

GET THE JOB

Just Getting Started?

Securing that first job might be harder than earning your diploma

Depending on your field, the job market out of college might be more competitive than ever. That's why literally hundreds of thousands of Americans with a college degree are nevertheless working minimum-wage jobs, according to the Wall Street Journal. You'll likely need to work hard to differentiate yourself in a crowded field of candidates. Here's how.

SHARPEN YOUR RESUME

Be on the lookout for simple errors that could lead a hiring manager to set your resume aside. Typos, bad grammar and — worse of all — misstatements or lies are easily spotted by seasoned pros. Fabricating any portion of your resume can lead to disastrous results. Keep in mind that potential employers will follow up with references, research qualifications and fact check other details before they even consider scheduling an interview.

If you're particularly worried about an incidental mistake sneaking through, have a friend or hired professional proof your resume before submitting it. The more people who look your application over, the better. Fresh eyes often find things like typos that



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are easily overlooked by those who create the documents.

PROACTIVE APPROACH

Busy hiring managers might

need a little nudge, in particular if you're part of a more competitive search. Entry-level hires are often made based on how proactive you are. That

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arrives. Do a little research into the company culture and its leaders before the interview, so you can fashion more detailed responses.

All of that should help you in the moment, but don't forget to follow up once you've left the building. Send a thank-you note with a specific comment after your talk. Just be aware the being proactive can easily drift into being a nuisance, so limit your follow-up communication.

BE CREATIVE

If the company culture fits, consider getting creative with your application. Move away from the tried-and-true resume with storyboarded video by transmitting through LinkedIn or Snapchat. This next-generation approach might be particularly effect in more tech-focused areas like web development, videography or graphic design. On the other hand, industries like banking, the law or executive management may require a more traditional approach.