

8 Things Only Successful Job Seekers Can Say

Next to losing weight, finding a new position is one of the most popular New Year's resolutions. Just as many have given up on diet and exercise, lots have given up on finding a better job. Yet a few savvy professionals will succeed at finding greater career satisfaction this year. How? They finally learned the right way to look for work.

Traditional Job Search Is Severely Broken = You're Wasting Your Time

If you think job search involves putting together a résumé and cover letter so you can spend hours online looking at job postings and filling out tedious applications, then the chances of you finding a new job any time soon may be slim. Here's why:

- The average job posting gets over 200 applicants
- The first application is usually submitted within 200 seconds of the job being posted
- The company's applicant tracking system (ATS) automatically eliminates at least half of those applicants because they don't meet basic match requirements set by the employer
- Of the 100 remaining, 80 will be eliminated via a refined matching process
- Of the 20 remaining applicants, recruiters will review and chose two to six candidates to pass along to the hiring manager

Unfortunately, all this means you have less than a three-percent chance of getting an interview.

Disruptive Job Search (or, How to Market Your Business-of-One)

Smart job seekers understand they need to disrupt the job search process to get noticed. It starts by realizing you are a business-of-one that needs to market your services to the employer. Instead of reacting to job postings, you proactively choose whom you want to work for and then use a targeted, highly efficient process for establishing a connection with them. Are you this kind of job seeker? Let's find out!

The Eight Things Only Successful Job Seekers Can Say

If you can say all of the following, you are properly prepared to find a better career opportunity:

- I know what problems I can solve that companies will compensate me for
- I can share who I am and what I want to do in three sentences or less
- I know 10 companies in my area that need my brand of expertise
- I have a clear networking plan to connect with at least five people at each of these companies
- My résumé and LinkedIn profile are optimized, focused, and error-proof
- My cover letter strategy gets them at "hello"
- I have completed interview prep and am up-to-speed on behavioral interviewing
- I understand how to leverage informational interviewing to uncover hidden job opportunities and to get referred into competitive positions

If you can't say "yes" to all eight of these questions, then you know exactly what you need to do next. Find resources to get you current on these key elements. Not having all of these in place is like trying to finish a puzzle when you know pieces are missing - you'll never get it done.



P.S.: Don't Have the Time? Then You Really Don't Want a New Job

There's one other thing all successful job seekers share - they hate feeling they have no control over their future and are petrified of things getting worse. The reality is, job search takes effort. Nobody will do it for you. Successful job seekers are motivated by fear of failure and of staying unhappy and unfulfilled in their careers. Which means if you don't push yourself to get competent in your job search, then you really don't want it bad enough. It's the hard truth. Ask yourself, "How will I feel if next year rolls around and my career isn't any better?" Are you really willing to let another year pass without improving your situation? Only you can answer that one!

