

1. Preparing for Your Search

Why change jobs?

Understand *your* why. There are countless reasons why someone seeks employment or a job change. Think about what you want to change in your current situation. Consider using categories like challenge, location, advancement, money, people, and security, to describe what you are looking for and then prioritize the list. This will help define the objectives of your next career move.

Do your research. Start with a list of companies you are interested in and then do research on each company's culture, industry, location, etc. to determine whether it aligns with your objectives. Sharing a list of target companies may help jog a contact name from your network or elicit a referral.

Establish reasonable expectations. Many times, the level at which you are hired or company policy, drives terms that are negotiable and other terms that are not negotiable. If the opportunity "checks many of the boxes" but not all, this still may be the right opportunity. For example, everyone loves paid time off, but many companies have a policy that limits the length of paid time off or requires accruing time off for a new hire so *expecting* six weeks of paid time off is probably *unreasonable*.

Preparation

Get your resume in order. Check out our free course on [Top 25 Resume Tips](#).

Develop a basic tracking tool to manage connections, dates, submissions, responses, follow-ups, etc.

Use a professional network, like LinkedIn, effectively.

LinkedIn

Mirror your resume on your LinkedIn profile by listing your employment history along with titles and dates of employment.

Review your job seeking preferences inside your LinkedIn settings. Turning on job seeking preferences will help to expand your network.

Personalize the ABOUT section of your LinkedIn profile and make it clear that you are open to opportunities. Condense your thoughts about why you want to make a job change and briefly describe what you are looking for so that hiring authorities can easily contact you. Take it one step further and add your contact information.

Consider changing your headline in your LinkedIn profile (i.e. VP of Lean Manufacturing Seeks New Company to Help).

Execute the plan

Now that you have a solid resume, organized tracking tool, and updated network profile, it is time to execute a daily plan. Do not depend on anyone but yourself to land your next role.

Deploy a goal to increase the number of your connections each day (i.e. 25 – 50 daily) using social networks, career fairs, etc.

Develop a scripted note that you can copy and paste into emails. You should include statements that:

- Explain you are open for new opportunities
- Describe what you are looking for
- Welcome referrals

Send the scripted note to 25 contacts per day.

Prepare a follow up note explaining that you are still in the market and reiterate what you said in the first email. It is good practice to send it to your contacts about 4 weeks after your initial contact.

Set up daily job alerts on key websites (i.e. LinkedIn, Indeed, company websites, etc.) and review the roles daily.

Apply to roles that meet your objectives and then find emails for the hiring authority and human resources at the target company. Send a note to both alerting them that you have applied to the role and request an opportunity to interview. Follow up three times over the course of two weeks and then stop and wait, as you do not want to come across as too pushy.

Find key people in hiring positions that meet your objectives and request a meeting (for coffee, virtual, or in-person) and network with them.

Use your tracking tool to capture your actions and results. With the flurry of daily activity, you will need to stay organized with your search. This will also help to identify who you will need to close out with once you start your new position.

References

Professional references are people you have worked with and who can speak about your work ethic, work history, and productivity.

Pull together a list of professional references. It is recommended to identify people who you have worked with in a more recent role.

Once you share this information with a potential employer, it is best practice to contact your references and alert them of possible phone calls from companies and recruiters.

Closure

Once you have officially landed a new role, update your LinkedIn profile.

Close the loop with the contacts that helped you or responded to you along the way.

Be professional; it will be remembered.

What's next? [Top 25 Resume Tips](#)