

GET THE JOB

EMPLOYMENT GUIDE



Economy on the Rebound

If you haven't heard by now, the job market is back in full force. Unemployment was at a six-year low as of June 2014 and looking to continue its roll.

That means opportunities are out there for you, the job-seeker. It also means competition is heating up.

YOU & THE ECONOMY

Perhaps more important than wondering why the economy is improving is asking how you can take advantage of it. This is the time to ready your resume and strengthen your online presence to make sure you can easily be found for new, exciting opportunities.

No matter if you're a graduate fresh out of college looking to land your first high-level internship or a grizzled veteran seeking a career change, the job market is in an accommodating state.

YOU & YOUR JOB

How you present yourself at work is a great indicator of how your career will progress. If you show up to work on time and work hard in your present role, you are setting yourself up for positive recommendations should the chance for a better, higher-paying job come along.

Furthermore, your current employer will be more likely to reward you with more pay or perks if they are worried

about you leaving. Maintaining a positive reputation is absolutely critical to both your present and future career aspirations.

AREAS ON THE UPSWING

The employment sectors seeing the most significant improvement during the past year have been professional services, wholesale and retail trade, leisure, hospitality, healthcare, financial services, transportation and manufacturing, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Lets' say one of these sectors interests you, but you're working in an unrelated field. It's time to make your transition plan. Start by identifying any required educational or certification requirements, then pursue them through whatever means necessary.

If a strong educational background isn't necessary for your target position, try to find a part-time internship or even a business that needs some extra help on

the weekends. Any foot in the door can help you meet influential people and make those solid connections that so often lead to full-time employment.



Minimize Your Job Search Costs

Being let go from a job is difficult on your emotions, confidence and, especially, your wallet. The average job search lasts 18 weeks, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

And given that the typical American worker takes home \$34,020 in salary, those 18 weeks between jobs add up to a stunning \$11,776 in lost paychecks, according to the same data.

There are many ways to minimize your job search costs if you're serious about doing so. Some methods will actually require you to pay money up front but can pay off in the long run. Here are a few to consider:

- **Buy a suit:** You'll want to look your best when your chance for an interview comes along. Wearing an outfit that is sloppy, too loose or too tight can send negative messages to your prospective employer.

- **Hire some help:** Recruiters, head-hunters and career coaches are plentiful. It is important to have experts help you make the right decisions when it comes to your next steps. Figure out how much help you need and then start the search process for credible, certified professionals.

- **Get a degree:** If the one thing lacking from your resume is an educational degree, it may be time to consider pursuing one. The competition for new jobs has turned global in many cases, meaning more qualified candidates than ever are



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applying for open positions. Having a degree can keep you.

GO ONLINE

Many employers are posting and promoting new job

openings online only. That's good news for job-seekers looking to save money on dropping off resumes or buying postage for sending them through the mail.

Check online job boards, LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook for new job postings. These social hubs are also great for making professional connections.

Reach out to your acquaintances through social media to get the scoop on any available jobs they may have heard about, and be sure to follow-up on all leads.

Paying for Your Resume?

Many people dread the project of writing and updating their own resume. “I am an above-average writer, but I am not good at writing about myself,” you might say. “I have no idea what keywords to highlight.”

“This is my first time on the job market in 15 years. I don’t even know what a resume is supposed to look like!”

Do any of these quotes sound like they would come from your mouth? You’re not alone. Professional resume writers hear these same concerns on a daily basis.

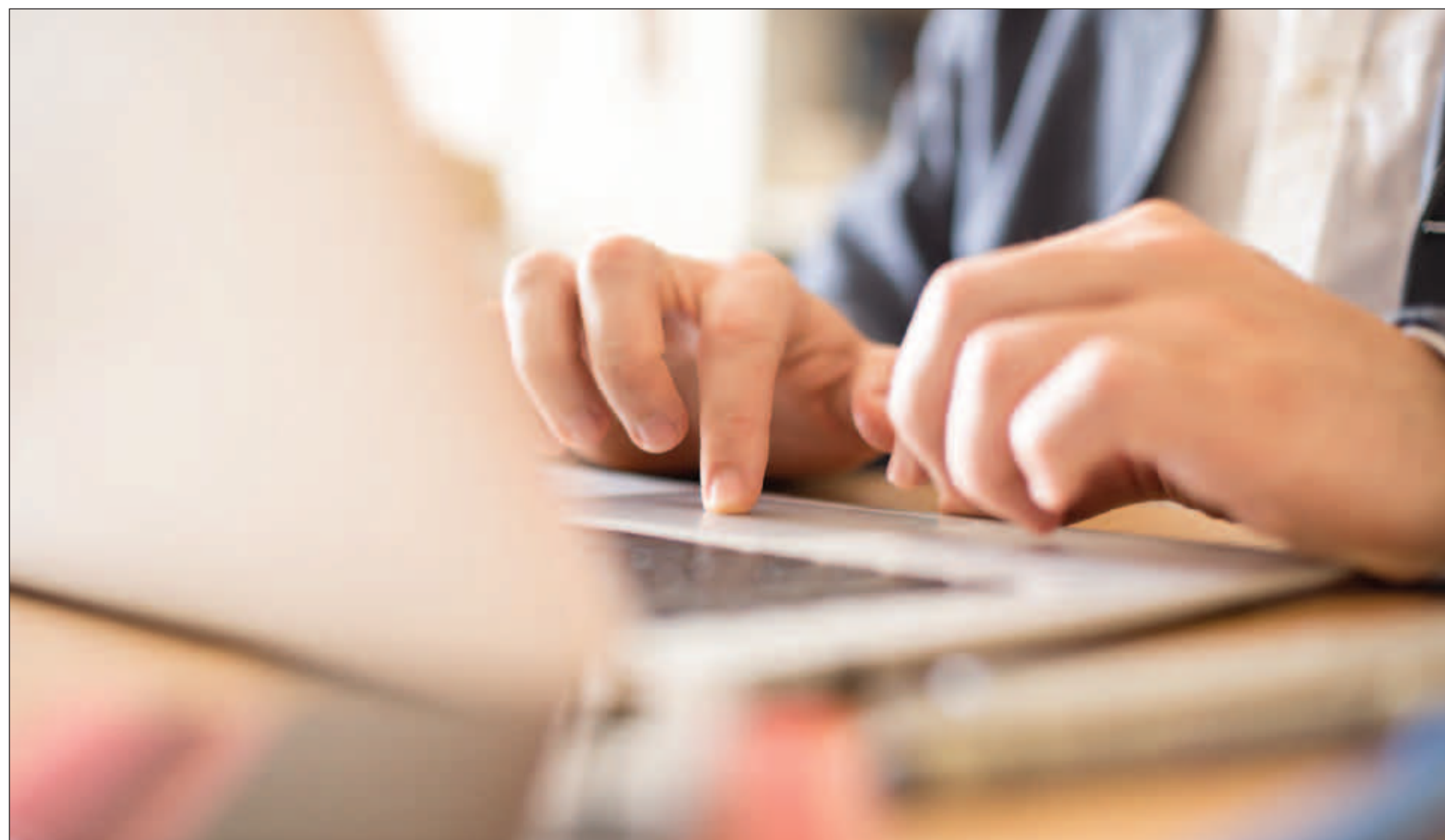
WHY PAY?

Many surveys have shown that after being presented with self-built and professional resumes of candidates with identical backgrounds, employers said they would likely offer a higher salary to the prospect with the professionally written document.

And don’t worry about recruiters being able to tell if you paid a professional service to write your resume. The fact you made an investment into your job search will convey your dedication and commitment to landing a new opportunity.

ABOUT CERTIFICATIONS

A quick online search for professional resume writing services will uncover a seemingly endless list of potential



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partners for your project. The competitive job market has created a boom for such services, many of which are legitimately aiming to advance your career opportunities with a concise, powerful resume.

One credential you should look for when choosing your

service is the Certified Professional Resume Writer (CPRW) designation. The Professional Association of Resume Writers and Career Coaches has been around for 25 years and puts writers through an intensive testing phase to earn the certification.

FREE RESOURCES

If you choose to build your resume yourself, many free resources are available to help you in your mission. You can find many free online critiques that will digitally parse your uploaded resume and give you tips on what’s working and what’s not.

You can also find experts in local employment centers who provide free resume-writing tips and services. If you’re a college student, check in with your school’s career services department, which usually staffs a few specialists skilled in crafting effective resumes.

Negotiation Power

Negotiating your next salary can be tough, but remember that you are ultimately in control. And if you feel uncomfortable at the thought of negotiating your pay, remember that it is a more common occurrence than you realize.

About 84 percent of managers expect their candidates to try to negotiate their salary, according to a report by www.salary.com.

KNOW YOUR VALUE

You are coming in blind if you're entering a salary negotiation with no idea of what comparable professionals earn. Check online for sites that calculate pay rates for various industries in different locations across the country.

Local trade associations also can provide you the average going rates to help give you an idea of a starting point. Once you have this knowledge, you can confidently understand your worth for a certain position.

STAY CALM – AND CLASSY

There is no reason to become upset during salary negotiations. Doing so will probably doom your candidacy. Instead, stay calm and listen fully to any offer that is given.

Once you have fielded the offer, take your time and weigh your cost of living, career trajectory and workload changes. It is important to have your ideal salary range in your head before any interview, just in case you are offered a position on the spot.

NEVER REVEAL YOUR FINAL NUMBER

Many candidates will list their specific salary requirements within their cover letter. This is a big no-no – unless you're prompted to do so by the target job description. Once your employer knows how much you'll be willing to take, they have taken control of any future negotiations.

The goal is to always remain noncommittal about this information, especially in the early stages of the interview processes. The time to begin detailed negotiations is when the employer lets you know the job is yours, if you can reach a mutually beneficial salary number.



The Six-Second Test

Here's an eye-popping statistic for you: Many hiring managers spend six seconds on their initial review of your resume.

Six seconds.

"That's hardly enough time for them to read my name!" you may be thinking. The truth is, recruiters and managers are trained to spot and digest key information swiftly – and they are almost forced to.

Many will field more than 100 applications for a single job opening. Jobs in bigger cities will attract many more.

Once hiring managers get a quick sense of who you are and what you've done, your resume is then scuttled into either the "yay" or "nay" pile for a more thorough review down the line. This process may seem unfair to qualified candidates, but it is the truth of today's hiring culture.

THE STUDY

The six-second conclusion was made by the The Ladders career service after it conducted a comprehensive eye-tracking study of recruiters while they reviewed resumes. In short, technology was used to record and analyze where and for how long the recruiters focused their attention during a resume assessment.

BEAT THE SIX-SECOND TEST

Here's what recruiters are looking for during their rapid review of your resume:

- An uninterrupted work history.
- Numbers-based achievements.
- Steady progression in your career, with increased leadership responsibilities.
- Specific academic qualifications.

- Specific certification or software skills.

FOLLOW-UP

Even if you're not sure that you meet the qualifications

for a job you recently applied to, a follow-up email or phone call can't hurt – unless the job description specifically mentions "No phone calls please."

In your follow-up, clearly explain that you recently applied for the position.

Describe one more time how your qualifications and key skills match what the employer is looking for and end the message or call by thanking them in advance for any consideration.

How you come across in your approach will make a big difference in how your follow-up is perceived. So find the delicate balance between eager and interested to leave a positive impact on the hiring manager.



The Military-to-Civilian Transition

While federal unemployment numbers continue to improve, one sector of workers is still struggling to find work.



One in nine veterans who served during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars were jobless in 2013, according to a report released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Furthermore, an estimated 200,000 of the about 2.8 million Americans who have served in uniform since 9/11 are unemployed.

Veterans need help in conveying how their military record can translate into success in the civilian sector. Their skills may be highly specialized for the military, or they may find that when they get back home, their intended industry has become more technologically advanced than it was five years ago, and they are behind on the latest software and tools.

DE-MILITARIZE YOUR RESUME

One way to make your transition into the civilian sector as seamless is possible is to de-militarize your resume. This process entails converting complicated military terms and jargon into easy-to-understand language.

If you're applying for a job in manufacturing – the most popular sector for veterans – you don't need to list the technical names and specifications of weapons you operated while in combat. The same goes for military software systems and policies. Many of these terms are long-winded acronyms that can confuse civilian recruiters and hiring managers.

Turn their attention away from what systems you worked on and place it on how you worked with them. Buzzwords such as logistics, supply chain management, inventory control and quality assurance are what employers are looking for when hiring their next manufacturing manager.

YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

During your military career, you surely accrued key skills through the execution of a variety of critical tasks. Knowing how to translate them into civilian speak is a challenge in itself.

Did you lead a battalion of soldiers through a mission in austere conditions? Then your skills in leadership, decision-making and project management should be highlighted within your resume and cover letter.

Have you developed and deployed trainings across your unit? Then make sure your mentoring, coaching and public-speaking skills are drawn out for recruiters and hiring managers to see.

Hot Markets for Recent Grads

If you're a college graduate with a degree in a technology-related specialization, then you're in luck. The University of California San Diego extension recently released its list of "Hot Careers for College Graduates," and technology-driven positions such as software developers and systems administrators topped its compilation.

So take a look below to find out the top 20 career hot spots for new grads, according to the UC San Diego extension. And if your target job is not on this list, don't fret. Earning a college degree or certification in any field will help put you on a level playing field with your competition.

- Software developers, applications.
- Software developers, systems software.
- Market research analysts.
- Accountants and auditors.
- Network and computer systems administrator.
- Elementary school teachers.
- Computer systems analysts.
- Managements analysts.
- Public relations specialists.
- Insurance sales agents.
- Financial analysts.
- Computer programmers.
- Sales representatives, wholesale and retail.
- Manufacturing, technical and scientific.
- Securities, commodities and financial
- Services sales agents.
- Paralegals and legal assistants.
- Middle school teachers.

