



Advice for the Experienced Job Seeker

ADVICE FOR THE EXPERIENCED JOB SEEKER. There is no shortage of information and advice on the Internet about how to get a great job, but a majority of that advice is directed at entry-level job seekers or those with minimal experience. While the range of topics—from how to write a résumé to how to dress for your interview—can provide great reminders for a candidate with any level of seniority, certain opportunities (and pitfalls) are unique to experienced job seekers.



UPDATING YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Many experienced job seekers make the mistake of using the same résumé (and bio) they have had for years. Take the time to update your current skills—especially technology, team management, leadership skills, and any new budgetary responsibilities. These grow and improve with time, and every step counts. Other considerations to note:

- Take the time to figure out how your knowledge, skills, and abilities apply to the job you want; then use the current language of the industry to write your résumé. Many organizations first scan applications and résumés for key words electronically, so this is a critical first step.
- Trim your résumé. (Recruiters typically say one page for less than 10 years of experience.) You should be able to describe and highlight your current skills while minimizing text devoted to unrelated jobs and skills. List dates and positions, as most employers still want to see your full career history.



MAKE YOUR COVER LETTER WORK HARD FOR YOU

A great cover letter can tackle many challenges, not the least of which is demonstrating that you are a great communicator.

- Craft a targeted cover letter for each place you apply to, and express your genuine interest in and enthusiasm for the organization and the role you seek.
- Take the opportunity to explain gaps in employment and note specialized training or skills.
- Be specific when applying your skills in one job or field to a new job or field. Don't assume the reader will make the connection.
- A cover letter allows the experienced job seeker to highlight quantifiable accomplishments in a narrative format that might not suit a résumé.



WORK YOUR NETWORK

One big upside to being in the middle of your career is that you have a network. Time to put it to good use.

- Don't be shy. Most people like to be helpful, so if you ask for a favor they can easily do, they almost certainly will.
- The key here is to make it easy for them to help. In the same email in which you send your résumé, include a few, key bullet points noting what you would like to do and why you are qualified.
- If you are looking to change fields, you will need to broaden your network to include people in your desired field. Research whom you already know who might be able to make some introductions for you.



UPDATE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES

Yes, you need to have a LinkedIn profile, and it needs to be up-to-date with your job history, an informative headline, and a summary that accurately reflects your professional goals.

- Now is not the time to let the app default to listing your name, location, and current title. The headline should tell people in one glance what they need to know about you as a professional. Sometimes recruiters are moving so quickly they only click through if they are hooked by the headline.
- All of your public social media profiles photos should be updated with professional headshots. Even your non-public profiles should have flattering photos that you would not be concerned about any potential employer seeing. Few things on social media are as private as you think.

ONE LAST NOTE. At mid-career, especially if you have not looked for a job since landing your first one, you may feel awkward about being a job seeker again. Don't let that hold you back. This is a chance to decide what you want and chase it. Use this opportunity to shape the next phase of your career. Whether you have five years of experience or 15, remember that you have something that entry-level folks do not: actual accomplishments. Whether you quantify them in productivity, dollars, or bills passed, do whatever it takes to highlight the contributions you have made, the lessons you have learned, and the obstacles you have overcome. The best predictor of future success is prior success, so brag about yourself a bit. Show your next employer where you've come from and where you're going.