

## **November 13<sup>th</sup> 2009 – What you can do to increase your chances of finding a job?**

It's been all over the news for at least the past year. The economy is looking bleak and it's your senior year in college. You may be thinking, "How am I ever going to find a job in this economic downturn?" What can you do to prepare to increase your chances of finding a job next year? This is the first of a series of blogs that will give you tips so that you will be ready when the opportunity knocks.

***Update your resume!*** If you are planning on searching for a job at either a Career Fair or posting your resume online, you may want to keep the information general. Resume writing is very important. It may be your one shot to make a great impression on a hiring manager. Don't let a hiring manager develop an unfair or inaccurate impression of you before you even get the chance to interview just because you accidentally forgot to 'spell check' your resume. Remember, first impressions are everything!

***Do your research!*** If you get invited to an interview, it's a good idea to spend some time researching the company so you understand the true nature of the business and what your role will entail. For a fulfilling experience, find a job that matches your interests and/or goes along with your values and beliefs. Once you are in the door and working 8+ hours a day, you will see why finding a job that matches who you are makes all the difference.

***Prepare for the Interview!*** Your resume won't get you a job. All it does is open a small window of opportunity for you to go in and really show an organization who you are. So, who are you?? It seems that for most students once they have reached the point of an interview, they feel that they are as good as hired. That's not the case. From the moment you walk into the door, the company is sizing you up for the position they have available. How are you dressed? Are you well groomed? Do you display confidence in your posture, hand shake, even your smile? These are all part of the first impression. After the interview begins be aware of your tone, tempo and hand gestures. Yes, this a lot to think about and you haven't even answered your first question yet, but believe me, it matters. In fact, before the first question is asked, a manager has a pretty good idea whether he/she would hire you.

Let's talk about answering the interview questions. Be friendly, make eye contact and let your personality peek through with a smile here and there. After all, everyone appreciates a real person. Be honest. A good interviewer will know if you are making something up or you are telling the truth. It's okay not to have the answer or experience but if it appears as though you are being dishonest, the rest of the interview won't matter. Speak professionally. An interview is no place for slang and acronyms. The interviewer is imaging you speaking to their customers/clients. Keep your answers concise and to the point. If the hiring manager asks you a question about your last job, you don't need to tell them about every job you've had in the past. Focus on the jobs/experiences that are most relevant to the job that you are interviewing for. Being friendly, sincere, professional and to the point are keys to your success. Finally, don't worry about whether or not you will know how to answer the questions. By the time you get to the interview, you know what you know. There's no point in adding extra pressure worrying about what you don't know. What's more important and will make a difference in getting that job is how you answer the questions...friendly, sincere, professional and to the point!

In today's job market, you will be lucky if there are only a handful of other candidates that you will be competing with. In most cases, the number will be much larger. Take each opportunity to make it your best! Good luck!