

STEP 1. Begin with Self-Assessment

The job search process begins with an identification of your values, interests, skills, accomplishments, experience, and goals. How can you seek a position if you don't know what you want from a job and what you have to offer prospective employers? Self-assessment, though a time-consuming process, provides invaluable information to facilitate career decisions and to prepare you to market your background effectively.

Values

An awareness of what you value (qualities that are important and desirable) in a career will aid you in exploring career goals and attaining greater satisfaction in your work.

Interests

You can identify interests by looking at enduring themes in your life-activities that persist over time, consistent choices, recurring dreams, or the way you spend your time.

Skills

A skill refers to something you do well, including handling problems or tasks. The key to your successful job search is recognizing these skills and communicating their usefulness verbally and in writing to a prospective employer. Some of the most marketable skills are those which are useful in a wide variety of work environments. These are known as transferable skills. For example, the ability to write effectively, communicate verbally, and use word processing or database software are valued skills in the private as well as public sectors.

STEP 2. Research and Explore Career Options

The next step in the job search process is to explore the "matches" between your identified skills, interests, and values and the demands of career fields and organizations. What kind of education and training is needed? What are the salaries? Perhaps the best way to explore career options is to try out intended jobs through internships, cooperative education positions, part-time or summer jobs, or volunteer opportunities. Another excellent way is by talking with people already doing the work you're interested in, or participating in job shadowing or mentoring programs.

STEP 3. Choose a Career Field, then Target Employers

After thoroughly researching possible careers/jobs, several field options will emerge as most realistic and attractive. These options should become your career or job search goals. It is probable that no single career will have the potential to utilize all your skills, allow you to develop all your interests, and incorporate a value system completely compatible with yours. Therefore, try to target a career field that will satisfy some of your high-priority needs. Other needs of less importance can perhaps be satisfied in your leisure time activities.

STEP 4. Prepare Job Search Materials and Develop Job Search Skills

Once your job goals have been targeted, resumes and application letters can be tailored to reflect your qualifications as they relate to the interests of prospective employers. Visit a Career Center for help with interviewing, resume writing, and job application skills.

http://www2.jobtrak.com/help_manuals/jobmanual/