

Public Libraries Briefcase

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Job Hunting Tips and Resources

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Public librarians have the opportunity to assist many patrons with their job searches. After fifteen years of offering this help to recent graduates, downsized executives and career changers, here are some tips that I can offer.

Develop a Great Resume and Cover Letter

Use some of the titles listed below to develop the best resume and cover letter that you can. Don't be afraid to individualize these for a specific position and organization.

Target Organizations

What qualities and experiences do you have? Where would you like to work? What business would like to have you work there? Be proactive- don't just wait for something to pop up on a job site. Develop a list of potential targets, using a database like Reference USA. This may take some thinking and keyword searching. Bring up a record of a known target and using their SIC and NAICS (industry classification codes) listed there, decide your geographic limits (MSA, zip codes, county, etc.) and create a list. This target list can then be downloaded and using mail merge you can easily create letters and mailing labels.

Networking

Get the word out to everyone. Network through colleagues, family, and professional organizations. You are more likely to be successful in your job hunting if you look at sites and organizations specific to your profession/area.

Research

Once you have put together a target list, research these companies through the Internet and business databases. Now make contact by sending your resume/cover letter to the appropriate person in the organization. Follow up in person, by emails or phone calls and hopefully get an interview scheduled. Come with ideas, questions and knowledge of the company and your field. Interview books may be helpful, but this is where reading your professional journals also pays off to be aware of the latest advancements and trends in your field. Research also pays off when it comes to negotiating your salary.

The following are a sampling of resources that are available in many public libraries or on the Internet.

PRINT TITLES

Reference Resources

Directory of Executive Recruiters , Peterborough, N.H., Kennedy Information

Published since 1971, the famous "Red Book" details over 13,000 executive recruiters at 5,600 search firms - with all the contact information you need to start networking right away: address, phone, fax, email, web address and much more! Indexed geographically and by area of expertise.

The National Jobbank , Avon, Mass.: Adams Media Corp.

Alphabetically arranged by state, this indispensable annual directory to over 21,000 employers, also available in separate volumes for each state, offers a variety of pertinent contact, business, and occupational data. It also includes tips on conducting a successful job search campaign, preparing for an interview, writing résumés and cover letters, and hunting for jobs online.

Occupational Outlook Handbook , Indianapolis, IN: JIST Pub., comp. by U.S. Department of Labor

More than 200 occupational profiles feature the latest, exhaustive information on employment scenarios, advancement opportunities, salaries, working conditions, and training, educational, and skill prerequisites. A definitive reference for the beginning job-hunter since the 1940s, it is also available online (<http://www.bls.gov>).

Farr, J. Michael & LaVerne L. Ludden. ***O*NET Dictionary of Occupational Titles*** , Indianapolis, IN: JIST Pub.

This print version of the U.S. Department of Labor's O*NET OnLine (<http://online.onetcenter.org>) database is designed to replace the older and lengthier Dictionary of Occupational Titles. In addition to the standard occupational classification titles and codes, it offers detailed information on earnings, education, job growth, skills required, and related jobs.

Weddle, Peter, ***Weddle's Directory of Employment-Related Internet Sites*** , Stamford, CT: Weddle's.

This one-of-a-kind directory lists more than 8,000 job boards, organized by occupational field, industry, and geographic focus. In addition to containing all of the larger and better-known sites and thousands of smaller specialty sites, the directory also features resume databanks, career portals, and the (URL) for each of these sites.

SUBSCRIPTION DATABASES

Business and Company Resource Center . Farmington Hills, MI : Thomson Gale

This subscription database is a fully integrated resource bringing together company profiles, brand information, rankings, investment reports, company histories, chronologies and periodicals. Thomson Financials' Investext Plus database is fully integrated in this database. Search this database to find detailed company and industry news and information.

Mergent Online . New York: Mergent FIS

U.S. company data service covering 10,000 public companies and their SEC filings and their annual reports. International company data from more countries than any other international database, with global searching across databases.

ReferenceUSA . Omaha, NE: infoUSA.

The ReferenceUSA subscription database contains, in module format, detailed information on more than 12 million U.S. businesses, searchable by company name, industrial codes, employee size, sales volume, geographic criteria, etc. Records can be downloaded into a spreadsheet and using mail merge, letters and mailing labels can be created.

Standard and Poor's NetAdvantage . New York : Standard & Poor's

Use this quick search source for comprehensive financial and business information. Find corporation records, industry surveys and biographies of thousands of corporate executives and directors.

GENERAL JOB SEARCH GUIDES

Bolles, Richard Nelson. *What Color Is Your Parachute?: A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters & Career-Changers* . Ten Speed: Celestial Arts.

With a supplemental web site (<http://www.jobhuntersbible.com>), this perennial best seller remains a self-assessment favorite, identifying techniques to determine mission in life, interest, and skills; describing interview questions and answers and salary negotiation strategies; and advising on locating employment.

Dikel, Margareet Riley. *Guide to Internet Job Searching* . New York ; London : McGraw-Hill

This regularly updated title provides a definitive guide to harnessing the Internet's powerful research capabilities, offering expert advice on how to find and use online bulletin boards, job listings, recruiter information, discussion groups, and resume posting services. Includes: Local, state-by-state, government, and international resource listings and opportunities.

Yate, Martin. *Knock 'Em Dead* . Adams Media

Updated regularly since 1987, Yate's comprehensive how-to covers the entire job search process from resumé writing and interviewing to salary negotiation and psychological and drug testing, with information on recent developments in the job market. Three appendixes address online searching with valuable listings of web sites and resources arranged by subject.

RESUME, COVER LETTERS, INTERVIEW RESOURCES

Criscito, Pat. *E-Résumés* . Hauppauge, N.Y. : Barron's, 2005

The book's list of web sites accepting e-résumés and offering jobs online has been updated and streamlined, and now consists of the top ten companies in each major career category. Thousands of other links are kept up-to-date on the book's companion web site. Emphasis is on the "how-to" of resumé design, writing, and use on the Internet. A new chapter teaches readers how to create and use e-portfolios in their job searches, which is then tied into the current chapter on home-page résumés.

DeLuca, Matthew J. *More Best Answers to the 201 Most Frequently Asked Interview Questions* . New York : McGraw-Hill, c2001

This update of the best seller provides readers with a complete guide to answering the most frequently asked questions at job interviews. It offers advice for how to dress, how to project the right image for the job, how to land the interview, and of course, how to answer any interview question that may come up, including illegal questions.

Parker, Yana. *Damn Good Resume Guide: A Crash Course in Resume Writing* . Ten Speed: Celestial Arts, 2002.

This longtime best seller features a clear ten-step approach to resumé writing with many creative solutions to problems, strategies for creating chronological résumés, and many examples.

Parker, Yana. *The Damn Good Resume Catalog: 200 Damn Good Examples* . Ten Speed: Celestial Arts, 2002.

Based on the premise that learning is easiest by example, this well-written companion and sequel to *Damn Good Resume Guide* (see above) offers 200 sample résumés from real people, each depicting a different occupation.

Greene, Betty, *Get the Interview Every Time: Fortune 500 Hiring Professionals' Tips for Writing Winning Resumes and Cover Letters*. Dearborn Trade, a Kaplan Professional Company, 2004.

The author surveyed Fortune 500 Human Resources executives, asking what they look for in a résumé. Based on the Fortune 500 feedback, the author provides a wealth of specifics on the difficult process of writing résumés and cover letters that resonate with the people on the receiving end. Of great practical value are the examples of before-and-after résumés. The chapter on how to submit résumés by e-mail demystifies this process.

INTERNET SITES FOR FINDING AND GETTING A JOB

The monster job posting sites are well known, but the following sites will help patrons to develop a more targeted job search.

Career Onestop

<http://www.careeronestop.org>

In line with the Department of Labor's vision for America's Labor Market Information System, CareerOneStop, is a collection of electronic tools, operating as a federal-state partnership, providing in-depth information on wages, employment trends, occupational requirements, state labor market conditions and links to thousands of online resources.

JobHunt: A Meta-List of On-Line Job-Search Resources and Services

<http://www.job-hunt.org/>

A large list of links to online jobs, job search sites and sites with more lists related to job hunting. Jobs are not actually listed here but the links are categorized by type of career and are divided into commercial and non-commercial sites. There are also links to companies which provide information about employment opportunities online. Links to hundreds of professional organizations and several job searching advice articles are also included.

The Riley Guide

<http://www.rileyguide.com>

Margaret Dikel (née Riley) is a librarian and her site is, perhaps the best on the net. Certainly Richard Bolles (*What Color Is Your Parachute?*) calls it the best gateway job site on the Web.

Salary.com

<http://www.salary.com/>

This web site contains all kinds of information relating to compensation. Their "Salary Wizard" lists salary statistics for hundreds of positions.

WEDDLE'S

<http://www.weddles.com>

This directory will lead you to associations' sites that feature job boards, resume banks, and other employment resources.