

A Lighthouse in an Ocean of Candidates

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*As the economy slows and an increasing number of people are finding themselves without employment, the job market is more crowded than ever. Like a lighthouse, you must be seen amidst in the vast ocean of candidates searching for a new position. Here are 10 ways to get noticed:*

1. Resume - In the 21st century, the definition of a resume has changed - It has become more billboard and less novel.
2. Making contact - Don't just send your resume to a job posting. Do a little research and dig up the hiring manager's name. Make a call, introduce yourself and schedule an interview.
3. Be assumptive - If you submit a resume, make sure you follow it up with a phone call to see when they will be meeting with you.
4. Use a good recruiter - There are a lot of mediocre recruiters out there. Talk to different ones and find out how long they have been recruiting and their process. Make sure the recruiter will let you know before you ever send their resume anywhere. Some recruiters use resumes as a marketing tool to demonstrate the high quality of candidates they have.
5. Research - Learning all you can about a company prior to an interview is a must. Having this information at your fingertips throughout an interview will win you major points over the competition.
6. Interviewing - This requires a whole other set of skills from the ones that make you a valuable commodity in your field. Find a good interview coach with proven experience to help you navigate the entire hiring experience. It is a small investment to ensure you don't lose the golden opportunity to make a good impression.
7. Ask for the job - We interviewed three Fortune 500 VP HR professionals. They all said that less than 5% of candidates actually ask for the job. If you want it, you have to ask for it.
8. Don't leave any stone unturned - At the end of the interview make sure you have answered all of the questions that will allow the employer to extend you an offer. "Is there anything else I can tell you about myself to assure you I am the best candidate for the job?"
9. Thank-you note - When you receive mail, do you open the typed or handwritten envelopes first? Don't email your thank-you notes. Write a thank-you note, by hand, that expresses appreciation, enthusiasm, and a reminder of the value you bring to that person and/or company. Make sure to send one to everyone you talked with...even the hiring manager's secretary. Sometimes a decision can be made within hours, before you even get home from the interview. By writing the notes in your car after the interview and dropping them off at the front desk before you leave can be the slight nudge your candidacy needs to put you over the top.
10. Follow-up - After a couple of days, call the hiring manager using the direct number on his business card you asked for earlier. Don't pressure them. Express your enthusiasm for the position and see where they are in the process. Ask if it is okay for you to follow-up when they say the process will be over, to check on their decision.