



# 2019 JOB SEARCH GUIDE

**Expert Advice on  
What it Takes**

**TO GET A JOB IN 2019**

**KFORCE**



## INTRODUCTION

Hunting for a job in the 21st century requires skills you may not even realize you have. Conquering every step in the journey requires a modern job search strategy. Coming out victorious is no easy feat—but we've got you covered!

We've created this easy-to-follow guide, packed to the brim with everything you need to know about how to get a job. At Kforce, our vision is *To Have A Meaningful Impact On All The Lives We Serve®*, and this includes you.

As one of the nation's leading staffing and solutions firms, we've hired tens of thousands of professionals during our 50 plus years of experience. In this guide, we share expert advice on what it takes to get that coveted job you desire.

Knowing how to find a job you love will serve you repeatedly over the course of your career. We'll help you conquer your job hunt, one victory at a time. Let's get started!

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# Optimize Your Professional Brand

Job seekers may think that the resume accounts for the bulk of landing a new job, however experts say there are so many more factors to consider. People often make the mistake of applying to several jobs without a strategy, praying that one of those spaghetti noodles actually sticks to the wall.

Resumes are important, and you need to have a strong one. But there is much more to a successful job hunt. You don't get hired by just blindly sending out your resume. This section focuses on one of the most significant job search tips: your professional brand.

## WHAT IS MY PROFESSIONAL BRAND?

Think of your professional brand as a single entity. It encompasses your past experiences, who you are, what you do, your habits, attitudes, beliefs and where you're headed. One's professional brand can be broken down into three parts:

- Skills and experience
- Professional values
- Behavior

Let's go through each one. Later in this section, we will show you how to demonstrate them online.

## SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Analyze your skills and past experiences before creating or updating your resume, optimizing your LinkedIn profile or applying for a job.

Craft your professional brand to align with the required and preferred skills and experience for your target job. Paint a holistic picture using your entire digital persona, demonstrating why you are the best fit for your ideal job. [Skills to articulate and demonstrate](#) are:

**Hard skills:** These are technical competencies that you need to complete a task efficiently and successfully. They vary by occupation and often are a minimum requirement you must meet to get an interview. Examples include programming, using test automation tools and working with graphic design programs.

**Soft skills:** You need this set of skills to execute the technical skills of your job effectively. Examples include time management, written communication, attention to detail, organization and presentation skills.

We will go into detail in other sections of this guide on how to showcase your skills and experience on your [resume](#) and LinkedIn.

**Professional values:** Professional values are "business-related beliefs or principles



## Optimize your Professional Branding

that guide professional behavior. Values may reflect ethics, practices, standards and other norms within a commercial environment,” according to Business Dictionary. [Professional values](#) include the set of beliefs that enable you to make any judgment calls at work to ensure the best interest of the department and the employer are promoted.

Examples include accountability, integrity, teamwork, transparency, commitment to your profession and continued learning.

Infusing your professional values into your digital persona requires more effort than articulating and demonstrating your skills.

## HOW TO PRESENT YOUR PROFESSIONAL BRAND ONLINE

As a job seeker, it is critical to demonstrate your strengths and the professional values you embody. Anyone can Google you and view your social media activity (even if you think your account is private).

Your behavior online is where the rubber hits the road.

To show potential employers that you possess the skills and the professional values they desire in a new employee, focus on the following areas:



**Continued learning:** This is an important professional value that most (if not all) employers find incredibly attractive in a candidate. Manifest this trait by engaging with content and dialogue. For example, a peer posts about a new technology that is poised to disrupt your industry. Post a thoughtful comment, ask a question or share related content with your network. You can also showcase your knowledge of trends that impact your profession, industry, employer or customers. It's up to you to self-study and continuously push yourself to learn new things.

**Professional achievements:** Prove your strong work ethic and why you are an asset in the workplace by highlighting your achievements. Awards like Employee of the Quarter or Rookie of the Year can bolster your resume or social profile and give a hiring manager insight into the impact you can have at any organization.

**Teamwork:** No matter how high you are in an organization, nothing is possible without teamwork. Demonstrate to potential employers that you have strong collaboration skills by showcasing team projects on your resume and profile.

**Commitment:** Passion for what you do can be the one trait that sets you apart from your numerous competitors. Hiring managers want team members who are committed and devoted! Think about your coworkers. Isn't it more enjoyable to work with people who are invested in their work and bring enthusiasm to the office? Recruiters are people too, and in today's digital world, it is easy for them to spot passion for one's work. Actively share content and participate in discussions about trends and issues impacting your field. Be an advocate for your profession. Provide value to others within your field, and to those entering.

Now that we have discussed **what** a professional brand entails, let's talk about **why** you should care.

## 3 REASONS YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT YOUR PROFESSIONAL BRAND

### 1. It's not all about your resume

The competition is fierce, and you need to use every opportunity to get a leg up on your competition. Think beyond the resume and view your professional brand as a singular, unique entity. Recruiters don't hire resumes; they hire human beings. Among many things, they are assessing your fit for their culture, your potential to advance the company's purpose and how well-rounded you are—not just at work, but outside of work. They are looking for things that cannot be conveyed on a resume alone.

### 2. Employers often hire for potential

The majority of employers will train and hire workers who may not have all the skills they need but have potential, according to [CareerBuilder's 2018 survey](#). Forty-four percent of all employers surveyed plan to train low-skill workers who don't have experience in their field and hire them for higher-skill jobs.

Use social media to demonstrate what your resume can't. You can't represent your potential on a resume; they are static and limiting. Resumes don't live and breathe as your professional brand does.

By networking on your social platforms, you can foster long-term relationships with potential mentors, partners or employers. This can help you to develop your skill set, stay current on the latest industry trends and stand out from others in the applicant pool.

### 3. What happens in Vegas could cost you a job

Talent acquisition professionals are savvy at internet research and can find just about

anything online—whether you think it is private or not. Google yourself online; what do you see? Now imagine you are highly-trained in [conducting x-ray searches](#) and uncovering “private” information online.

More than ever, people's online activity can cost them a job. What is posted on the internet is written in permanent ink. Something you may find funny or innocuous may resonate differently to someone else. In the physical world, there is context, and in the digital world, there is not.

## HOW TO GET A JOB WITH YOUR PROFESSIONAL BRAND

Now that you know what your professional brand entails, and why it's important to focus on it—let's talk about where to best leverage it. There is a long answer to that short question, and we don't have enough room on this page to cover it all here.

Look up our channel-specific strategies to optimize your professional brand.

- **Twitter:** <https://www.kforce.com/articles/twitter-hacks-for-job-seekers/>
- **LinkedIn:** <https://www.kforce.com/articles/optimize-your-professional-brand-linkedin/>
- **Instagram:** <https://www.kforce.com/articles/building-your-professional-instagram-brand/>

You've put in a lot of work up to this point in optimizing your professional brand. But, you're not entirely done yet. We encourage you to invest time in creating a resume that answers why YOU are the best person for the job.

# Create a Compelling Resume

Some recruiters spend as little as six seconds scanning your resume.

You've got little time to make a positive impression on a recruiter. Follow our tips to increase the likelihood of your resume falling into the short stack of "maybe" resumes and not the leaning tower of "no" resumes.

There's certainly no shortage of articles about writing resumes. In fact, a Google search for "How to Write a Resume" turns up numerous results. Curious about how to get a job in this digital age? Here are the "must know" tips to resume writing in 2019:

## A SMALL, INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT PIECE OF THE PIE

Over the years, the resume has lost some of its power to the rise of the LinkedIn profile and a strong professional brand online. Your resume might get a cursory glance, while your LinkedIn profile, blog or recent tweets get a longer look. But, keep reading. You still need to have a resume, and it needs to be of the best quality. It's worth the time on your part. Your resume should tell your story—specifically about how you will add value to your future employer.

## RESUME TIPS FOR FINDING A JOB IN 2019

### 1. Create a custom resume for every job you apply to.

Instead of casting a wide net and applying to multiple jobs at once, narrow your selection to focus on the jobs you truly want and feel like you have a good shot at landing. Then, tailor your resume to that specific job.

### 2. Consider a video resume.

In addition to your print resume, [create a short video](#) to stand out to prospective employers. Target the video to each position or company you are applying to. This outlet allows you to show off your personality, highlight your experiences and market why you are the best candidate for the job. Depending on your hiring manager's approval, you may be allowed to upload the video resume directly to your job profile.

### 3. Develop a keyword strategy.

Use rich keywords and phrases relevant to your desired job position or industry 2-3 times to ensure your resume is found when searched by employers or scanned through an applicant tracking system. In your resume, include phrases and skills that are listed in the job description.

### 4. Organize your resume.

Make your resume easy to read by including header sections, concise information and simple lists. Order your resume by the information that you want to spotlight first depending on where you are in your career journey. This will allow hiring managers to quickly scan your resume and find the qualifications they are looking for.

### 5. Include only relevant information.

Don't waste time including unnecessary details or jobs on your resume that don't illustrate skills needed for the role. Avoid overused words that don't differentiate yourself from your competitors, like "energetic" or "good communicator."

### 6. Validate your experience.

Show the impact you had in your previous roles by detailing your accomplishments, quantifiable metrics and context. Give credibility to work experience and skill set by providing links to relevant resources, including personal websites, your LinkedIn profile and digital portfolios. It's best to hyperlink words, instead of including a long, ugly link on your resume.

### 7. Check for spelling and grammar.

Before submitting a resume, always conduct a spelling and grammar check. Your resume is your first impression with a prospective employer. And, we can't forget the age-old adage—first impressions matter! Even one typo could cost you the job. Typos and other errors can be avoided. Use free software like Grammarly or Microsoft Word as a final set of eyes before you press send.

### 8. Be honest.

Last, but certainly not least, always be truthful about past work experience, including what you did in a role and how long you were

there. Hiring managers and recruiters can spot inconsistencies in resumes.

## WRITING YOUR RESUME FOR APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS

Thanks to technology, applying online is easy and fast. The result for employers is a mountain of job applications for every open role. On average, large corporate [companies receive up to 250 resumes for each job they post](#), according to Zety.

Recruiters and hiring managers utilize artificial intelligence (AI), automation and machine learning to sort through the deluge of applications they receive. Software known as an ATS, short for applicant tracking system, scans and filters submitted resumes based on specified criteria before being viewed by an actual human. These systems automatically filter out candidates who aren't a close match for a role.

If you haven't been contacted after submitting a resume, an ATS may have something to do with it. Use our resume tips below to help your resume beat the bots!

## HOW TO CREATE A BOT-FRIENDLY RESUME

- Do not include pertinent information such as skills, contact information or links in the header or footer. Not every ATS can read information in these document sections.
- Use standard fonts like Times, Arial, Georgia, Tahoma and Verdana.
- When using lists in your resume, stick to bullets. Avoid symbols like arrows, check marks and hyphens to prevent information scrambling. Use header sections like Summary,



## Create a Compelling Resume

Professional Skills, Experience and Education.

- Save your resume in a compatible format: .doc, .docx or .txt.
- Avoid PDFs. Some older ATS software interprets PDF information as one single image.
- Use relevant, targeted keywords & phrases.
- Keep graphics and design elements to a minimum.
- Spell out all terms alongside abbreviations and acronyms [i.e., project manager (PM)].

## HOW TO TEST YOUR RESUME FOR ATS COMPLIANCE

### Convert your resume to a plain-text document

One good way to check your resume before submitting to an ATS is by taking your content and copying it into a plain-text document. Missing information, scrambled characters and unorganized information can signal that your resume needs some refinement for an ATS (i.e., the dates of your employment appear next to the wrong job entry, or your summary section appears in the middle of your education).

### Use a web-based software to score your resume

Want to know your resume's likelihood of being viewed by a human through an ATS? Check out online software systems such as [Resunate](#) and [Jobscan](#) to score your resume

like an applicant tracking system would. Use features on these amazing tools to help fix your resume and improve your overall score.

### Writing your resume for SEO

A crucial step in getting your resume into a recruiter's "maybe" pile is making it search engine optimized. [SEO works](#) by implementing a keyword strategy including words and phrases that help get your resume found—whether it is online or in an ATS.

In resume writing for SEO, you'll need to include industry keywords that show you're the right person for the job. To get an idea of what keywords to use, review the descriptions of the positions you want. Record common keywords and phrases used throughout. The right keyword can be a defining factor in an employer finding your resume.

During your research, keep the following questions in mind when building your keyword strategy:

- **Job titles:** What relevant job titles are being used that describe your skill set?
- **Skills:** Are there any specific skills required for the job you seek?
- **Technologies:** Which technologies should you be proficient in?
- **Certifications:** Are there any specific certifications or education requirements?
- **Industry:** Is the employer looking for a candidate with a specific background?
- **Location:** Does your address match the location of the position you're applying for?

## WHY CONTEXT ALWAYS TRUMPS KEYWORDS

Avoid stuffing your resume with repetitive keywords. Applicant tracking systems ignore extra instances of keywords. You should only use keywords where they make logical sense. **Also, don't forget that keywords are nothing without context.** You'll still need to provide relevant experience and compelling details that illustrate your abilities around these keywords. Make sure your resume answers the who, what, where and why to convince hiring managers and employers that your skills can "walk the talk."

### Example:

If you're a *[job title]*, don't say you're familiar with a "*[keyword/skill]*." Say instead, "I worked for *[company]* on a large *[specific project]* and achieved *[solution]*."

**Bonus Tip:** Visit LinkedIn and research other professionals who have the job you're trying to land, whether at the same company or in a different industry. Study how they communicate their skill sets and experiences and take note when crafting your resume. Sometimes, the best inspiration can be found by exemplary professionals in your field!

## CREATING A MASTER RESUME

You've got tons of work experience with plenty of awards and accomplishments to match. However, when compiled, your extensive 4-page resume exceeds the recommended 1-2 pages.

This type of career journaling is called a Master Resume—a chronological record of your entire work history. While listing all your accomplishments may seem like a good idea,

employers are looking for candidates with specific skills. Never submit a master resume.

Instead, use your master resume as a springboard to create a tailored, targeted resume for each job you wish to apply to. Take your most relevant job experiences from your master resume and create a 1-2 page resume that highlights the skills and requirements the job posting seeks.

## HOW TO USE A MASTER RESUME

- Gather job descriptions, regardless of whether or not you are going to apply to those jobs. Good sites to try:

- [Indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)

- [Careerbuilder.com](https://www.careerbuilder.com)

- [Simplyhired.com](https://www.simplyhired.com)

- [Glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com)

- Compile the keywords and phrases you will use on your master resume.

- As you write your past experiences, skills, certifications, etc., use the keywords and phrases you've compiled.

- Every time you apply to a job, use your master resume as a starting point to craft a resume tailored to that job.

## WRITING A RESUME FOR A NEW FIELD

If you are seeking a job that is different than your current and past work, highlight your transferable skills and areas of competence on your resume to downplay your work titles. Skills such as training, customer service and project management can position you for a wide variety of jobs and apply to an array of industries.

# Search for Jobs

There has never been such an excess of information available at our fingertips in the history of humankind. With an exorbitant amount of detail on employers and jobs, finding a job can feel like trying to find a polar bear in a snowstorm.

Without a plan, your job search efforts can quickly grow cold. (See what we did there?)

Nevertheless, if you haven't searched for a job in the last few years, you may encounter some surprises. Technology continues to penetrate multiple areas of our lives in this digital age—and the job hunt is no exception.

With the emergence of company review sites, chatbots that interact with job seekers and the ever-increasing application of artificial intelligence, old tactics like reviewing classifieds, cold calling and visiting brick and mortar locations have almost gone extinct.

Now, more than ever, job seekers need a definitive plan alongside modern job search tips to find employment.

## HOW TO FIND A JOB: YOU NEED A STRATEGY

To find a job, you need a strategy. You are busy, with a finite amount of time to search for jobs.

Scarcity of time may be a significant obstacle for those of us who currently have full-time

jobs since the job hunt often feels like a second full-time job.

Without planning your strategy first, you risk losing precious time and spending unnecessary effort. Consider the following steps when creating your job search strategy:

## JOB SEARCH TIPS

### Tip 1: Define what you want out of a job

- **Roles and responsibilities:** What will you do every day in this role? How will you uniquely contribute to the employer's success? How will you leave your mark? Do you want to manage a team, or work as an individual contributor? Are you looking to make a lateral move, or looking to move up? What certifications or education are required for this role?
- **Companies:** Where do you want to work and why? What appeals to you about the employer, and why do you think you fit there? What do employees say about culture, benefits and work? Do you prefer a small, medium or large company? Is there a specific industry you want to be in?
- **Geography:** Where do you want to live and work? Do you prefer to work remote, in an office or both? How far are you willing to commute? Are you open to relocating?

### Tip 2: Visit peer review sites

These days, people don't often make important buying decisions without reading reviews first. Buyers want to be informed. They want to know what to expect and how their peers rate that product, hotel, rental home or restaurant. Nowadays, people even look up [peer reviews when choosing a doctor](#)!

Likewise, finding a job has become very similar to online shopping. And we understand why. Think about how much more important your career is than what restaurant you'll choose for Friday night. When searching for a job, check as many review sites as you can to learn what employees are saying about the work environment, culture, leadership and more.

#### Popular employer review sites include:

- [Glassdoor](#): Glassdoor is perhaps the most widely-known website for employee reviews. Here, visitors can view pros and cons of working at a company, company profiles, interview tips, recommendation scores, CEO ratings and more.
- [Indeed](#): Best known as a job aggregator site, Indeed also provides company reviews submitted by current and past employees broken down by a rating system based on several factors like work/life balance, compensation, management, culture and more.

People also read Google reviews written by both employees and customers, which can help provide a holistic view of how a company operates internally and with their customers.

Be sure to keep an open mind when reading reviews. Social media and peer review sites give everyone a voice. People can say whatever they like about their employer or former employer. Take reviews into consideration, but don't let them be the determining factor on whether or not you apply for the job. Use your discretion.

### Tip 3: Befriend a recruiter during your job search

Let recruiters do some of the work for you! They have multiple jobs at various companies at their fingertips and have a direct line to the hiring managers. Recruiters will listen to what you're looking for in your next job. Their goal is to find the perfect candidate for the employer. There are multiple [benefits of working with a recruiter](#) at staffing services firm.

#### Benefits of partnering with a recruiter:

- Expanded network for your job search
- Access to hidden job markets and jobs that may not be posted publicly
- Candidate advocacy
- Salary negotiation
- Free of charge

To find a recruiter, ensure your online presence is optimized for your [professional brand](#) and that your [resume](#) is updated online. Recruiters look for candidates online and review countless resumes. Ensure that your differentiators across your digital brand stand out and grab their attention.



**83%** OF JOB SEEKERS ARE LIKELY TO RESEARCH COMPANY REVIEWS WHEN APPLYING FOR A JOB.

-GLASSDOOR



## Create a Compelling Resume

Recruiters also use various social platforms to share open jobs with their network. Recruiters tweet or post about their open jobs every day. Try following or connecting with recruiters who post the types of jobs that you are interested in, or who recruit for companies you're trying to get into. You'll get relevant job postings right in your feed, and this is also an effective way to start the conversation. Send them a private, direct message to express your interest in the role.

### Tip 4: Use social media

Job seekers should take full advantage of social media, being that this digital space is now the cornerstone of online networking. Thanks to social media, you can have access to thousands of people and jobs globally.

Twitter is often considered an [untapped resource](#) for job seekers, yet it is free and ridiculously easy to use, even from your phone. [Create a Twitter list](#) that includes recruiters, hiring managers, job search websites and your target companies. Then check their tweets daily for job posts.

LinkedIn is also an excellent resource for [uncovering potential connections](#) that you might already have at the company to which you're applying. A quick search of the company name on LinkedIn will give you a list of employees. Then, you can search to see who you are already connected with. Turn those connections into conversations and hopefully into a referral that can put in a good word for you from the inside. That's the personal touch that can give you a leg up over other applicants!

### Tip 5: Make a daily habit of job searching

If you want results for your job search, you must put in the work. Job searching requires being proactive, and a routine can help achieve that. When creating your job search strategy, stick to a schedule to remain productive.

- **Create a to-do list.** Setting a goal and working toward it calls for getting organized. With adequate planning, you can maximize efforts by prioritizing your job search activities and completing tasks in a timely manner.

- **Block off time on your calendar.** Time is precious, and job seekers need every minute to count to find their dream job. That's why it's important to devote daily and uninterrupted time blocks for your job search.

- **Dedicate certain days for certain activities.** While working on multiple tasks at once can work for some, it might be your best interest to focus on one task at a time. Consider breaking different parts of your job search across different days to complete tasks efficiently.

- **Track your job search.** Document your job search on a spreadsheet by recording jobs you've applied to and those you're considering applying to. Tracking your progress can help you avoid applying to duplicate jobs. Most of all, it can allow you to see your success throughout your search.

### Tip 6: Keep an open mind

Lastly, when looking for that right opportunity, it's important to be open and not limit your hunt too narrowly. If you are not flexible, you may miss out on a rewarding career. Check out these job search tips below to ensure you keep an open mind during your job search.

### Vary your keyword search

When finding a job online, think outside of the confines of your job title. *What do you do? What skills do you have? What is your experience in?*

## Create a Compelling Resume

Job titles vary from company to company, so if you're a software engineer currently, don't limit your options by only viewing jobs with a "software engineer" title. Searching for jobs with alternate titles like application developer, software developer or web developer will expand your possibilities.

Complete a quick Google search of your job title to see what other jobs are returned in your search. Then go through and skim the job descriptions to see if jobs with different titles are just as good—if not a better fit.

### **Suggested jobs are good jobs too**

Have you ever bought something unexpected because it was under "Customers who viewed this item also viewed" on Amazon? This can happen during your job hunt, too. Check out suggested or recommended jobs that populate in your search results. You might be surprised to find something that piques your interest outside a specific search.

### **Remember salary talks are on the table**

Imagine this: you're looking for jobs online, scrolling through the different postings, and you find THE ONE—the job you've been looking for. You have all the required skills, and it's the perfect match except the salary. If the compensation is slightly lower than you'd like, apply for the job anyway! In a lot of cases, salary is negotiable for the right candidate.

Check out sites like [Salary](#) and [Paysa](#) to see what these jobs pay and what to ask for. Find more on this topic in [Accept the Job Offer](#).

Now that you've found what seems like the perfect job for you, it's time to apply!

# Apply for Jobs

You've thought seriously about your passion and purpose regarding your career. You've optimized your professional brand. Your resume is polished, and we've covered how to find a job.

Just as how finding a job is different than a decade ago, the way we apply for jobs has also evolved. This section provides information on trends and best practices for submitting applications in 2019.

## WORKING WITH AI

Whether it's Siri, Alexa or Google Home, you probably engage with chatbots more than you realize. Chatbots can benefit both the candidate and the recruiter—making the recruiter's job easier by doing more administrative recruiting tasks, like candidate pre-qualification and scheduling interviews.

It's also a win for you too, as the job seeker. AI and [recruitment chatbots](#) help candidates by speeding up the screening, interview and hiring processes. They also assist with providing the feedback and follow up that you want but may not get.

Chatbots offer an antidote to some pain that so many candidates suffer through. We mentioned in a [previous section](#) of this guide that many resumes for a role are overlooked. Chatbots can help the recruiter do the tasks that they might not have time to do themselves—giving them more time to review your resume.

## CREATING PROFILES AND ALERTS

Saving a profile that includes your resume on a job board can make applying for a job as easy as one click! Most job boards have an app these days, so download the app and browse for jobs when it's convenient for you. If you're not ready to apply right then, most job sites will give you the option to save the job and apply later.

When you're searching for jobs on various job boards, most offer the ability to set up an email alert. Any new jobs that fit your search criteria will be sent directly to your inbox as soon as they're posted. Let the jobs come to you!

### DID YOU KNOW?



Applications submitted between **6 and 10am** have the **highest chance**, at 13% of getting an interview.

The **worst time** to send an application is **7:30pm** when your chances of landing an interview drop to just 3%.

- TALENTWORKS



## APPLYING ON THE GO

People are searching for and applying to jobs in micro-moments—on your commute, waiting at the doctor’s office or on a commercial break while watching your favorite TV show. Furthermore, consider uploading your resume to free services like [Dropbox](#) or [Google Drive](#) to apply on the go.

When applying on the go, also keep in mind that they are several mobile applications to assist you when applying for jobs. Most job boards like Indeed, CareerBuilder and more have mobile apps that have the same functionality as their desktop sites.

Download mobile apps to help your job search:

- Indeed Job Search: [iOS](#) | [Android](#)
- CareerBuilder: [iOS](#) | [Android](#)
- Glassdoor: [iOS](#) | [Android](#)
- LinkedIn Job Search: [iOS](#) | [Android](#)
- SnagaJob: [iOS](#) | [Android](#)
- Simply Hired: [iOS](#)



**IN THE US, 60 PERCENT OF JOB SEARCHING OCCURS ON MOBILE PHONES AND IS DONE WHEN MOST CONVENIENT FOR YOU.**

-INDEED



# Master the Interview

Learning how to get a job also requires knowing what it takes to have a successful job interview. The interview can make or break the decision to hire you. Therefore, this is your opportunity to demonstrate why you are the best person for the job.

In one word, [the secret to nailing an interview](#) is pretty simple. PREPARE! This will boost your confidence, allowing you to shine as the expert you are throughout the interview process.

## LEARN EVERYTHING YOU CAN ABOUT THE COMPANY

And we don't mean just the night before. Dedicate sufficient time to utilize multiple sources to get an understanding of who the company is and what major initiatives/technology/products are they advertising.

- Check out the company's website, paying attention to service offerings, products, their mission and other general information.
- Scroll through their social media activity to get a sense of what they're sharing with their audiences, and what's important to them. Are they excited about a new product release, a stellar quarter, a new member of the executive team or a recent award they've been presented with?

- If the company is public, be sure also to listen to their latest earnings call or review their SEC filings to understand their financial position.
- Identify their top 3 competitors and understand their similarities and differences.
- Prepare 3-5 questions based on your research that you could ask the interviewer. For example, if you noticed the company just received an award, you could ask the interviewer what the award means to him or her. This shows that you've done your homework, and more importantly, that you are genuinely interested in the company and this opportunity.

## RESEARCH YOUR INTERVIEWERS

To identify your interviewer, take note of the person sending you an interview invite or any inclination that could provide you with more details. If that information is unavailable, ask who you'll be speaking with.

In addition, check out the LinkedIn profiles of the interviewers. Online research can arm you with information when building rapport and planning questions for your interviewer. When reviewing your interviewers' profiles, think about the following:

## Master the Interview

- How long have they been at the company?
- Have they worked their way up to management?
- Do you have shared connections?
- Do you have common interests?

### Here's an example of how to use this type of research during the interview:

"I recently saw on LinkedIn that you volunteered with your company at a local shelter. That's great! Can you tell me what else your company does for stewardship?"

## Plan well thought-out answers

Let's face it—most interviewers ask typical interview questions like "What do you consider to be your greatest strength?" or "Where do you see yourself in five years?" Most of the responses interviewers hear are probably very similar. For this reason, you should articulate your value through strategically crafted responses to set yourself apart from the dozen other candidates who are interviewing for the same position.

- Take the time to write out your responses in bullet point form. The goal isn't to memorize your responses word for word, but rather make a note of the points you want to be sure to get across.
- Be specific, use real examples, highlight accomplishments and mention any challenges you had to overcome.
- Have a few compelling stats relevant to your accomplishments that you can fall back on if necessary.

**Example:** "I was faced with the challenge of streamlining a dozen reports for our monthly executive briefing. Through the innovative use of data visualization tools, I was able to create one comprehensive, automated dashboard that updates real-time, saving the team around 20 hours each month to focus on more strategic projects."

- Evaluate how your skills and background match the job requirements. Prepare a few case examples to illustrate how you embody the desired skills.
- Practice, practice, practice. There is no such thing as being over-prepared for your interview.

## CREATE YOUR ELEVATOR PITCH

Imagine that you only have 60 seconds to convince your interviewer that you are the perfect candidate for this job. What points do you need to get across? Can you describe your strengths and greatest attributes? What can you bring to the table that no one else can?

- Prepare an elevator pitch tailored to the job you are interviewing for that answers the above questions.
- Draft a pitch with no more than 5-6 sentences to ensure it's less than a minute.
- Include who you are, what you do and the credentials that qualify you for the job.

- Express your interest and desire for the role. The four words “I want this job” go a long way when selling yourself for a position.
- Do not recite your pitch word for word, but be sure that you have creatively worked in all the components of your pitch throughout the interview.

## AUDIT YOUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Just as you’re researching the people who will be interviewing you, count on them to research you too.

We’ve covered how to optimize your [professional brand online](#). We also encourage you to invest time in this area of your job search strategy. In this digital age, an abundance of information is readily accessible to potential employers at a push of a button. It’s incredibly easy for interviewers to form an opinion of you after reviewing your social media activity before you even step foot into the office for the interview. Therefore, take a few minutes to do an audit of your professional brand, ideally before you even start your job search.

- Delete any questionable photos that may portray you in an undesirable light. Be sure to not only clean up the photos you’ve posted but check for any inappropriate photos that you may be tagged in.
- Avoid highly controversial “soapbox posts,” such as political opinions.
- Do a Google search on yourself to make sure there are no surprises that come up.
- Update your content online so that it accurately reflects current information about you. This is a good time to [update](#)

[your LinkedIn profile](#), online resume, email address and other contact information.

- Check your privacy settings on social media platforms and be aware of what the public can see.

## REMEMBER THE IMPORTANCE OF FIRST IMPRESSIONS

You’ve no doubt heard the phrase “It’s all in the details,” and this is also true when it comes to first impressions during your interview.

- Don’t wait until the last minute to pick out what you’re going to wear. Give yourself plenty of time to make sure your interview attire is clean and wrinkle-free. Also, have a backup outfit ready in case there are any unforeseen issues the morning of the interview like a coffee spill or a leaky pen.
- You may not think people notice the little things, but they do! Make sure your nails are clean, your shoes aren’t scuffed and that you have a box of breath mints close at hand.
- Give yourself plenty of time to get to your interview by accounting for traffic and parking. Arriving even just one or two minutes late does not give a good first impression. In addition, if you are anxious because you arrived late, you won’t be at your best during the interview.
- If you are asked about your current manager and have a less than perfect relationship with him or her, be prepared to put a positive spin on anything negative that has occurred. The interview is not a time for you to vent or to air your dirty laundry. Remember, your goal is to be liked.

- Compliment the interviewer about something you discovered in your research to show that you've done your homework before the interview.

## EXUDE CONFIDENCE

Preparation leads to confidence, and confidence helps get you hired! When you are feeling confident, you will naturally come across as the subject matter expert that you are.

- Remember, there is a big difference between confidence and cockiness.
- Don't ramble and go off on tangents. Instead, talk at a reasonable pace and focus on answering each question with one concise thought at a time.
- Pay attention to your body language. Be engaged, sit up straight and genuinely try to enjoy the process.
- Nail your elevator pitch with the best response when probed and find an opportunity for it when not explicitly asked.
- Lastly, start and end your interview with a firm handshake and a smile.

## PREPARE FOR PHONE & VIDEO INTERVIEWS

Video and phone interviews are now commonplace in the job search process. Job seekers should be prepared for them if the opportunity arises. When participating in either format, still consider the previous and following tips:

- Use a quiet place to avoid interruptions and background noises.
- Gather proper lighting for optimal visuals during your video call.
- Silence any electronics that may cause disruption.
- Keep your resume, notepad and pen close.
- If using a webcam, [test your computer's audio and camera](#) prior to the call.
- Use a headset or earbuds to avoid echoes.
- Ensure your internet connection.

## DON'T FORGET THE THANK YOU NOTE

You've nailed the job interview, but your work in leaving a positive, lasting impression isn't done yet. Immediately after, send a thank you note to the interviewer. In the message, thank the person or party and express your excitement to learn more about the opportunity.

Hi **[Interviewer's Name]**,

It was a pleasure meeting you today. I enjoyed learning more about the team and **[title of the position you're applying to]** position. It was amazing to hear that **[something recalled from your interview]**.

I'm excited about the opportunity to join **[company name]** and help **[the solution your role assists in part of the company's goal]**.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information.

Best regards,  
**[Your Name]**

Now that your interview is over, take a deep breath. Continue your job search as you wait for the golden ticket—the job offer.



# Accept the Job Offer

You've mastered our previous job search tips and landed the job offer.

Just thinking about negotiating a job offer is enough to cause some people to run and hide. Experts suggest that most companies are willing to negotiate salary, yet the minority of job candidates even try.

Most job seekers view it as the scariest part of the entire job search process. Because of this, we tend to avoid it altogether. In fact, just a third of candidates negotiate their salary according to [Jobvite](#).

Don't give into fear. Take control of negotiating your best possible job offer with these tips.

## KNOW WHAT YOU'RE WORTH

Utilize sites like [Payscale](#) or [Glassdoor](#) to get a data-driven understanding of what others in your field are currently compensated. Knowledge is power—especially when it comes to salary negotiations. Most of all, before starting any negotiation conversations, it's critical that YOU understand the value you bring to the table.

Think through your specific skills, technology expertise, certifications, industry experience, etc. that set you apart from the competition. In essence, how can your particular skill set and knowledge help the employer?

## DON'T MAKE IT PERSONAL

It's also important to remember that your salary shouldn't be calculated by what you need to earn monthly to pay your bills. Of course, you'll want to make sure that your living and personal expenses are covered. However, it's critical to understand that your salary is independent of your monthly expenses.

Factors that contribute to salary include:

- Years of experience
- Industry experience
- Proficiency with specific technology
- Management expertise

Failure to consider these factors will cause you to leave money on the table during offer negotiations.

## UNDERSTAND WHAT'S EXPECTED OF YOU

You never want to put the cart before the horse. Be sure to understand all the details and components of your new role.

Ask diagnostic questions to gain a better understanding of facets of the job including:

## Accept the Job Offer

- What would I be directly responsible for?
- How is my success measured?
- How much exposure will I have to senior executives?
- Will I be required to travel?

You may find that the responsibilities and overall scope of the role are more significant than you initially thought. If this is the case, your salary requirements may rightfully change.

## JOB OFFERS AREN'T ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL

First and foremost, it's important to remember that negotiating a job offer is not the same as negotiating a salary. Salary is merely one component of job offer negotiations. For some individuals, salary is by far the most important thing; however, for others, a flexible work schedule might be equally as important for someone trying to juggle specific family responsibilities.

Other things you may want to consider in your negotiations apart from your base salary are:

- Additional vacation time
- Flexibility in your work schedule

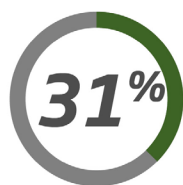
- The ability to work from home
- Your new job title
- Tuition reimbursement

Think about what's most important to you, and then focus on those one or two items during negotiations.

## THE ART OF THE ASK

We know how awkward and challenging offer negotiations can be. Most of us have never received formal negotiation training. Surprisingly, there is quite a bit of strategy that goes into offer negotiations—on both sides. Make sure you're on top of your game by remembering the following tried and true tips:

- Lead with what you've done, what you can do and why they can't live without you. Then talk numbers.
- Pick the top of the range. Once you state a number, it's nearly impossible to go back and increase it.
- Don't quote a range. If you do, you'll almost always be stuck at the low end.
- Be positive and confident throughout the entire process.



**OF JOB SEEKERS NEGOTIATED THEIR SALARY AT THEIR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT JOB.**

*-2018 JOB SEEKER NATION SURVEY, JOBVITE*

## BEFORE YOU SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE

Make sure you have a thorough understanding of the offer and ensure all the details are in writing in your offer letter.

Before putting pen to paper, make sure you can answer “Yes” to the following checklist items:

- Do I understand my compensation package (including base pay, bonus potential, pay frequency, employer 401k match, etc.)?
- Do I understand the benefits package (including when I’ll be able to sign up for benefits, company contribution, etc.)?

- Is my title finalized?
- Am I clear on the reporting structure (including leadership, direct reports or any dotted-line relationships, etc.)?

While navigating the job offer can be taxing, never be afraid to state your worth and request what you deserve. Once you’ve reached a final agreement that is signed, sealed and delivered, it’s time to prepare for your job exit. Check out the next section to learn how to leave on a positive note and ensure a smooth transition to the next phase of your career.

# Transition Out of Your Current Job

Great work on landing your new job! It's been a long journey, and you're probably on cloud nine celebrating the great news.

But, now you realize that you must tell your current employer that you are resigning. Did your stomach just flip?

We understand that this can be an uncomfortable process. Next, let's talk through how to transition out of your job so that it's a positive experience for both you and your employer.

## A BIRD IN THE HAND...

Before doing anything, ensure your new job offer has been signed, sealed and delivered—and that it's a done deal. Have your written offer letter in hand, before saying anything to your current employer.

What if, for whatever reason, your new job offer falls through? We've heard plenty of horror stories of people quitting their current job because they believed they had a new job lined up—only to find themselves out of a job and unemployed. Most importantly, protect yourself as much as possible and have everything in writing first, before taking action.

## PLAN YOUR EXIT STRATEGY

A two-week notice has been the norm for years, and this should be your minimum. You and your employer need time to transition and adjust. In short, anything less than two weeks could leave your boss and your teammates in a difficult spot.

For example, if you have a specialized position in which you are the only one (or one of a few people) at the company who knows how to do your job, you may need a longer transition period. Discuss this with your current manager first, and then work on your new job's start date with your future manager.

Also, do not feel pressured to start your new job in exactly two weeks. Your new boss will likely respect that you are doing right by your current boss, and are avoiding leaving your current employer in a bind.

## CREATE A TRANSITION PLAN

Before you tell your boss you're leaving, put together a transition plan. Put yourself in his or her shoes for a moment. Imagine how your absence will affect the office's workflow and think of the things you can do to aid the transition until your replacement is found.



## Transition Out of Your Current Job

If there are any open projects and assignments, plan to communicate them with your boss. Make a list of important passwords, links, training documents, and anything else you think your replacement should have.

Overall, your efforts in this area will no doubt be appreciated by your manager and will help leave a favorable impression as you exit the company.

## YOUR MANAGER MUST FIND OUT FIRST

Picture what it feels like to be the last person to know something—when you feel like you should be the first person to find out. It's imperative that your boss is the first person at your company to find out that you are resigning. Here's a couple of reasons:

- **It's professional courtesy.** Managers should be your first contact when announcing your resignation. No one likes being caught off guard or surprised, including our leadership.
- **Prevent a rumor before it starts.** Avoid stirring up office gossip around your departure by telling your manager before your coworkers. Never allow your boss to find out through the grapevine.

## TIPS FOR THE CONVERSATION

Schedule a time to talk with your boss in private. Doing this in person is ideal, but if you or your boss is remote, a phone call or video conference is OK.

Plan out exactly what you will say. Also, keep it positive and don't blurt out all the reasons you're leaving—especially if they are negative. Be careful about how much feedback you provide. Demonstrate respect and professional courtesy.

## DO NOT CHECK OUT

During your last two weeks, it is vital that you do not check out. Be fully present, and just as engaged in your work as if you weren't leaving. Keep up the same level of intensity and work as diligently as you can until you walk out the door for the last time.

## LEAVE ON A HIGH NOTE

Most of all, no matter the circumstances or what your emotions are, it is imperative that you don't burn bridges. Be professional and mature. There's no reason to hurt feelings on your way out, and there's a lot to be said about taking the high road.

Take time to thank people and say goodbyes. Consider providing LinkedIn recommendations for coworkers, your direct reports or your manager. Sharing your contact info is also a nice touch as you exit the company.

People tend to remember their most recent interactions with others—so ensure you leave positive impressions during your final days.

# Start your New Job

Congratulations!

Your persistence and hard work have finally paid off. You've officially gotten the job and accepted the offer. The job search was a beast, but you've finally made it to the finish line. While you relish your job success, your next step awaits you—starting a new job!

With any change in life, there's sure to be challenges along the way. And, of course, we're here to guide you through this phase too.

## STARTING A NEW JOB? HERE'S WHAT TO EXPECT!

### Information overload

Starting a new job can be nerve-wracking, especially when there's a ton to learn. While orientations and training sessions may make you feel like your brain is ready to explode, don't fret! A learning curve is expected. It's nearly impossible to retain everything you need to know right away. Be assured that there will be time to get acquainted with your new responsibilities, policies, procedures and more.

### What to do:

A rush of new information can be overwhelming. To combat this issue, remember to set your priorities, focus on important information first and tackle each

task one step at a time. Take as many notes as possible each day and review them at night while they're still fresh.

### Introductions and more introductions

A new job means new people. Expect to experience many introductions when you begin your new role. You'll be meeting new team members, additional departments and more. During this process, you'll have to learn lots of names and faces. It's important not to be shy. First impressions are everything, and it's in your best interest to make each of these moments count.

### What to do:

If your memory isn't the sharpest, try writing down names of people you meet and their corresponding roles or check out these memory tips below.

***Repeat the name of the person aloud***

***Build familiar associations***

***Take mental snapshots***

### Anxiety

It's perfectly reasonable to feel some apprehension and nervousness when starting a new job. After all, you did make a new life decision. Embarking on a new chapter can be scary for anyone. Anxiety when starting a new job can be due to a myriad of reasons. Whether you've been out of work for a while or you're worrisome about fitting in, you can overcome new job jitters.

#### What to do:

The first step to managing new job jitters is acknowledging that anxiety is normal. Once you've accepted this, remain positive and refute any negative thoughts you may have. Also, don't forget to practice self-care. Consider taking a short stroll during your lunch break to relieve stress. Lastly, confide in people who believe in you.

## HOW TO SURVIVE THE FIRST 90 DAYS OF YOUR NEW JOB

Navigating a new job can be daunting. That's why we've provided these strategies below to assist you throughout your first week, month and 90-day-period.

### FIRST WEEK

#### 1. Develop a new morning routine

A new place of employment can play a crucial factor in your morning routine. Consider how long you need to get ready for work, eat breakfast and arrive at your new job. You should also aim to make this part of your day as smooth as possible because you never want to be late to work, especially in the first week. To avoid kinks, perform a dry run before your first day.

#### 2. Arrive early

The early bird catches the worm! What better way to make a good first impression than to not only arrive to work on time, but early. Create positive perceptions amid your new colleagues by starting on the right foot. To ensure you arrive to work on time, set your alarm, go to bed on time and pick out an appropriate outfit the night before.

#### 3. Be a sponge

It's critical during your first week to soak up all the information you can. Observe how things are done, what the company culture consists of and other workplace dynamics. Be attentive and ask questions. Try creating a list of questions that will help clarify your duties and help you transition faster. Focus on understanding procedures and learn the reasoning behind processes.

#### 4. Be yourself

Remember to be yourself on the job. It's natural to feel compelled to impress your colleagues, but don't let that pressure overshadow your real personality. People often can tell when someone isn't authentic. Remember who you are and the reason why you landed the job—you! Being comfortable with yourself will allow your confidence to shine and your team the chance to connect more with your unique subtleties.

### FIRST MONTH

#### 1. Speak up!

After learning all you can about your new job, your team, business and procedures, don't be afraid to speak up and share your thoughts. Once you've been informed, make respectful suggestions for efficiencies and share your fresh ideas. Be vocal in your perspectives to show your engagement and to establish your value in the workplace.

### 2. Get organized

At the beginning of your employment, get organized early to avoid falling behind in your tasks. Organization plays a pivotal role in alleviating stress and nervous tension at work. Most of all, it ensures that you will be efficient and effective in your position. To get organized, map out your days with to-do-lists and calendar blocking. Also, check out personal project management tools like [Evernote](#) and [Asana](#) to stay productive.

### 3. Set goals

It's essential that you come up with a game plan to make your mark at a new job. Discuss your goals with your boss and establish realistic objectives and timelines. When creating your goals, think about things you professionally want to accomplish and things that drive results for your organization. Remember, each goal you set must be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-sensitive).

## FIRST 90 DAYS

### 1. Find a mentor

Once you've finally gotten acclimated to your new company, you should have a good inclination of individuals who are knowledgeable and inspiring. Take a proactive role in locating a qualified veteran to help you navigate your new role and success within the company. Great mentors help you set measurable goals and share personal experiences that inspire you.

### 2. Don't overcommit yourself

When starting a new job, it's critical that you establish boundaries and a proper work-life balance. Performance is critical in the first 90 days to show that you're worth the investment, but it's also just as important that you set realistic expectations for yourself and your boss. If you don't, you'll most likely find yourself stressed out.

Instead of overcommitting yourself, focus on doing your job effectively and building relationships with your team.

### 3. Build rapport with your manager

Your relationship with your boss is critical in establishing your experience at work. Complete tasks, be respectful, achieve results and be proactive to start your employee-manager relationship off on the right foot.

Also, consider [setting up weekly meetings or 1:1s with your new boss](#) to provide updates about your work, progress and issues on the job. Meeting frequently will not only help you stay on track but also establish trust and open communication with your leadership.

In conclusion, starting a new job is tough work, and everyone wants to hit the ground running. Remember, be patient. It takes time to settle into a new job. Every job is a new experience. Regardless of your position, you will have to learn. So be open, enthusiastic and take things slowly. Lastly but most importantly, don't forget to enjoy your new role!

YOU'VE **CONQUERED** THE JOB SEARCH HUNT!  
*These skills will serve you repeatedly throughout your career.*

**SEARCH JOBS**

## SUGGESTED READING

### OPTIMIZE YOUR PROFESSIONAL BRAND

[The Best Skills to Include on Your Resume - The Balance Careers](#)

[99 Key Skills for a Resume \(Best List of Examples for All Types of Jobs\) - Zety](#)

[Top Skills to Include on Your Resume - Glassdoor](#)

### CREATE A COMPELLING RESUME

[How to Include Your LinkedIn URL on Your Resume—The Balance Careers](#)

[Resume Keywords to Use: Step-by-Step Guide—Zety](#)

[How to Get Your Resume Noticed by Employers—The Balance Careers](#)

[The Ultimate Guide to Resumes—Glassdoor](#)

### APPLY FOR JOBS

[Tips for Using Your Phone to Job Search—The Balance Careers](#)

[6 Ways to Use Your Phone to Land Your Dream Job—Glassdoor Blog](#)

[5 Ways Your Smartphone Can Land You a Job—Lifehack](#)

### MASTER THE INTERVIEW

[50+ Interview Tips that Work: Best Advice for a Successful Job Interview—Zety](#)

[Must-Know Job Interview Tips for 2018 and Beyond—Entrepreneur](#)

[10 Awesome Interview Tips from Actual Hiring Managers—Undercover Recruiter](#)

### ACCEPT THE JOB OFFER

[9 Things to Never Say in a Salary Negotiation—Glassdoor](#)

[How to Negotiate, Accept, or Decline a Job Offer—The Balance Careers](#)

[How to Be an Ace Salary Negotiator \(Even if You Hate Conflict\)—The New York Times](#)



## Suggested Reading

[5 Rules of Salary Negotiation–Entrepreneur](#)

### **TRANSITION OUT OF YOUR CURRENT JOB**

[How to Quit Your Job–Glassdoor](#)

[Learn How to Resign From Your Job–The Balance Careers](#)

[How to Quit Your Job in the Most Professional Way Possible–HubSpot](#)

### **START YOUR NEW JOB**

[10 Tips to Help You Get Along with Your Boss–The Balance Careers](#)