



## **Six Job Search Exercises for Job Change Success**

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What follows are six exercises for you to complete. When you review your responses to each exercise you will gain valuable knowledge about what needs to be improved to help make your job seeking result in a successful outcome.

### **EXERCISES**

#### **Exercise One**

Do you have the 19 Skills of Job Seeking?

#### **Exercise Two**

Test Your Job Search Preparation Skills

#### **Exercise Three**

Audit your Preparation for Résumé Writing

#### **Exercise Four**

Assessment of Time Allocation to the Job Search

#### **Exercise Five**

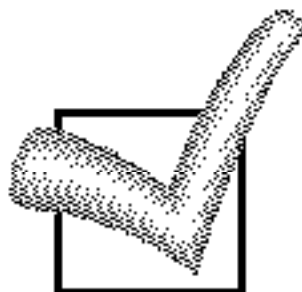
Are You Ready to be Interviewed Analysis

#### **Exercise Six**

Where do I need more help?

#### **Caution:**

*If you invent or wildly guess your answers to the questions in any of the six exercises you will not gain much benefit, so take your time and answer thoughtfully and thoroughly.*





### Exercise One - Do You have the 19 Skills of Job Seeking?

To conduct a successful job search you need to use 19 skills. In preparation for achieving this success, rate your personal skill level out of ten (10) on the scale provided for each of the following:

#### Self-Evaluation

- Assessing personal values 1                    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Clarifying preferred skills 1                    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Identifying career record achievements 1   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Establishing job content goal 1                1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Assessing personal constraints 6              1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

#### Research

- Sources of useful printed information 2    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Learning different job search strategies 2  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

#### Detective

- Networking for vacancy information 3       1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Developing employer prospect list 6        1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

#### Communicating

- Questioning for information 3                1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Writing résumé and correspondence 4       1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Listening effectively 5                          1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Using appropriate assertiveness 1           1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Use of voice to convey confidence 1        1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

#### Transition

- Assembling support group 2                  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Self-marketing 6                                1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Dressing appropriately 5                      1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Acquiring interim job 2                       1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Keeping physically fit 2                        1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Review your scores to the questionnaire. Circle those skills you need to improve, i.e. those you have rated a 7 or lower. Plan what actions you will take to increase those job-seeking skills requiring development.



## Exercise Two - Test Your Job Search Preparation Skills

Circle the number you consider applies to you

Scale:            1 = strongly agree            4 = disagree  
                      2 = agree                            5 = strongly disagree  
                      3 = maybe, not certain

### Self-Assessment: Searching self and analysing my situation

- |    |  |           |
|----|--|-----------|
| 1. | I have assessed the skills I prefer to use, my personal values, and primary wants to determine the job situation change I should undertake | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. | I have written an inventory of these ready for my next steps   | 1 2 3 4 5 |

### Interpreting Data: Exploring this information

- |    |  |           |
|----|--|-----------|
| 3. | I can list my past and present workplace accomplishments in ways in which my performance is clear and quantifiable | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. | I have identified, or confirmed, what nature of work which would reflect who I really am                           | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. | I am clear about the whole issue of making a career decision   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. | I feel like I am growing and advancing in my career  | 1 2 3 4 5 |

### Opportunity Awareness: Researching facts and labour market

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|-----|---|-----------|
| 7.  | I have interviewed three or more people in the occupation that interests me   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8.  | I know what workers do in the occupation I am targeting   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9.  | I have researched what skills employers most seek in my target occupation   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. | I have researched relevant recruitment agencies and employers in a public library, career reference centres or Internet | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. | I have collected and organised a list of people who I know  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. | I can access the membership directory of the Association of my target occupation for networking purposes                | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. | I can distribute résumés and letters to the ten most relevant recruitment consultancies and employment agencies         | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 14. | I can identify no less than ten employers with whom I want to obtain interviews   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 15. | I know where to get information about pay levels I can use in salary negotiations                                       | 1 2 3 4 5 |



16. If my target job role is not achievable at the moment I know how to obtain an interim employment or contracting work to ensure income flow 1 2 3 4 5

**Decision Learning: Making my decision**

17. I am confident about the types of work that I could perform well 1 2 3 4 5  
18. I know how to evaluate if a job vacancy is the right fit for me 1 2 3 4 5

**Transition Training: Preparing my career action step**

19. I know how to prospect for job leads where none are advertised 1 2 3 4 5  
20. I have secured support of family and friends for my job Search 1 2 3 4 5  
21. I have planned how to implement an effective direct-mail job search 1 2 3 4 5  
22. I can allocate 10-15 hours each week to conduct a job search if need be 1 2 3 4 5  
23. I have planned my financial resources to sustain a four month job search if need be 1 2 3 4 5  
24. I have a mentor who supports my career action step 1 2 3 4 5  
25. I have an up-to-date résumé that has been reviewed by a professional colleague or an accredited career coach 1 2 3 4 5  
26. I have prepared an electronic version of this résumé 1 2 3 4 5  
27. I have drafted a variety of work search letters (e.g. cover, broadcast, interview follow-up, etc.) 1 2 3 4 5  
28. I have three carefully prepared questions for when interviewers ask me, 'Any questions?' 1 2 3 4 5  
29. I can explain convincingly to interviewers what I did well for my last employer 1 2 3 4 5  
30. I have ready give three good reasons why an employer should hire me 1 2 3 4 5

Add the numbers you circled for a total score. If your score is more than 58 points, you need to work more on developing your job seeking skills by further reading and/or consulting a career coach!



### Exercise Three - Audit your Preparation for Résumé Writing

Your résumé content and conversation content at selection interviews will be considerably improved if you first analyse in a thorough manner the past five years of your working life. Your review of your working life is a search for evidence of your skills and capabilities.

Your review project is best carried out in two steps:

#### **Step 1:**

The first is to write full responses to the memory triggers below. You can do this either by pen on pads of paper or create a document on your computer.

Your writings recount details of what occurred and why and where. What were the benefits to your employer or outcomes of the activity you record should also be specified.

#### **Step 2:**

Now you need to edit each activity you have described down to no more than 8 lines. You may need help from another person with this task. Try to include quantitative data such as amounts of dollars and-or percentages,

The reason for your hard work with this Step 2 edit is that you will find yourself using several of your activity descriptions in:

- content for your résumé describing your achievements
- useful for mention in a cover letter with your job application
- help for your referees for their responses to enquiries about your abilities
- responses to questions asked by interviewers
- interview follow up communications to your prospective employer

#### **Your memory triggers are:**

- \* Projects you worked on
- \* Assignments you completed in addition to regular job role
- \* Selected to lead a project or team
- \* Developing new or more effective techniques or procedures
- \* Increasing personal, team, or company-wide productivity
- \* Saving your employer money
- \* New responsibilities you were given
- \* Created a new system or improved an existing one
- \* Sales or productivity increases
- Where you demonstrated leadership, teamwork or effective communications
- You acted on your own initiative with outcomes beneficial to employer
- \* Major new learning and skills development acquired
- Knowledge gained while in this position
- New designs, new approaches to problem solving you initiated
- Actions which illustrate your ability to plan, organise, and maintain focus on achieving results



**Exercise Four - Assessment of Time Allocation to the Job Search:  
Questionnaire**

In the last week (Sunday to Saturday):

1. How many hours did you spend researching and learning more about an occupation and its industry? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many hours did you spend researching a possible career or self-employment option in directories, occupational guides, books or magazines? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many hours did you spend making appointments for information interviewing? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many hours did you spend conducting information interviews on the phone or in face-to-face with another person in your targeted occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How much time did you spend informing people you know what nature of job and employer you are seeking? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How much time did you spend requesting information on possible job openings? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many phone calls did you make requesting information or a possible job opening? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How much time did you spend with employment agencies discussing possible vacancies? \_\_\_\_\_
9. How many hours did you spend reading and analysing the job ads in newspapers and on web Job Vacancy sites? \_\_\_\_\_
10. How much time did you apply to networking? \_\_\_\_\_
11. How many hours did you spend posting job applications on internet job vacancy sites and filling out, mailing or personally delivering job applications? \_\_\_\_\_
12. How much time did you spend writing thank you notes to people you talked to regarding job opportunities or career direction options? \_\_\_\_\_
13. How many hours did you spend requesting letters of recommendation (references) and/or introductions to people who could assist your job search? \_\_\_\_\_



14. How much time did you spend changing your résumé and job application communications to suit different employment prospects? \_\_\_\_\_
15. How many hours did you spend with a career coach or job search trainer to help you improve your job search techniques or discussing emotional factors which affect your self-confidence or negotiating ability? \_\_\_\_\_
16. How much time did you spend planning and rehearsing your answers and questions for selection interviews? \_\_\_\_\_
17. What amount of time did you spend travelling to be interviewed for a job? \_\_\_\_\_
18. What amount of time was spent at selection interviews? \_\_\_\_\_
19. How much time was spent on information interviews by telephone or in person with people who know well the nature of job role you are seeking? \_\_\_\_\_
20. How many hours did you spend watching TV? \_\_\_\_\_
21. How many hours did you spend listening to music? \_\_\_\_\_
22. How many hours did you spend talking socially to a friend(s) in person or on the phone? \_\_\_\_\_
23. How many hours did you spend getting your hair, your nails or personal grooming done? \_\_\_\_\_
24. How many hours did you spend shopping for clothes and groceries, banking or doing errands? \_\_\_\_\_
25. How many hours did you spend in bed? \_\_\_\_\_
26. How many yours did you spend doing household chores? \_\_\_\_\_
27. How many hours did you spend exercising? \_\_\_\_\_
28. How many hours did you spend relaxing and with family? \_\_\_\_\_



**Assessment of Time Allocation to the Job Search: Analysis**

- A. Calculate the time you spent last week on the many activities which are involved in job searching by adding your responses to Questions 1 to 19.

Your total time was

- B. Calculate the time you spent on activities other than your job search last week by adding your responses to Questions 20 to 28.

Your total time was

If you are unemployed and your total time did not reach 30 hours, you are risking your chances of success in gaining employment within a short period. . If your total time exceeded 30 hours, look over how you allocated your time. Was it evenly spread across the many different aspects of the job search?

Consider whether some time spent other than on the job search should be allocated to it next week?

If you are employed consider how you can increase the time allocated to your job search for an alternative employer.

Are you really ready to job search seriously  
Yes / No



### **Exercise Five - Are You Ready to be Interviewed Analysis?**

Employers look for an applicant who...

1. Knows the reason why they have applied to this particular employer. Why have you applied?

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2. Has evidence of their achievements to date. What are your achievements?

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3. Can comment on work-related problems they have solved in past employment. What problems have you solved?

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4. Has had leadership experience – paid or unpaid. Give examples of your leadership experience.

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5. Knows how past experience relates to their vacancy. Describe how your experience relates to their vacancy.

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- 6. Can explain how the employer will benefit from your education, training and skills. Describe these benefits.

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- 7. Has a career goal (not an 'I'll take anything' attitude). State your career goal.

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- 8. Has a good appearance – dresses appropriately. Describe the clothes you will wear.

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- 9. Has carried out research about their organisation. What do you know about the organisation?

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- 10. Has good interpersonal skills in order to relate well to others at work. Give examples of your interpersonal skills.

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11. Is willing to work hard – not just a '9 to 5' person. Give evidence of your willingness to work hard.

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**Interviewer's Unspoken Questions**

- How much enthusiasm does this applicant have about us?
- Will this person stay?
- Will we like each other?
- How motivated is this applicant?
- Could I rely on this person?



## **Exercise Six - Where do I need more help?**

*Complete this exercise and take it to the person guiding your job search preparation*

Underline or highlight with a marker pen your needs and take it with you to your next meeting with your guide / mentor. Do read all items before selecting.

### **1: *Sorting out what's really important***

- changing my work-life balance
- dealing with current or anticipated changes or events in my life
- adapting my career direction to a shift in my values
- resolving dual career issues with my family or partner

### **2: *Understanding where I am now***

- learning the reasons for my career choices along the way
- learning more about my transferable skills, values, and capabilities
- separating my concerns so I can isolate and deal with them
- taking more control over my career direction

### **3: *Deciding what I want my future to look like***

- clarifying the 'must' and 'wants' for my next career step
- evaluating the career enrichment value of staying with current employer or changing employment
- achieving clarity about appropriate career choice options
- keeping my short-term and long-term interests in balance
- learning how to enjoying my current job role more

### **4: *Learning what possibilities there are***

- learning how to obtain contracting or freelance work
- learning about job sharing or part time work possibilities
- knowing what my employability is in current labour market
- learning what resources and people could help my transition

### **5: *Planning how to get there***

- finding alternative ways to job search
- learning how reduce or overcome employment barriers
- preparing résumé format and content
- coaching in interview techniques
- preparing to discuss my concerns and plans with my manager

### **6: *Knowing if my plans will work***

- testing the reality of my goals
- underestimating or overestimating my chances

### **7: *Keeping track of how I'm managing my career***

- leaning ways to audit and measure my career progress
- getting an unbiased review of my development needs, plans and proposed actions



***8 Maintaining my career situation***

- learning how to hold my own against competitionimproving my visibility to people that affect my career

Record here other concerns for discussions: