

FINDING YOUR DREAM JOB

New Chapter's practical top tips for finding your dream job

**NEW
CHAPTER**
OUR PROMISE • YOUR FUTURE

INTRODUCTION

IS THERE SUCH A THING AS A DREAM JOB? WE THINK SO. AND WHAT'S MORE, WE BELIEVE IT'S ESSENTIAL TO FIND IT IF YOU WANT TO ENSURE SUCCESS. BECAUSE HAPPY PEOPLE ARE SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE AND BEING HAPPY AT WORK STARTS WITH LOVING WHAT YOU DO.

Before starting your search for a new role give some serious thought to deciding what your dream job looks like and be realistic. We might love the idea of being a brain surgeon but unless we're qualified or committed to years of study it's outside of our reach.

We suggest you begin by asking yourself and writing down the answers to the following questions:

- What am I qualified or have the skills to do? What options do I have?
- What does my dream company look like? What culture do they have? What values do they live by?
- What are my "must have's" and "nice to have's" - again, be realistic.

Once you have a clear idea of all of these factors, you're ready to start your search.

"SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE AREN'T ALWAYS HAPPY PEOPLE BUT HAPPY PEOPLE ARE ALMOST ALWAYS SUCCESSFUL IN REACHING THEIR GOALS."



TIP 1: LOOK!

Although it's possible that your dream job may come to you via a direct approach - whether that's by a recruiter or an employer - if you're serious about a new challenge, you should be actively looking.

With the vast number of job boards out there, sifting through job adverts can be incredibly time consuming so it's worth registering your details with a recruitment agency that you believe has the right contacts and experience to help you. Try to avoid registering with too many agencies - a recruiter will work harder on your behalf if they know they're the only one, or one of a small number of agencies working for you.

Why not register on New Chapter's website and register for our jobs by email? That way, you'll receive regular email updates of any jobs that match your criteria.

Try to be realistic and apply for the roles that your background and level of seniority are relevant for. Seeing that a candidate has applied to hundreds of roles without thinking about their suitability can be highly off-putting for an employer.

TIP 2: GET SOCIAL

Social media, especially LinkedIn, is a favourite hunting ground for recruiters and employers. In fact, recruiters now report that up to 50% of their candidates are found initially on LinkedIn across all sectors and areas of business. If you don't have a LinkedIn profile, it's important that you get one.

If you have a LinkedIn profile that's incomplete or out of date then we can help - follow our Guide to Creating a Recruiter friendly LinkedIn profile.

Some job seekers tell us they're nervous about creating a LinkedIn profile because they believe it sends a signal to their existing employer that they're looking for a new job. This is not the case at all - LinkedIn is primarily a networking site and there are a huge number of happily employed LinkedIn members who are simply looking to connect and share views with people in their industry.

Consider other social media platforms. Recruiters are fast embracing multiple social sites including Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Google+ and YouTube so if you have an account, ensure your content is appropriate!

TIP 3: NETWORK

Consider whether ex-colleagues are now working for a company that's of particular interest to you. If so, it may be worth getting in touch to ask them if they're aware of any opportunities or to be kept in touch if any roles become available that you might be suitable for in the future. They might even be willing to introduce you to the appropriate hiring managers.

This approach could give you a head start on vacancies that have not yet "gone public" and furthermore, being recommended by somebody who already has their foot in the door can be a real advantage.

Attending industry networking events and using a host of social media platforms are other effective ways of networking and building a plethora of contacts that may prove useful to you.

TIP 4: GIVE YOUR CV A MAKEOVER

When applying for jobs, a CV is often still the first thing your potential employers will see. CV mistakes and inconsistencies are the fastest way to end up in the “no” pile. It may sound simple, but it’s important to go through your CV with a fine tooth comb to eradicate any spelling or grammatical errors. If you think you’d benefit from some advice, don’t be shy about asking your recruitment consultant to help - most good recruiters will be happy to assist. It’s also important to ensure that your employment dates are consistent and to explain any lengthy gaps in your career history.

Each time you apply for a role, it’s a good idea to review the job specification and tailor your CV to more closely match the role requirements. You’ll give yourself the best chance of standing out if you accompany your CV with a covering letter that explains precisely how closely suited you are to the role. For more advice, consult New Chapter’s Guide to Writing a Winning CV.

TIP 5: BE PICKY!

It’s important to find the right, long-term opportunity that closely matches your ideal role and offers you the best chance to succeed. Don’t jump at the first job only to find it’s not right for you six months later.

There’s nothing quite as off-putting to a hiring manager than a candidate who has jumped from job to job as they’ll naturally assume that you wouldn’t stay long with them either. Never take a job as a stop gap - it looks bad on your CV and it won’t be forgotten by the employer who may be useful to you at some point in the future.

TIP 6: USE KEY WORDS

Using key words throughout your CV, online profile and cover letters is a great way to increase your visibility and chance of being found online. The trick is to study job adverts and specifications within your sector and identify the key words that employers use when they’re advertising jobs.

By incorporating these into your CV and online profiles, when recruiters or hiring managers are searching for suitable people they’re far more likely to find you.

TIP 7: MANAGE YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

It’s now commonplace for future employers to research you online. They may do this after seeing your CV, or after an interview - but most now “check you out” to build a greater sense of what you’re about and who you are.

Most people carefully consider what they write on LinkedIn. Less consider other social sites such as Facebook and Twitter which they believe to be personal domains. Ensure that you:

- Eliminate any bad language.
- Don’t make any radical judgements or comment on controversial/emotive subjects without carefully considering who might read your updates.
- Try to make yourself seem appealing - it’s fine to keep the content personal, but if all you ever post is drunken night out pictures, this might not be the message you’d like your future employer to see.
- Don’t bad mouth ex-employers or talk negatively about your experience with them.
- If you’re unsure, turn your privacy settings on and make sure only your friends can see your updates.

TIP 8: BE FLEXIBLE

It's important to be as available and flexible as possible for that all-important interview. If you're committed to job hunting make sure you keep plenty of free space in your diary for employers to choose from. Most companies work to exact timeframes when recruiting - make sure you don't miss your chance simply by being too busy to see them.

Ensure that at each stage of the recruitment process you're aware of what's coming next. At first interview, ask when second interviews are likely to be and block out that time in your diary.

Hiring managers are busy and often have to assemble people from multiple functions of the business to meet with you. A candidate who is repeatedly unavailable on the required dates could be perceived as difficult.

TIP 9: DO YOUR RESEARCH

Preparing thoroughly for an interview makes all the difference. Researching the company you're interviewing, even if you think you know it well, is an imperative step in securing your dream job.

Thorough research isn't just about clicking through a company website. It's important to get a sense of its strategy and what's currently going on in its world. You can build a thorough picture of a company by:

- Checking its social media presence for blogs, news items etc.
- Taking a look at current staff - do they say anything about what it's like to work for the company online?
- Conducting basic google searches to pull up any recent published material on the company.

- Checking financial performance with publicly available records.
- Check out annual reports (if any are produced).
- If you can, speak to someone in the company about what the culture is like.
- When you look at the website, don't just look at the home page and news section - take a look at the information on corporate vision and values. Many companies will also outline their approach to CSR, strategic objectives, case studies etc. Go through the website with a fine tooth comb - the interviewer will expect you to know everything that's publicly available about the company.

TIP 10: PRACTICE COMPETENCY BASED QUESTIONS

Competency based interviewing (CBI) is now a widely used technique in interviewing. Questions usually take the form of:

“Give me an example of a time when you....?”

Many people get flustered when faced with competency based interview questions but if you're well prepared they are a great opportunity to showcase your softer skills. CBI questions are formed from the role competency profile. Ask the company or your recruiter for a copy of the competency profile if there is one. If not, the job specification should provide you with enough information for you to make an accurate judgement on the type of competencies they might focus on.

For example, if the role specification says: “The person will need to be able to influence people across all tiers of the business” then it's likely that one of the competencies is “influencing skills”. Think about an example you can give that demonstrates your ability to influence before you go the interview and you'll be one step ahead.

New Chapter's Guide to Dealing with Competency Based Questions offers further advice on how to prepare for competency questions.

TIP 11: BE YOURSELF AND BE HONEST ABOUT THE TYPE OF COMPANY YOU WANT TO WORK FOR

Many potential employers will ask you to undertake psychometric testing as part of their interview process. But don't be daunted by this - these tests have no right or wrong answers and you can't prepare for them. They're simply there to assess your personality type, preferred style of working and environment that you're most likely to succeed in - in order to gauge whether you'd fit into the culture of their business or not.

It's important to be honest with your answers rather than respond with what you think they'll want to hear. For one, it's usually obvious when a candidate is not honest as their results lack consistency, and secondly it does nobody any good to "fake" your way into a job you're simply not suited for.

TIP 12: PRACTICE NUMERICAL/VERBAL REASONING TESTS

An increasing number of employers are requesting numerical or verbal reasoning tests as part of the recruitment process. They often have a business-wide benchmark score and your results will need to meet or exceed this level in order for you to stay in the process.

Being rejected due to test scores can be frustrating - particularly if you performed well in similar roles in the past and you do not feel that the tests are relevant to the job duties.

Whether you're confident or not, if you are asked to take a numerical or verbal reasoning test we strongly advise that you practice before you take the tests. Relevant practice tests can be found online - "SHL" are a popular test provider and practice tests can be found on their website.

TIP 13: BE RESILIENT

Unless you're incredibly lucky, you're bound to experience rejection along the path to securing your dream job. While rejection is disheartening it's also inevitable so try not to let it get you down, learn from your mistakes and come back stronger.

Always ensure you ask for feedback after each interview to get an idea of where you might need to improve and take steps to overcome any areas needing improvement in time for the next interview.

**Good luck from all of us at New Chapter.
Contact us on 0845 2000 741 if you'd like
any additional advice or assistance.**