Tips for Job Hunting

Job hunting involves two basic stages – (1) submitting your CV/Resume and (2) interviewing.

Companies use the CV as the first level of sorting. If your CV doesn’t demonstrate the requisite skills/experience you won’t get called in to an interview. But equally, if you have the requisite skills/experience but your CV is badly formatted/spell-checked you will lose out to candidates who have skills/experience and took the time to present themselves in the best possible light.

CV/Resume

- Do you know the difference? A Curriculum Vitae is a detailed history of your education and experience and could run to many pages. A resume is a short summary of your education/experience and should be no longer than a page. A resume should be customised to emphasise the skills required for the job for which you are applying.
- Triple-check your resume for typos. Think of it from the perspective of your potential employer – a resume with even a single typo screams “I didn’t spend the time needed to get this done right”. Employers want to hire people who take the time to get things right.
- Tell people what you have done, not who you are. What you do defines who you are. If you worked at a coffee shop and received the highest customer assessments of anyone in the store you should include that in your resume. If you worked in a suit store and sold $30K worth of suits per month you should indicate this. Anyone can write “I am a proactive person with exceptional people skills” but only people who have actual achievements can list those achievements.
- Be as concrete as possible. Write down exactly what you did in each of your former roles.
- Talk in terms of what you have done, not what you have the potential to do. If you are planning on looking for a job from July 2017 and you have little experience on your resume, go and get some. Work as a volunteer (this shows that you are proactive). Get a job in a ramen shop (demonstrates customer service and Japanese skill). Build a web page (shows the ability to teach yourself a skill). Do some online courses. Learn a programming language. Intern somewhere.

Interviewing

- Be on time. If for some reason you are going to be late, ring ahead and warn the interviewer.
- Be prepared. If you don’t know much about the company you are interviewing with you will immediately be in line behind all the applicants who took an hour to read the company web page.
- Present yourself well. Remember, an employee is looking at you and thinking “Can I put this person in front of a customer/client?” (Dress appropriately for the role – if you are interviewing for a software engineering role a suit might not be appropriate).
- Interviewing well is a skill – the more you practice the better you get. Before you get into an actual interview you should have done a number of practice interviews with friends/colleagues.
- Interviews start before you get into the interview room – they start with the first email/call asking you to come in for an interview. You are being assessed on how promptly you respond and the tone you use. Why? Because the employer is imagining what you would be like as an
employee. If you are slow to respond and write badly worded emails as an applicant this is
evidence that you are likely to do the same as an employee.

- Don’t waffle. Answer the question and stop. Waffling makes you sound like you lack
  conviction. And remember, if you talk endlessly during the interview the employer will think
  “I am going to be spending a lot of time with this person. They talk a lot. Do I want to spend
every day with someone who prattles on?”

- Ask questions during the interview
- Give concrete examples. Saying “I am a people person” is nowhere near as effective as
describing a real life example in which you, as a sales person in a shop, demonstrated
empathy to a frustrated customer and made them feel valued again

- Watch videos about how to interview well
- Read articles about how to interview well
- After the interview write a thank you email