

2010

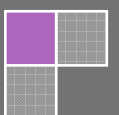
50 Top Tips for Job Seekers

Fifty Practical Tips to Help You Find a New Job



Andy Headworth

1/1/2010



Contents

Introduction.....	Page 3
Don't Forget the Basics	Page 4
Start Online with LinkedIn.....	Page 5
Then Move onto to Facebook.....	Page 7
Now it's Time for Twitter.....	Page 10
Some Key Reminders.....	Page 12

The information in this document is proprietary and confidential to Andy Headworth owner of Sirona Consulting Limited. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, for any purposes without the express written consent of Andy Headworth. This document is subject to change without notice, and Andy Headworth does not warrant that the material contained within this document is error free.

Introduction

This century has started with a global jobs crisis, which has not been seen since the famous pre-war depression of the 1930's. For anyone looking for a job, whether they are new to the job market, looking to change jobs or have been made redundant it has been a really tough time.

While the situation is not brilliant for job seekers currently, there are opportunities out in the marketplace to find job opportunities....if you know how to find them.

What you need to know is that companies are still recruiting. They may not make it obvious, and they may even tell you they are not hiring - especially if there is talk of redundancies or layoffs flying around. But the truth of the matter is that many companies are now starting to look at recruiting staff again, albeit 'under the radar' or 'in secrecy'.

If you are looking for a job, what you need are some solid useful and practical helpful tips that you can use to give yourself a head start over the competition out there in the marketplace.

As a recruiter I have spent many years successfully recruiting for companies large and small, while at the same time providing career advice to thousands of job seekers over my career. While writing my popular recruitment blog - <http://blog.sironaconsulting.com> - I have provided some great advice for job seekers. I have taken the best bits to compile this **list of hints and tips that** are realistic, practical and above all proven, and **will help you in the process of finding a new job.**

This is a pre-cursor to my launch of a **brand new website for job seekers launching soon.** It will take you through the stages of looking for a job, and will provide you with real hands on content to take you through the process, from the moment you start looking for a job, via written documents, video and audio. I have to say, I just can't wait to let you see this new website, because it will really help you find a job, by giving you great advice and support right the way through the process.

The great news is that **you don't have to worry about missing it**, as I will keep you updated as to when the launch date will be through the email address you provided to get this report.

Right then, let's get started.

Don't forget the basics!

1. Sending a CV or an application form WILL ONLY ever get you an interview - it won't get you the job. So focus on that fact and that fact alone. When asked to participate in a telephone interview, remember it is a screening process only. It is a way of saving time for the companies (and a good idea). Here you will only get screened out, not screened in. Those that are not screened out will by default go to the next stage, as the ones that are left.

So again a telephone interview is only a route to a face to face interview.

You don't get the job at the first interview, but like above, you can lose a job here. The second (and in some cases third) interview is the decision maker from a company's perspective. So the goal of the first interview is ONLY to get to the second interview and so on.

2. If you don't ask, you don't get. After all, isn't this what you're Mum told you when you were a little child? The same applies with getting a job - at the end of each stage 'ask for the job'. This can be couched in many ways, but the bottom line, asking for the job shows desire and intent to want the job.

3. Follow-up everything. Following up every stage is essential, if only to know you were not successful. It may make the difference when a company is deciding who to invite back for the next stage. If you find out you have been unsuccessful, then at least you can then focus on another job and not waste your time.

4. When approaching a recruitment agency for the first time - don't ever listen to those immortal recruiters' words...."I will get back to you".....they never do. It isn't because they don't want to, it is because they are so busy dealing with 100's of new CV's every day. So try and speak to a recruiter initially BEFORE you send a CV. At the very least follow it up after you have sent it. And don't give in until you speak to them. If they are blatantly ignoring you.....bin them and move to the next agency.

5. Volume, Volume, Volume! I am afraid this is a fact of life within the recession. You need to be working the numbers game. Don't stop at one or two jobs you are pursuing, you need to be going after as many as possible. It is better to have several offers to turn down than none at all, just because the one job you focused on, failed to materialise.

6. Don't bear grudges, don't burn any bridges and certainly don't tell recruitment agencies how to do their job (as tempting as it may seem sometimes!). This may not be the last time you need the services of the recruitment industry - and trust me on this - as recruiters, we all have very long memories when it comes to 'certain' candidates!!

7. Recruiters don't work with career changers. They work for their clients and are briefed to find people who are an exact match for their requirements. If you are looking to make a career transition (from Sales to Marketing for example), then contacting recruiters is a waste of time. The same applies if you are looking for a non-specific graduate entry job.

8. Don't make the silliest mistakes when doing something so important like applying for a job. It is madness, and usually means an instant reject. This may seem a little harsh, but if a job seeker can't be bothered to get the little details right, then for me, it is an indicator of things to come. So it is absolutely crucial that when you communicate with people via email, to either submit the CV or make the job application (which is invariably by email) that you get your details right.

9. Research your subject, and don't be afraid of staking out the premises of the company you are going to go for an interview with! The more you know about the interviewer and the company, then the better prepared you will be and consequently, the more confident you will be, therefore giving you the best chance at your interview. (Just don't mistake stalking for staking!)

10. No mad ties, loud shirts or a half a bottle of that new perfume or aftershave! First impressions are (more than ever) really important so you need to be memorable for the right reasons. Yes, you might think that new tie or shirt might make you stand out, but don't go too far! Show your interest at the interview, by sitting upright and leaning forward - rather than slouching in the chair like a baboon! Eye contact is great, but having a staring competition with the interviewer wouldn't be ideal. One thing you must do is retain your integrity and not bad mouth any previous employers - this may be difficult in some cases, but you must refrain!

Start online with LinkedIn

11. Make sure you have signed up to <http://www.Linkedin.com> , the business focused networking website - if you are a newbie, then download my LinkedIn beginners guide(<http://blog.sironaconsulting.com/files/linkedin-for-beginners-3.pdf> here) will help you get started.


12. Don't sign up with LinkedIn unless you are committed to spend some time making it work. Networking is about investing your time, and if that is something that doesn't interest you, or you can't be bothered, then stop now, buy a book and sit on the beach all summer waiting for a job to come your way! (You will have a long wait!)

13. Profile. This is absolutely essential and something that you shouldn't take lightly. It should effectively be your online CV, and with this - unlike a paper CV - make sure you upload a decent looking photo (headshot) of yourself. Make sure you have all the correct dates for your work history, and that it reads well with NO TYPO's! Don't forget, many employers check for online profiles before they interview people (whether they should, is a different conversation!), so you don't want any glaring mistakes making their decision for them.

14. You need to expand your LinkedIn network with as many people that know as possible. Get all your business cards out, go through your email contacts and spend some time writing down all the people you have interacted with, directly and indirectly. Then search for them on LinkedIn and invite them to your network. Size matters with LinkedIn - the bigger your network, then the bigger your 2nd and 3rd level search network will be. For example I have 872 connections which makes my overall search network 15,500,000 - quite a powerful tool isn't it?

15. Make sure you join a number of the groups (that are relevant to your sector), as these will become part of your search zone as well. Many groups can be joined simple by requesting to join. Once accepted (usually very quickly) the people in that group will become part of your search network!

16. Make sure you tell people that you are actually looking for a new job. You have two opportunities to do this on LinkedIn -in your personal profile, where you can explain what you are (by red line in example below), and then in the status section (by green line) where you can update your statuses as often as you like. It may sound obvious, but if people don't know you are available, then they won't talk to you about opportunities!



The image shows a screenshot of a LinkedIn profile for Andy Headworth. The profile header includes the name "Andy Headworth" with an "[Edit]" link. Below the name is a red vertical bar followed by the text: "Help & advise on recruitment process, strategy, reducing recruitment costs. Consulting | projects | workshops | training. [Edit]". Underneath this is the location "Brighton, United Kingdom [Edit]" and the industry "Staffing and Recruiting [Edit]". To the right of the text is a square profile picture of a man with short hair, wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt. Below the profile picture is a "[Edit]" link. At the bottom of the profile, there is a green vertical bar followed by the text: "Andy Employee Engagement the Smile and Move way - http://tinyurl.com/obuu7u 6 days ago [Edit]".

17. Ask current/previous colleagues for recommendations. Fortunately, LinkedIn makes this easy, and takes you through this process well by prompting you. This is a great way of adding to your credibility, and your online profile by showing your strengths, and the fact you were a valued employee (well hopefully anyway!). Also if you are/were a manager, recommendations from your staff is as equally powerful.

18. Use the power of LinkedIn to help you find the people you need to speak to. Hopefully you will have highlighted a number of companies that you want to work for (if not, don't worry, I will cover this aspect soon in this blog). These may be entirely new companies to you, and you will have no names to start with. Look at the 'company profiles' of the companies you want to work for. Find out what the background are of the people who work there. Have you got similar skills? Then find out where current employees have previously worked - check their profiles - have you worked for a similar company? You can then find the names of hiring managers, or HR staff that work there. You probably will have to contact them offline, but having the contact name will be a great start.

19. Do it now! If you are currently working, don't wait for you to become unemployed to start using LinkedIn, start now! Build your network before you need it, then when you need it, it will be one less area to get started.

20. Combine the use of LinkedIn with other social networking sites. If you use the LinkedIn tools to combine other social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook, it then becomes a very powerful tool to help find a job.

Then, move onto Facebook

21. Don't forget the public nature of Facebook. While I am sure you do appreciate the public nature of information on the internet, don't forget that just because you are looking for a job. You must assume that everything you write is available for public consumption, and that means any future employers. Many companies now do some internet searching and check the validity of their future employees - yes I know they will all tell you they don't, but I can confidently tell you that is rubbish, they do!

So if you have a profile on LinkedIn and other sites, make sure they all tell the same story! Also make sure your details are all accurate. As I tell everyone, **don't put anything on your online profile that you wouldn't want an employer to see.**

22. Pimp your profile. You need to ensure that you have a full profile, and that it reads akin to a CV or Resume. What you must remember is that when companies or recruiters are searching for candidates, they are 'conditioned' to view prospective candidates in a traditional way (right or wrong). So in the art of stating the obvious - give them what they expect.

It is important to highlight your assets and project an accurate representation of yourself. Make sure your education history is correct, with correct dates; your employment history need to be correct, again with correct dates - and just in case you think you can get away with changing the dates, don't even bother - it is very easy to check! ; list any volunteer work or work done through your degree (sandwich courses); check your group memberships -you may want to remove some of the more 'seemed fun at the time' groups you joined - would you want an employer to see them?

23. Review your photos. This is one of the best parts of Facebook, but it is also potentially one of the most damaging parts.

First make sure your profile photo is a clean head and shoulders shot of you in a non-stupid pose. Make sure it represents the 'professional' look that you would expect to portray at an interview.

Second, make sure all the drunken and stupid photos of you collapsed over furniture (and other people!) are removed. You really don't want to give any future employers the impression that you are a drunken party animal - even if you are!! Remember, as will all social interaction, and especially with employers - first impressions count (even if they are just photos on Facebook!).

24. Don't be boring. I may have started by suggesting you clamp down on some of the 'mad excesses' in your life, and is correct. But whatever you do, make sure you let your true personality shine through on your pages. You can express your humour, fun times and 'mad moments' - that is exactly what Facebook is all about - but keep them clean and keep them inoffensive! Employers want fun employees - they don't want overly sarcastic, rude or too opinionated employees!!

25. Don't be bashful. The recession has removed people's stigma about looking for a job. There did used to be (particularly in the UK), a reservedness towards telling people that you were out of work and wanted to find a new job. With so many people on Facebook, and with so many people looking for work, this is no longer an issue. Your friends, colleagues and people in your network will even expect you to help you in your job search process, they will want to refer you to anyone that can possibly help. All you have to do is actually tell them you are looking for a job!

Make it clear in your profile that you are seeking a new job. Also, use your status updates to indirectly tell everyone that you are engaged in job seeking activities; rewriting your CV, meeting with recruitment consultants, interviewing (but don't tell them who with, obviously!) etc Your network will see these and they may well prompt referrals and recommendations, so these indirect communications can work.

26. Show your knowledge to your network. Again like above this is an indirect method to attract your network to your skills and expertise in your chosen industry/sector. By sharing interesting information and links on your wall, you can build up a profile of being a knowledge expert about your sector.

Obviously don't do this all the time, working on the same premise above in No 24, mix up the messages to get your own personality to come through. You will be surprised how effective this can be, over a period of time. Showing that you are passionate and interested in the areas you're looking for a job, is a great way of demonstrating your desire to get a job in the sector and more importantly IF an employer or an agency finds you in a search, they can see that you are serious (especially if you put it on Facebook!) about presenting yourself in the right way.

27. Search. You can of course use Facebook to search for people from different industries, schools, universities etc, but there are different tools out there that will now do an open search on the 100's million Facebook profiles for you, much easier. You could try tools like [Wink.com](http://www.wink.com), which is a great way of drilling down searches to locations and industries.

Focus on your chosen industry, sector or chosen profession. Try and think a little laterally with your searching - this concept is no different to when you are looking for products on Google! Write down relevant keywords, job titles, brand names, buzz words etc from your target areas and search them. It will definitely yield people you should be networking with on Facebook. Find them, engage with them and friend them, not forgetting to see who they are friends with along the way. **People ALWAYS network with some of their work colleagues**, so not to offend them, so if your target works for company X, then chances are you will find others in that company to network with as well!

These searches are only limited by the time you invest in the exercise. There should be no excuse for not finding the people you want - there are 100's of millions of people on Facebook, after all!

28. Groups. Using the search tool within Facebook, search for topical and relevant groups within Facebook. There are literally thousands on Facebook, and they give you a great entry point into groups of people with similar interests. There will definitely be groups on your subject / industry or work interest - you just need to find them. There are many types of networks, and it will take a little time to do these searches, but I **guarantee this method will open up new networking opportunities** with likeminded people, more than happy to engage with a focused, professional person like you that is happy to share information and experiences with others!

29. Engage and share with people. You have already demonstrated that you are a giver by sharing links to industry articles and interesting sector information etc. Now you need to take this a stage further and start engaging with others. Get involved with the conversations going on within your network, shown on your news feed. Don't make meaningless comments, add some opinion and in depth answers - start to engage in proper conversations. Your network will see you commenting in this meaningful way, and as I have mentioned a couple of times, it helps build credibility and presence.

Don't be afraid of asking questions, it helps conversation and encourages responses. If you have a large network, and don't know them all personally, then the first thing the person you are engaging with will do, is read your profile. The effect of engaging is driving people back to your profile, and if you have that looking good (you should by now!), then the response will be even better. I am sorry if this sounds so obvious, but you will be surprised, how many people are just reactive when it comes to social networking - **pro activity tends to shine out!**

30. Network, Network & Network some more. The bigger your network, the more secondary and third level contacts you will be exposing yourself to. Sometimes it isn't the people in your network that are the targets, it is the people that they know that are the targets!

When you are communicating, most people use emails. So have you put all your details in your email signature? Have you included your LinkedIn profile URL, or your Facebook profile URL or even your @Twitter name? I see many emails every day from job seekers, and I can tell you the answer is most don't do it! So make sure you finish reading this post and fill out yours, it is very easy to do - and then everyone you email will be able to find out all the good stuff about you online.

Now it is time for Twitter

31. Understand Twitter and what it is about. The best way to do this is to take off your boots off, just dive in and have a good look around. See what other people are talking about, how they are talking and how they use the 140 character limit. Get a sense of the twitter sphere before you join in.

Spend some time looking at other people's bio's and how they present themselves. Then ask yourself a question - would YOU follow that person? Have they got your interest? Take note of your thoughts - you will need to bear this in mind for yourself soon.

32. Create a quality Profile and Bio. Here are some things you must do:

a) No cat or dog photos - just a good head shot image of yourself. It gives recruiters a good impression of you straight away.

b) Your URL - use your blog | website | LinkedIn profile. If you have none of these, create a LinkedIn profile (Download LinkedIn for beginners if you need a hand setting one up - <http://blog.sironaconsulting.com/files/linkedin-for-beginners-3.pdf>). Don't put a profile up without a URL, because every serious job seeker will have some form of online profile, and you will lose the opportunity to get followed by the right people otherwise.

c) Your one line bio - you have 160 characters to sum up your career and what you are looking for. Remember keywords from your industry. If you are actively looking for a job now - say so.

d) Background - go to [TwitterGallery](#) and choose a free background. It will be an extra way to help you stand out from other people.

Above all, be interesting - no-one will follow you if you have a boring profile and bio.

33. Twitter Tools. You need to be able to manage all the people you are going to follow, and respond to people following you (don't worry you WILL get plenty of followers soon!) Use [Tweetdeck](#) (my choice) or [Twhirl](#) on your PC, they are both excellent. Tweetdeck allows you to create groups to follow, which is great if you are looking at several different types of jobs/careers.

34. Go Mobile. Time waits for no one, and that is certainly the case in the job market. Make sure you can access Twitter on the move, by getting either [Twitterberry](#) (Blackberry), [Twitterrific](#) (iPhone) or go to m.twitter.com from a normal mobile. They are all surprisingly good, and I find myself using Twitterberry too often, because it is so good!

35. Who to follow? Now is the time to have some fun and start searching. First write down a number of the keywords from your industry or job that you are trying to look for. Then go to [Twittersearch](#) or [Monitter](#) and put these keywords in and see who is mentioning these words in their tweets. Don't forget to use the words like, job, hiring, recruiter, recruiting in some of your searches. Also look out for commonly used words that people are using, and make sure you search them too. Follow all the people you find interesting and who might be able to help you at some stage in your job search, from your industry etc.

36. Be someone that is worth following. There are three rules that apply in 'Twitterland' - **Don't be rude; Don't be boring; Give to get.** You need to be aware of these and practice them. Share news, share industry tips or links to interesting websites and blogs. Jump into some of the Twitter conversations and answer people's questions, engage with others in the Twittersphere.

There are six types of tweeting to consider, to build your twitter track record and they are:

- a) Info tweet
- b) Re-tweet or RT
- c) Help tweet
- d) Postman tweet
- e) Smiley tweet
- f) YOU tweet.

37. Find the industry professionals in your sector. Use some of the excellent Twitter directories online such as **Twellow** and **TwitDir** to track down all the other people in your industry that are on Twitter - you will be surprised how many are! Also take a note of who they are following -you might find a few surprises (nice ones of course!)

38. Build your following. You have already started to follow people on Twitter, but now start to develop a strategy, specific to your task - ie job seeking. Using some of what I have mentioned already, you will now (hopefully) have identified some interesting and useful people to follow. Keep this going. Take some time each day and endeavour to follow 10-20 people a day. The nature of the way that Twitter is working currently, people will normally follow you in return, if you are relevant and interesting to them. This is how you build your following numbers up - some strategic job seeking twittering. But don't stop tweeting and remember No 36!!

39. Watch your ratio's - you don't want to be tagged a spammer! The worst thing on Twitter is to be following 200 people and only have 7 followers yourself. Yes you might be great, but to other tweeters (me included) you will be tagged as a spammer! Basically, you followed loads of people and because you were not interesting to them they didn't reciprocate. Hence my point in No 8 - take it steady and only follow a certain number each day, and (presuming you have a good bio) they will start to follow you back, hence building up your ratio.

40. Don't be afraid. Twitter is still very new and even though there are many people with huge numbers of followers, there are also many, many people who are relatively new to it. So don't be afraid to try different things - the way you tweet, or the links you post etc. While there are 'guidelines' there are no hard and fast rules. Some things have worked for some people, and yet for others they haven't. So create your own Twitter persona and style and you will have fun. I nearly forget - don't forget to tell people that you are actually looking for a job. Don't do it every tweet, but make sure people know you are on the market.

Let me finish with some key reminders for you!

41. **Don't be arrogant.** Whatever your background and expertise, it is safe to assume that you won't necessarily know best when it comes to career advice. So don't be arrogant enough to think you do. Take a step back and seek some career advice and market advice from experts.
42. **Accept you can't do everything.** Unless you have been born with an 'S' on your chest (indicating that you are Superman or Superwoman), then you have to accept that you can't do anything when it comes to different jobs. It is a fact that there will be some jobs that will not have the skills or experience for. If that is the case, DON'T apply for those jobs, as you are wasting everyone's time. You have to understand that from an employer's perspective, they will look for relevant skills for a relevant job. Yes, you can try and 'sell the concept' of transferrable skills, and for some employers that will be applicable. Unfortunately in this current climate, it is less likely that you will succeed. So focus on your industry, key skills, experience and aligned sectors.
43. **Read the requirements.** This sounds like kindergarten advice, but the majority of applicants don't read the jobs they are applying for. They think it is 'worth a chance' to send off a CV in the hope that they will be considered. Trust me - it is another complete waste of time, don't bother if you don't have the required skills or experience.
44. **Plan your job search like a project.** Don't commit your entire job seeking work to memory, use a spreadsheet and document all your activities. You can make it a very simple and organised process. Document all the companies you have called, who you have spoken to/emailed, contact names and numbers and importantly the date/time to follow up. Make sure you transfer the date/time to your calendar (Outlook or Google calendar etc) so that you don't miss an opportunity.
45. **Research everything.** Whichever stage of the job seeking process you are at will require you to do some research - make sure you do. Don't skimp and try and think you will get away without conducting research on companies, interviewers or the industry competitors etc. You need to be prepared at every stage to make sure you give yourself the best opportunity - whether that is for a short telephone interview or a final second interview. Be prepared.
46. **This won't be a quick process (unfortunately!).** You need to be mentally prepared for a longer timescale between starting to look for a job and actually getting a job offer. With the control of the job market sitting firmly in the

hands of employers, the sense of urgency has (I hope temporarily) currently disappeared. Employers are being more cautious that they are recruiting the best they can find, and so consequently are typically looking at more candidates, and unfortunately not rushing in the process. So it is vitally important that you document everything (as I mentioned in [No. 44](#)), so that you don't miss anything.

47. **Don't put all your eggs in the one basket.** With intense competition out there in the job market, you have to accept that you will be up against many people for every job you go for. Even if you have been referred to someone or feel you have the 'inside track' on a job, don't take it for granted. Even if you are down to the final stage and you have still to get a confirmed offer, a 'better' candidate could appear at the last minute and snaffle for job. Also common, is the fact that previously signed off jobs are put on hold or even canned, right that the last minute. So make sure you try to secure as many interviews as you can. Better to have some choice and (hopefully) decline job offers than to 'rely' on one or two coming to fruition.
48. **Don't stop networking.** Make sure that this becomes a way of life. Don't just rely on LinkedIn, Twitter or Facebook for this, make sure that you pick up the phone, meet people and put your face out there. If you don't there will be someone that has left more of a lasting impression on your contact, and they may well get the call before you do. So carry on networking!
49. **Tell everyone and thank them!** When you are lucky enough to get that job, make sure you tell EVERYONE that you have been successful. I don't mean sending a blanket email out to everyone; I mean pick the phone up or email personally to thank them for their specific help in your job search. You will know doubt be speaking to these people again, and it is both respectful and good business sense to acknowledge their assistance.
50. **DON'T GIVE UP!** There are millions of people in the same situation as you. Qualified persistence does pay off.....in the end. It may take a little while, but **YOU WILL** get there in the end, with some careful thought and some good advice.

I hope that you will find some of these tips useful during your job search. Why don't you check out my blog, Sirona Says - <http://blog.sironaconsulting.com> And if you are on Twitter, then please follow me at <http://www.twitter.com/andyheadworth> ; if you are a LinkedIn user, then make sure you connect with me at <http://www.linkedin.com/in/andyheadworth>