have you budgeted for this meeting?"

If 15 to 30 mins is mentioned, stick to the timeframe. When allotted time runs out, request for a follow-up meeting later, if more info is needed, and the prospective employer is also interested in continuing the dialogue.

Have a clear goal in mind. Ask relevant questions and listen intently. Your questions reveal your personality and character. Try to learn about the organization, its history, its culture, its customers, its challenges, its priorities and its past business performance. Your intent is to see how you could contribute to the organization's profitability, growth and sustainability.

You will also be asked questions during such an exploratory meeting. Listen to the questions carefully. If you are not clear about what is being asked, request the person to repeat his or her question. Paraphrase, if necessary. Listen more than you speak. Try to keep the Listen/Speak ratio to 60:40.

It may happen that the prospective employer, during the meeting, suggests, "Why don't you work with us?" Express gratitude and say you'll need a week or two to think about it, as you are in the process of meeting other companies. If asked about what salary package you would like, don't state a figure. Say that you would like to be compensated based on the responsibility level assigned and the value you are expected to add. Leave the decision with the organization on how much they should pay you.

If you find the offer ridiculously low, it may be an indicator, that the company is not valuing your credentials - or that they are

testing to see how you might respond!
Never look discouraged.

Don't overstay your welcome. Once the agreed time is up, thank them for the time they have given you and leave. Make sure to send a short email/WhatsApp text, summarizing the meeting and conclude by expressing your wish to stay in touch.

Conclusion

Have faith that you will get a job, when the time comes. Continue to make consistent high-quality efforts.

Bear in mind that employers are interested in knowing:

- a) Will this candidate maintain and/or enhance the reputation and image of our business?
- b) Will this candidate contribute, directly, or indirectly, to greater profitability or impact through cost savings, better productivity and/or greater revenue?
- c) Will this candidate improve the culture of teamwork and performance in the organization?

If, after an interview, management feels that you can satisfy them on the above three points, you are very likely to get placed.

What you seek - seeks you!

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